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## CANADA

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS<br>INTERNAL TRADE BRANCH

# CANADA'S BALANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS 

1926-1932

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Minister of Trade and Commerce.


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## Canadian Balance of International Payments Statement 1926-1932

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## FOREWOKD

## Canadiun Balance of Internationol Payments

1. "Balance of Trade" figures are frequently misinterpreted due to the persistence of an old doctrine long ago exploded that a nation's trade is in a healthy state when exports exceed imports necessitating an import of gold to make up the difference. Trade was then said to show a "favourable balance". This theory only took account of the "visible" or comnodity items of trade, whereas a true statement of a nation's international position can only be known when not only the comodity items are considered, but also the "invisible" items such as interest, freight, immigrant remittances, financial services, tourist traffic, etc. In short, all debit and credit transactions must be considered - all the valuable things received from other countries must be balanced against all the valuable things transferred to other countries during a given period of time. This account must balance; if it does not balance the fault lies with the inadequacy of the estimates for individual
items. Many of these estimates are bound to be rough approximations. Errors and omissions are inevitable. Where direct estimates of capital borrowings and lendings are not made, it is customary to regard the balancing item as representing the net capital movement and the inevitable margin of error.
2. A nation's balance of international payments, therefore, may be defined as a tabular presentation of the amounts of the various visible and invisible exports and imports of the country, so arranged as to show their comparative size and interrelationships, their influence upon foreign exchange and upon international gold movements. Such a compilation is indispensable for a study of the country's financial and economic position and policies. Among its more important uses may be rentioned the following:
(1) It gives a comprehensive picture of a country's international debits and credits and how they are balanced.
(2) It shows the extent of international borrowings and lendings.
(3) It shows the magnitude of individual invisible items, such as interest, freights and tourist expenditures in international transactions.
(4) It explains exchance disturbances and the effect of internetional financial difficulties.
(5) It furnishes data for judging economic tendencies and for guidance in the formulation of fiscal, financial and commercial policies.

## CANADIAN BALANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS

1932

## Balances from 1929-1932

1. In 1931, Canada's balance of international payments had shown an excess of credits over debits (excluding capital movements) amounting to approximately $\$ 28$ million, which compared with an excess of debits amounting to $\$ 159$ million in 1930 and $\$ 65$ million in 1929. The 1932 balance of payments statement shows an excess of credits (exclusive of capital movements) amounting to 872 million. Comnodity trade was favourable to the extent of nearly \$80 million. There was an unfavourable balance of "invisible" items (all items exclusive of commodities, gold and capital, and including the omission and error estimate) of \$123 million. Net gold exports in terms of Canadian currency were $\$ 67$ million. Gold and commodity favourable balances less the unfovourable balance in invisibles, leaves a net favourable balance of $\$ 23$ million.

Frror and Omission Estimate
2. If there were no omissions nor erroneous estimates in the balance of payments statement, the difference between all debits and credits, exclusive of capital movements, viz., $\$ 72$ million, would be the correct figure for the net outflow of capital during the year. Since much of the data included in this calculation must be the result of estimation, and since it is inevitable that in such an extensive inquiry some items will elude detection, then the difference between debits and credits will contain errors and omissions as well as capital movements.

## Direct Estimate of Capital Movement

3. For this reason, the indirect evidence of capital movement furnished by the balance of payments statement should be supplemented by an investigation designed to arrive at a direct estimate. Available data on capital
movements in 1932 may be summarized as follors:

$$
\left(000^{\prime}\right. \text { s omitted) }
$$

|  | Debit | Credit |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sale and purchase of securities, including <br> repurchases, redemptions, sinking funds, etc. | 100,000 | 150,000 |
| Maturities paid during the year ................ | 75,000 |  |
| Direct investments by other countries in Canada |  | 2,000 |
| Net outflow of capital .......................... |  | 23,000 |

## Interpretation of the Capital Figures

4. It will be seen from this estimate that, on balance, there was an export of capital from Canada amounting to $\$ 23$ million. Since this is $\$ 43$ million less than the difference betreen all debits and credits in the balance of payments statement, the latter amount must be taken as the error and omission estimate. While it is true that the export of capital amounting to $\$ 175$ million exceeded imports amounting to $\$ 152$ million by $\$ 23$ million, a large proportion of the capital export was for the purpose of meeting maturities and redemptions. Maturities alone amounted to $\$ 75$ million. If the latter amount is deducted from our capital exports without considering other deductions for redemptions, sinking funds, etc., the table indicates that Canada was a capital importing country to the extent of $\$ 52$ million.

## How Balance was Achieved

5. Consideration of these data setting forth the details of the Canadian balance of payments will reveal how balance in international accounts was achieved.

## Commodity Trade

6. Commodity trade declined still further in 1932. In 1931, exports were $\$ 608$ million against $\$ 497$ million in 1932 . Imports were $\$ 612$ million in 1931 and $\$ 417$ million in 1932. Last year, however, was characterized by a greater fall in imports leading to a favourable balance of $\$ 80$ million, while in 1931 exports and imports were nearly in balance. This was, of course, an important factor in easing the situation as regards payments abroad.

## Gold Movements

7. Gold again was a very important item on the credit side of the Canadian balance sheet. In Canadian currency, there was a net export of $\$ 67$ million. This large export left reserves a little reduced as compared with the previous year.

CANADIAN GOLD STOCK

> December 31st, 1925-1932
( 000 's omitted)

|  |  | Current Gold and <br> Subsidiary Coin held by Canadian Banks |  | Gold held <br> by Banks <br> in <br> Central <br> Gold <br> Reserves | Gold held by Minister of Finance against Dominion Notes and Savings Bank Deposits | Total <br> Canadian <br> Stocks |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | $\begin{gathered} \text { In } \\ \text { Canada } \end{gathered}$ | Elsewhere |  |  |  |
|  |  | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| December | 1925 | 49,915 | 18,772 | 18,910 | 137,858 | 226,455 |
| " | 1926 | 44,528 | 27,962 | 26,910 | 131,195 | 230,595 |
| " | 1927 | 48,061 | 28,458 | 21,245 | 130,733 | 228,497 |
| " | 1928 | 46,908 | 30,115 | 20,631 | 93,317 | 190,971 |
| " | 1929 | 46,852 | 26,442 | 14,631 | 62,995 | 150,920 |
| " | 1930 | 47,403 | 36,636 | 12,631 | 96,212 | 193,882 |
| " | 1931 | 45,961 | 19,856 | 10,682 | 66,960 | 143,459 |
| " | 1932 | 37,976 | 15,287 | 11,082 | 73,044 | 137,389 |

## Tourist Expenditures

8. Expenditures of tourists, as was to be expected, were lower in 1932. Receipts were $\$ 212$ against $\$ 251$ million in 1931 and payments $\$ 57$ million against $\$ 76$ million. Nevertheless, a favourable balance of $\$ 150$ million was achieved. This constituted the largest credit balance in our international accounts.

## Interest Payments and Receipts

9. By a wide margin, net interest payments constituted the most serious adverse item. Interest payments abroad amounted to $\$ 248$ million against which there were receipts of $\$ 56$ million, a difference of 192 million. Other Invisible Items
10. Among other invisible items the chief net debits were: Freight $\$ 20$ million, and exchange $\$ 14$ million. The principal net credit was insurance which amounted to $\$ 7$ million.

## Summary

11. Freight, interest and exchange together accounted for $\$ 226$ million out of $\$ 287$ million net debits (including error and omission estimate) in Canadian international payments in 1932. Other invisible items made up the remaining $\$ 61$ million. Commodities, gold and tourist traffic yielded net credits totalling $\$ 297$ million out of $\$ 310$ million. Other invisible items made up the balance of $\$ 13$ million. Canada's exports (visible and invisible) exceeded her imports (visible and invisible) largely because of the necessity of meeting maturities abroad.

## CAILADIAN ESTIMATED BALAIVCE OF INTEFNATIONAL PAYMENTS

1932
( 000 's omitted)


(1) Included in Comnodity Trade since 19:8.
(2) This item roprbeacia not capital uiurements and errors and omissions.
( 000 's omitted)

| 1928 |  | 1929 |  | 1930 |  | 1931 |  | 1932 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Inports | Exports | Imports |
| Visible and | Visible and | $\begin{gathered} \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \end{gathered}$ | Visible <br> and | $\begin{gathered} \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \end{gathered}$ | $\left\|\begin{array}{c} \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \end{array}\right\|$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \end{gathered}$ | Visible and | $\begin{gathered} \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \end{gathered}$ |
| $\frac{\text { Invisible }}{\$}$ | Invisible | Invisible | Invisible | Invisible | Invisibie | Invisible | Invisible | Invisible | Invisible |
| \$ | \$ | \$ | - | \$ | \$ | + | * | \$ | * |
| 1,374,246 | 1,222,318 | 1,208,338 | 1,298,993 | 905,372 | 1,008,479 | 617,243 | 628,098 | 502,801 | 452,614 |
| 1,374,246 | 1,241,548 | 1,208,338 | [1,318,413 | 305,370 | 1,015,949 | 617,243 | 628,598 | 502,801 | 152,611 |
| -10,926 | -21,395 | -11,679 | $-24,+14$ | -10,957 | -23, 814 | -3,328 | $-16.751$ | -6, 526 | -14,048 |
| 1,363,320 | 1,220,153 | 1,196,659 | 1,295,793 | 894,413 | 982,135 | 607,915 | $\begin{array}{r} 611,347 \\ 5,000 \\ \hline \end{array}$ | 496,275 | $\begin{array}{r} 438,566 \\ 22,000 \end{array}$ |
| 1,363,320 | 1,220,153 | 1,196,659 | 1,295,799 | 894,413 | 992,135 | 607,315 | 606,847 | 496,275 | 416,566 |
| 107,614 | 39,659 | 50,598 | 3,746 | 25,343 | 39,062 | 70,062 | 2,038 | 60,825 | 2,175 |
| 88,266 | 115,433 | 85,541 | 130,855 | 68,815 | 100,908 | 49,670 | 76,528 | 7,919 38,864 | 58,864 |
| 275,230 | 107,522 | 309,379 | 121,645 | 279,238 | 113,292 | 250,776 | 76,452 | 212,448 | 57,403 |
| 80,966 | 246,916 | 87,886 | 258,307 | 88,220 | 272,586 | 70,722 | 252,076 | 56,000 | 248,000 |
| 14,421 | 23,195 | 14,036 | 23,385 | 14,000 | 23,000 | 10,051 | 13,110 | 6,080 | 7,127 |
| 11.,819 | 11,030 | 11,750 | 11,300 | 11,750 | 10,373 | 11,750 | 10,960 | 8,850 | 10,379 |
| 4,688 | - | 4,325 | - | 4,000 | - | 1,295 | - | - | - |
| 1,373 | 1,800 | 900 | 1,800 | 900 | 1,800 | 900 | 1,800 | 500 | 1,000 |
| 35,761 | 28,790 | 31,990 | 24,418 | 29,483 | 22,138 | 27,000 | 20,000 | 24,000 | 17,010 |
| 3,858 | 5,000 | 4,000 | 5,280 | 1,000 | ¢,000 | 3,000 | 5,000 | 2,000 | 3,500 |
| - | 3,750 | - | 3,750 | - | 3,750 |  | 3,750 |  | 3,250 |
| 14,783 | 11,178 | 14,117 | 11,436 | 11,08\% | 3,424 | 5,173 | 3,820 | 4,416 | \%,775 |
| 13,725 | - | 13,725 | - | 3,696 | - | 1,357 | - | 750 | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5,000 | 10,000 | 28.750 |
| - |  |  | - |  | - | - | 5,000 | - | 7,000 |
| - | 201,398 | 65,475 | - | 153,533 | - | - | 27,790 | - | 72,138 |
| 2,015,824 | 2,015,821 | 1,890,381 | 1,390,381 | 1,594,474 | , 594, 474 | 1,110,171 | 1,110,171 | 923,927 | 928,327 |

## ESTIMATED BALANCE OF PAYMEITS BETWEEN CANADA AivD GREAT BRITAIN

## Limitations of This Estimate

1. An attempt has been made to compile a separate statement of international payments between Canada and Great Britain and Canada and the United States. Its limitations are admitted. If a general statement of international payments can only be considered an approximation, one confined to transactions between two countries must be subject to a wider margin of error. For a number of items, data are available only for total debits or credits and not by countries. In such cases, arbitrary guesses have sometimes to be made regarding the geographical division.
Means of Balancing Payments, Great Britain-Canada
2. In the case of Great Britain, however, the principal items are the commodity trade and interest receipts and payments, the figures for which are not subject to arbitrary estimation. In 1932, Canada had a favourable commodity trade balance with Britain amounting to approximately $\$ 103$ million, but an unfavourable balance in interest payments of approximately $\$ 79$ million. As all other items, exclusive of capital movements, nearly offset each other, a difference of \$24 million favourable to Canada remained. This balance, however, was again offset by capital items, including debits of $\$ 50$ million and credits of $\$ 24$ million. Only a small balance of slightly over $\$ 1$ million remained unaccounted for.

Complexity of Settlement Process
3. This near approach to balance should not be taken as conclusive. Our debits and credits with London would not be settled on the basis of our commercial transactions in goods and services with that country alone. London is the clearing centre for most Empire countries. Our debits and credits with India, Australia and Fiji, New Zealand, South Africa, etc., would probably mostly be settled through London. It is the clearing centre for many foreign transactions as well. So that in the end we might find that, although on the basis of our transactions confined to Canada and Great Britain alone the accounts were in balance, when all transactions settled through London were taken into consideration, we might be debtor to London or vice versa. The situation is still further complicated by the fact that London transactions mostly come through New York.

## ESTIMATED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS CADADA AND GREAT BRITAIN

(000's omitted)


## ESTLIATED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

1. During the twelve years prior to 1932 , Canada's commodity trade balance with the United States was adverse, on the average, to the extent of \$225 million per year. The important invisible items in the international account are tourist traffic, interest and freight. Heavy net interest and freight payments must be made to the United States, while Canada has a large balance in her favour from tourist traffic. As a matter of fact, during the last few years, tourist receipts have been sufficient to more than offset our payments for interest and freight. Other invisible items practically balanced. In some years, heavy shipments of gold, of which Canada is now producing about $\$ 60$ million per year, have further reduced the adverse balance.
2. For many years until 1931, no difficulty was experienced in meeting our adverse balance. Expansion had been so great that capital movements were easily adequate to meet it. Indeed, in the period 1924 to 1928, Canadian prosperity was such that we became during those years, a capital exporting country. In 1929 and 1930 we resumed the role of capital importers.
3. In 1931 and 1932 the meeting of our obligations to the United States was much more difficult because the flotation of capital issues in New York ceased in the latter part of 1931. Details of the international account for 1931 and 1932 are set out in the accompanying table, which shows how balance was achieved. In the latter year, tourist net receipts practically offset net interest, freight and exchange payments. Gold shipments in Canadian funds amounted to $\$ 67$ million. Other invisible items were adverse to the extent of approximately $\$ 10$ million。 The comodity adverse balance which had declined to $\$ 107$ million in 1931, less than one-half the average for twelve years, was still further reduced to \$85 million. Capital items included debits of $\$ 55$ million for maturities, $\$ 65$ million for other capital debits and $\$ 123$ million credit for sales.

Summary
4. Canadian debits to the United States in 1932 ta be brought into balance required (a) greatly reduced imports, thus lowering the unfavourable balance of trade; (b) a credit of over $\$ 160$ million in tourist traffic; (c) net gold shipments aggregating $\$ 65$ million; (d) United States investments in Canada in securities and direct items of nearly \$125 million.

## ESTIMATED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

( 000 's omitted)

|  | 1931 |  | 1932 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | ```Exports Visible and Invisible``` | ```Imports Visible and Invisible``` | $\begin{gathered} \text { Exports } \\ \text { Visible } \\ \text { and } \\ \text { Invisible } \end{gathered}$ | ```Imports Visible and Invisible``` |
|  | \# | \$ | \% | \# |
| 1. Commodity Trade - Fiecorded merchandise exports and imports $\qquad$ | 266,682 | 393,776 | 163,834 | 263,549 |
| Deductions for settlers' effects and other noncommercial imports ..... | 5,212 | 14,817 | 3,371 | 12,338 |
| Real total of cominodity trade | 261,470 | 378,359 | 166,523 | 251,211 |
| 2. Exports and imports of gold coin, bullion and subsidiary coin .................... | 69,557 | 1,945 | 59,240 | 2,135 |
| 3. Correction for gold movement to convert to Canadian currency | - | - | 7,709 | - |
| 4. Freight payments and receipts n.o.p. ........................ | 32,004 | 55,982 | 23,711 | 44,008 |
| 5. Tourist expenditures ........ | 238,758 | 56,902 | 201,905 | 38,148 |
| 6. Interest payments and receipts | 40,505 | 153,018 | 35,000 | 160,000 |
| 7. Immigrant remittances ....... | 8,233 | 7,849 | 4,693 | 3,478 |
| 8. Government expenditures and receipts | 4,900 | 3,62.5 | 4,300 | 3,871 |
| 9. Charitable and missionary contributions ............... | 800 | - | 400 | - |
| 10. Insurance transactions ...... | 12,000 | 15,750 | 10,500 | 13,000 |
| 11. Advertising transactions .... | 2,700 | 3,500 | 1,750 | 2,500 |
| 12. Motion picture earnings ..... | - | 3,600 | - | 3,000 |
| 13. Capital of immigrants and emigrants | 4,673 | 1,481 | 4,161 | 1,013 |
| 14. Earnings of Canadian residents employed in U.S.A. (net figures) | 1,857 | 1 - | 750 | + |
| 15. Allowance for exchange on U.S.A. funds ............... | , | 5,000 | 2,000 | 23,750 |
| 16. Allowance for known omissions such as direct magazine subscriptions, entertainers, radio, etc. | - | 4,500 | - - | 3,700 |
| 17. Sale \& purchase of securities. | - | - | 123,000 | 65,000 |
| 18. Maturities | - | - |  | 55,000 |
| 19. Direct investments .......... | - | - | 1,600 | - |
| 20. Difference between all debits and credits, including capital | 14,654 | - | 22,572 |  |
|  | 692,111 | 692,111 | 663,814 | 669,814 |

ESTIMATED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS
CANADA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

$$
(000 \text { 's oraitted) }
$$

|  | 1932 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | ```Exports Visible and Invisible``` | Imports <br> Visible <br> and <br> Invisible |
|  | $\stackrel{*}{*}$ | \$ |
| 1. Comnodity Trade - Recorded merchandise exports and imports ........................... | 153,813 | 95,557 |
| Deductions for settlers' effects and other non-coninercial imports ....................... | 1,040 | 413 |
|  | 152,773 | 95,144 |
| Deduct for overvaluation |  | 3,000 |
| Corrected total of cominodity trade | 152,77\% | 32,144 |
| 2. Exports and imports of gold coin, bullion and subsidiary coin | 1,585 | 25 |
| 3. Correction for gold movement to convert to Canadian currency | 210 | - |
| 4. Freight payments and receipts, n.o.p. ...... | 8,233 | 6,588 |
| 5. Tourist expenditures | 1,643 | 6,755 |
| 6. Interest payments and receipts .............. | 18,000 | 6,000 |
| 7. Immigrant remittances ....................... | 616 | 1,506 |
| 8. Government expenditures and receipts ....... | 1,400 | 2,015 |
| 9. Charitable and missionary contributions .... | - | 1,000 |
| 10. Insurance transactions | 4,500 | 500 |
| 11. Advertising transactions ..................... | 50 | - |
| 12. Capital of immigrants and emigrants ....... | 89 | 113 |
| 13. Allowance for known omissions such as direct magazine subscriptions, entertainers, radio, etc. $\qquad$ | - | 50 |
| 14. Sale and purchase of securities ............. | 3,000 | 5,000 |
| 15. Direct investments | 100 | - |
| 16. Difference between all debits and credits, including capital | - | 70,503 |
|  | 192,199 | 192,199 |

