

Passport forgers foiled

Canadian Bank Note Company Limited has announced a breakthrough that it says should make the forging of passports and other photo-identification cards "extremely difficult, if not impossible". It involves a printing process that integrates a photographic image into a secure document in a process similar to photocopying.

The technique is a world exclusive to the company's knowledge, according to corporate secretary, Shirley Arends. It was developed for the firm by Xerox Research Centre of Canada but the need for the product and its concept originated within Canadian Bank Note, which owns world rights to the process.

Shirley Arends says the system would be applicable to any security document which carries the bearer's photograph — particularly passports, identity cards for security-sensitive employers, and drivers' licences which, as in some European countries, include a photograph.

Passport fraud in particular is a continuing problem because photographs, which are simply glued to the document, can be replaced by sophisticated forgers. Under the new process, the holder's picture is an integral part of the document and cannot be altered, short of using scissors. In addition, the document itself does not photocopy well so that potential forgers cannot glue a picture over the printed one and make a copy.

Canadian Bank Note Company already has the contract to print conventional Canadian passports. Ms. Arends said the company will be ready to market the process by the end of this year and hopes to sell it around the world.

Acid rain damage detected

Environment Canada plans to set up a country-wide early warning system against acid rain.

In a recent speech, Environment Minister Charles Caccia said that 75 sample plots will be established and monitored across the country, 20 per cent of them in Ontario.

The minister said the system will detect changes in forest soil, vegetation and trees and "will give an alert in case there are circumstances we should become aware of as quickly as possible".

Mr. Caccia said the plots will be established immediately with the first testing carried out later this year. The results will be used as a standard for future comparisons.

It is expected to take at least five years of testing before Environment Canada officials are able to determine what acid rain is doing to the country's major forests.

System tracks submarines

Canadian Astronautics Ltd., the Ottawa aerospace company has won a \$2.1-million contract with the Department of National Defence to develop an acoustical training system for Canada's CP-140 Aurora patrol planes.

The system will be used to train three pairs of operators at a time to interpret acoustic signals gathered from "sonobuoys," portable underwater microphones that transmit information on ships and submarines to the patrol planes. The acoustic signals allow operators in the patrol planes to identify the submarines, their country of origin and where they are going.

Vice-president Michael Stott said the advantage of the Canadian Astronautics system is that operators can be trained on the ground to identify and interpret unusual signals, using pre-recorded tapes of actual sonobuoy transmissions.

He said the system developed during the 22-month contract could be adapted for use by other countries, or for non-military uses, such as sounding the earth for oil or other minerals.

Electronic newspaper

An electronic newspaper, *INS Electronic News*, is being produced in Toronto by the company that operates the Canquote system, a system which provides corporate information through 3 000 terminals in Canada, the United States, Britain and Switzerland.

"This is the first electronic newspaper that I know of in North America," said Connie Baillie, publisher of *INS Electronic News* and president of the company that launched it, Investors News Service Inc. of Toronto.

Canquote is a division of Dataline Inc. of Toronto which offers comprehensive information-processing and software services to an investment-oriented clientele, consisting primarily of brokers but including a growing list of diversified corporate users, individuals and regulatory bodies.

INS Electronic News will contain a mix of economic/financial news, sports, editorial comment, political coverage and movie reviews. Out-of-the ordinary items will also be featured, such as sports betting lines and warning bulletins from law enforcement agencies on stolen bonds and scams.

As a fledgling in a new medium, the *News* presents an innovative, advertising-free format. Its purpose is to inform, entertain and encourage Canquote users to access Investors News Service.

Modern-day voyageurs retrace fur-trading route



Thirty modern-day voyageurs, students from Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, set out from Lachine, Quebec, April 30 to retrace the 19 000 kilometre journey of the early voyageurs up the Ottawa River to the head of the Great Lakes. They are expected to reach Old Fort William in Thunder Bay by July 1. The students are duplicating the trip of the voyageurs as part of Ontario's bicentennial anniversary.