

## News briefs

After spending Christmas in Ottawa with his children, the Prime Minister visited North American Air Defence (NORAD) Headquarters in Colorado Springs December 27 and 28, where he attended a briefing and took a tour of the headquarter facilities. The Prime Minister met with NORAD Commander in Chief, General James E. Hill, of the U.S., and the Deputy Commander, Lieutenant-General David Adamson, a Canadian, as well as the Canadian personnel stationed there.

U.S. Vice-President Walter Mondale has changed the date of his visit to Canada to January 17-18, 1978, instead of January 18-19 as originally announced.

At a time when companies are announcing layoffs, de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd. says it is short of skilled workers. The company has hired about 400 persons in recent months and is looking for about 200 more as production of its Dash-7 increases.

The Federal Cabinet has taken the first step towards buying six naval vessels at a cost of about \$1.5 billion, Defence Minister Barney Danson said recently. The final decision to proceed with construction of the ships will not be taken until 1981 when the contract definition stage is completed.

The Fisheries Department has announced that groundfish quotas for the Atlantic fleet in 1978 are being increased by 13.2 per cent to 489,000 tonnes from 431,800 last year.

Environment Canada recently announced that one of the almost extinct peregrine falcons raised in captivity and returned to nature in 1975 has produced some offspring. The falcon, of the *anatum* subspecies, is the first of its kind known to have mated successfully after being in captivity.

*Canada Weekly* is published by the Information Services Division, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, K1A 0G2.

Material may be freely reprinted. A credit would be appreciated. Photo sources, if not shown, will be provided on request to (Mrs.) Miki Sheldon, Editor.

*Cette publication existe également en français sous le titre Hebdo Canada.*

*Algunos números de esta publicación aparecen también en español bajo el título Noticiario de Canadá.*

*Ahnliche Ausgaben dieses Informationsblatts erscheinen auch in deutscher Sprache unter dem Titel Profil Kanada.*

Current Canadian reserves of recoverable coal are estimated at 717 million tons of coking coal and 5.2 billion tons of thermal coal. The 1976 quantity of resources is estimated at 31.9 billion tons of measured resources, 14.6 billion tons of indicated resources and 181.5 billion tons of inferred resources. Coal reserves are defined as that portion of coal resources that can be produced with current technology and delivered at competitive market prices. Coal resources refer to coal in the ground and are based on the assurance of its existence and the feasibility of exploitation.

A Saudi Arabian telecommunications contract valued at \$3.1 billion has been awarded to Bell Canada, the Philips group of the Netherlands and L.M. Ericsson of Sweden. Bell Canada will provide management and maintenance for the project which will modernize the Saudi Arabian system and add 470,000 new automatic switch telephone lines. The contract, which should provide gross proceeds to Bell of over \$500 million over five years, should generate about 300 new jobs for Canadians.

A gas well in Alberta (West Pembina field) which blew wild in early December and caught fire over Christmas was still burning on December 28. Preparation was being made to extinguish the flames with a dynamite blast.

Canada's merchandise trade surplus for the first ten months of last year was \$2.334 billion compared with \$1.089 billion for the whole of 1976, reports Statistics Canada. Exports over imports were \$489 million in October compared with \$50 million in September.

Agreement has been reached by the federal and Alberta governments on a joint program to help defray transportation costs of feed for livestock producers in parts of Alberta affected by the drought last year. Each government will pay half of the estimated \$2-million cost of the program.

The Fitness Break Package, a new program that will create 220 jobs in Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, will begin this month at a cost of \$1,125,000. Designed by Fitness and Recreation Canada consultants, the Fitness Break Package will help health professionals conduct fitness sessions for employee groups, elementary and secondary school children and the elderly.

The Alberta Government has set a record with the \$1.94 billion it collected during the first nine months of 1977 from various petroleum industry sources. It also appears to be certain of setting a record of \$2.5 billion a year in petroleum-related revenue, since fourth quarter royalty and other receipts traditionally reflect the higher crude oil and natural gas production levels of the winter months. The petroleum industry paid \$1.98 billion in 1976 to the province, whose petroleum income has more than doubled in the past four years.

The Nova Scotia Government, which has regained federally-held mining leases covering near-surface coal deposits in Cape Breton, expects that a large new strip mine will be developed soon on the north side of Sydney harbour. The transfer is in line with the province's policy of markedly reducing its energy dependence on costly imported oil.

Quadruplets born to a Quebec woman in Montpellier, France, December 24, remain in good condition. The babies, two boys and two girls, were born to Johane Berlamont, whose maiden name was Gauthier, of Montreal. Their father is Marc Berlamont of Brussels. They were married three years ago after meeting in Quebec. The babies, each weighing 4.4 pounds at birth, were in incubators but doing well.

Canadian uranium shipments to the European Economic Community are likely to be resumed early this year, External Affairs Minister Don Jamieson said after talks with the EEC Energy Commissioner.

Canada had a current-account deficit of \$1.19 billion seasonally-adjusted in the third quarter of last year, compared with a revised deficit of \$1.44 billion in the second quarter.

Statistics Canada reports the rise in unemployment in recent months has been accompanied by a marked fall in available jobs. Figures show that the average daily number of full-time, part-time and casual job openings in the three-month period ending last November was 46,200, a 14-percent decline from the June-to-August period.

Members of Parliament adjourned for a 34-day Christmas break December 20 after a 44-day Commons sitting. During the session so far members have passed three of 14 bills introduced by the Government. A long, complex income tax bill was discussed for 21 days.