

Canadian satellite shines at Australia workshop

Demonstrations of telephony and television in remote areas via *Hermes*, Canada's communications satellite, were described as "an outstanding success" last month by observers and the media during a joint Canada/Australia satellite communications workshop in Canberra. *Hermes*, launched in 1976 — eighth of nine Canadian satellites — was moved westward in its orbit over the Pacific Ocean for the event, which involved demonstrations in 47 communities in Queensland and New South Wales. (See also *Canada Weekly*, dated August 22, Page 4.)

Twenty-five Canadian experts, led by Dr. John Chapman, Assistant Deputy Minister (Space Program), Department of Communications, were present at the workshop, which was opened by Australian Post and Telecommunications Minister A.A. Staley at the Australian Academy of Science in the capital.

Australian decision soon

At a press conference at the commencement of the proceedings, Mr. Staley said his Government would make a decision in principle on whether to proceed with a domestic communications satellite before the end of the year. A submission would be made to the Cabinet, he said, outlining various satellite communications options. "Major decisions will be made by the Government in the next few months to enable planning to begin," Mr. Staley told reporters.

Attending the workshop were some

235 participants from government, non-governmental agencies and private industry, with special interest in the media, communications, education and health in the field of satellite communications. The chairman, Harold White, former General Manager of Australia's Overseas Telecommunications Commission, was also chairman of the Australian Task Force on a National Communications Satellite System, which reported to the Australian Government last year.

Common communications problems

Dr. Chapman, who conveyed greetings from Canada's Communications Minister, David MacDonald, stated that the idea of the workshop, the demonstrations of *Hermes*, Telidon and fibre optics technology came about last February during a trip to Canada by Mr. Staley and confirmed during a subsequent visit by Dr. Chapman to Canberra in May. The discussions during those two meetings had included the provision of communications services in a huge, sparsely-populated land, and the steps Canada had taken to alleviate or solve those problems.

"We were struck with the similarities to the problems of Australia as Mr. Staley and senior Australian officials described them to us," Dr. Chapman said.

Delegates to the workshop discussed the Canadian experience and future plans for Australia in the field of satellite communications. They had the opportunity to use the telephony facility offered

through *Hermes* and also examine the effective use of the TV Receive Only facility at locations in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. Teleconferences conducted by satellite were held on the subjects of fibre optics, telemedicine and tele-education.

The quality of television pictures beamed from Canada and received by small 1.2-metre dish antennas was judged to be completely satisfactory in all locations. The demonstrations provided proof that low-power satellite transponders could be used for TV broadcasting from a satellite.

Canada helps to set up Kenya's electrical transmission system

One of the largest Canadian aid projects in Africa is to start in Kenya during the next five to seven years. The \$82.75-million agreement includes \$72 million in interest-free loans and \$10.75 million in grants to carry out development of Kenya's electrical transmission system.

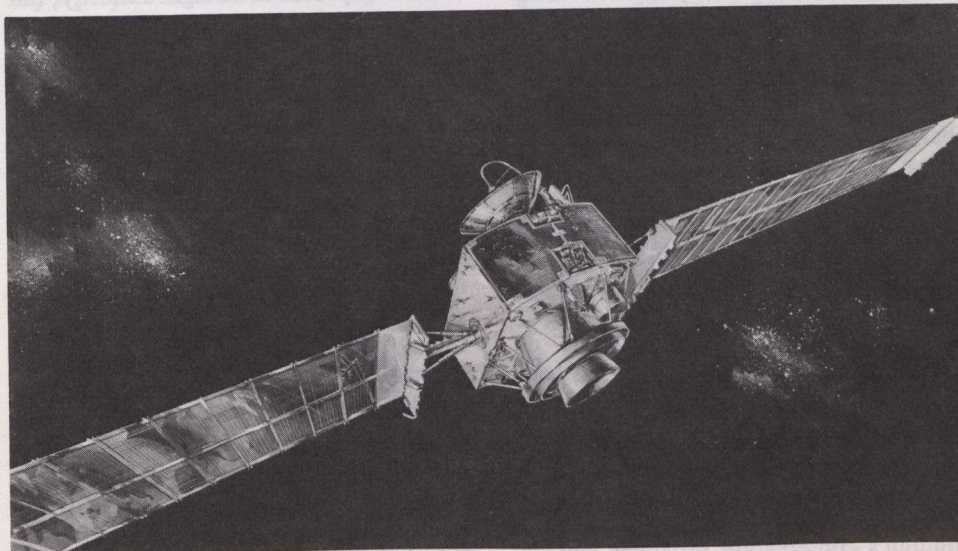
The loans are to finance the costs of consultant and engineering services, material and equipment for high voltage transmission lines and sub-stations to assist the industrialization of Kenya's western and coastal regions. The grants will be for the extension of rural electrification in the eastern part of the country.

Kenya's Vice-President and Finance Minister, Mwai Kibaki, says the project will be a cornerstone of his country's current five-year development program.

Refugee foundation set up

Paul-Emile Cardinal Léger and former Governor-General Roland Michener have been named to head the federally-created Canadian Foundation for Refugees, a group of prominent Canadians which will receive private contributions for refugee assistance.

Immigration Minister Ronald Atkey and External Affairs Minister Flora MacDonald said in announcing the make-up of the foundation's board that, although its mandate was to collect money for Southeast Asian refugees, it would also have the power to channel aid to those from other areas later if there were enough money. It is to be independent in deciding how to handle the contributions.



Telidon was successfully tested in July using *Hermes* (above), one of Canada's high-powered communications satellite, which was launched in 1979.