

Agreement on space technology

A new agreement on co-operation between Canada and the European Space Agency (ESA) was signed recently by Donald Johnston, Minister of State for Science and Technology and by Erik Quistgaard, director general of ESA. The agreement was signed at the European Space Research and Technology Centre in Noordwijk, the Netherlands.

"Canada's co-operative relationship with ESA began when the first agreement came into force in 1979," Mr. Johnston said. "This country will continue to work closely with ESA's 11 member states to foster the development and application of space technology and to open new industrial opportunities for all of us."

As part of Canada's co-operation with ESA, Canadian industry participates in general studies and programs such as the large telecommunications satellite, OLYMPUS, planned for launching in 1986 and the European earth observation satellite ERS-1.

ESA was founded in 1975 to promote peaceful co-operation among European states in the application of space research and technology. Recent agency accomplishments include the development of the Ariane Commercial launch vehicle and the scientific laboratory SPACELAB which completed its successful first mission on the last shuttle voyage November 28 to December 8, 1983.

The member states of ESA include Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Britain. Austria and Norway are associate members.

Radar system helps increase safety

Ice, whether it is pack ice in the Arctic or icebergs off the east coast, is a serious hazard in frontier oil and gas drilling.

But Intera Environmental Consultants Ltd. of Calgary has developed an airborne radar system that it says will increase the safety margin for offshore drilling in ice-threatened regions.

The Star-1 — for Sea-ice and Terrain Assessment Radar — unveiled recently by

Intera can produce highly detailed computer pictures from radar images. The technology itself is not new, derived from military reconnaissance hardware known as side-looking airborne radar. But the Star system is the first commercial use of high-resolution airborne radar aboard a small airplane and the first capable of producing pictures on the plane.

Canadian Marine Drilling Ltd., a subsidiary of Dome Petroleum Ltd. of Calgary, which has contracted the Intera plane for ice monitoring over the Beaufort Sea, had been using an older radar-imaging system which could not produce fine detail.

Intera president Brian Bullock said the new system incorporates several advances. Besides greater detail, Star produces pictures almost immediately instead of after days or weeks. The information can be transmitted to a ground station or ship using a computer link-up.

Mr. Bullock said the Star system also fits into a smaller, more fuel-efficient aircraft — cutting operating costs.

An Intera official said the system gives drilling operators much more information on ice problems. The unit can pick out objects 15 metres in size that might be missed by older radars or other detection systems.

Donation helps fight hunger

Canada is contributing an additional \$15 million to the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) administered by the World Food Program (WFP), it was announced recently. The funds will be used for the supply and transportation of Canadian food products to countries facing urgent food shortages.

The food situation in sub-Saharan Africa is of growing international concern. Persistent drought and production shortfalls in the region have led the Food and Agriculture Organization to conclude that as many as 32 African countries are enduring a food crisis and to appeal for additional food aid and agricultural assistance.

The present contribution will increase the ability of the international community to help reduce hunger in Africa and other countries. Within the United Nations' family of organizations, the WFP and the IEFR which it administers, are the two programs mainly responsible for emergency food assistance. For the current fiscal year, 1983-84, Canada has already contributed \$125.0 million for the WFP for its regular and emergency operations, and \$6.5 million to the IEFR.

Manitoba contest winner visits United Nations



Manitoba sixth-grader Treena Bron received top honours in a recent Manitoba Human Rights Commission poster contest. Coinciding with the final year of the first United Nations Decade against Racism and Racial Discrimination and with the thirty-fifth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the contest theme was the elimination of racial discrimination. Treena's poster, with its simple message, HUMAN RIGHTS... BECAUSE WE ARE ALL HUMAN, won her a six-day trip to United Nations headquarters in New York. Treena Bron (right) presents a copy of her winning poster to James Jonah, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Secretary-General of the Conference on Racial Discrimination.

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