

## NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE

Over four years ago a group of private citizens known as the National Capital Arts Alliance, which represented 55 cultural organizations in the Ottawa and Hull area, submitted to the Prime Minister a report entitled "A National Centre for the Performing Arts".

That was the birth of the National Arts Centre. On December 23, 1963, the Government announced that it had accepted in principle the main recommendations of the report: that a national centre for the performing arts be established in Ottawa, and that an annual national festival be held there. It appointed architects to design the buildings, and committees of experts on the performing arts to advise the architects. G. Hamilton Southam, president of the National Capital Arts Alliance, was seconded from the Department of External Affairs to serve as co-ordinator of these early activities. Construction of the buildings began early in 1965. In July 1966, an Act of Parliament "to establish a Corporation for the administration of the National Arts Centre" was passed, and by December the Board of Trustees provided for by the Act had been appointed. Lawrence Freiman of Ottawa was named chairman.

One of the first actions of the Board was to appoint Mr. Southam director-general of the Centre. By the end of its first year, the Board had also authorized the creation of an orchestra and a French-language theatre company for the Centre, and had

entered into an agreement with the Stratford Shakespearean Festival Foundation.

### CONSTRUCTION

The National Arts Centre is being built under the direction of the Department of Public Works in accordance with plans proposed by the Montreal architectural firm of Affleck Desbarats Dimakopoulos Lebensold Sise. On completion in 1969 it will be handed over to the National Arts Centre Corporation, an independent institution established by Act of Parliament in 1966.

The Opera House-Concert Hall (largest of the three auditoria) will seat 2,334, has the largest stage in Canada, and one of the largest anywhere. The 900-seat Theatre, has a "thrust" stage of Elizabethan-type. The projecting thrust element can be removed if required, creating a conventional proscenium stage. The experimental Studio is the most unusual of the three theatres. The staging and seating arrangements are completely flexible, and the two galleries completely encircle the room.

On the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to the site last July, the Prime Minister said: "This is not an Ottawa Arts Centre; it is a national institution, and the justification for its existence - and its expense - will rest with what it contributes to Canada as a whole."

## FOUR NEW DESTROYERS

Mr. C.M. Drury, Minister of Industry, and Mr. L. Cadieux, Minister of National Defence, have announced that the Department of Defence Production recently awarded contracts for the construction and outfitting of four helicopter-carrying destroyers for the Maritime Command of the Canadian Armed Forces. These contracts follow nearly two years of purchasing activity on the gas-turbine propulsion machinery, other machinery, weapons systems and communications equipment.

The new ships, of the DDH-280 class, are fitted with a missile system for defence against air attack and 5-inch guns for surface action. Thus, though designed primarily for an anti-submarine role, these ships can perform other duties as part of a peace-keeping force. In many respects, their special capabilities, which the Maritime Forces have lacked for some time, will be well in advance of any ship of their type in the world.

### PROPULSION AND CONTROL

Two other significant features are the all-gas-turbine propulsion plant and a computerized command-and-control system. The propulsion plant is designed for remote operation either from the bridge or from the machinery control room. The use of a computer for

command and control will give the ships maximum effectiveness in the performance of their tactical roles.

Delivery of the ships, to be named *Iroquois*, *Huron*, *Athabaskan* and *Algonquin*, (after famous Canadian warships of the past), is scheduled to begin in 1971. *Iroquois* will be delivered in June 1971, *Huron* in November 1971, *Athabaskan* in June 1972 and *Algonquin* in September 1972.

The cost of the four-ship programme comprising construction, propulsion and other machinery, weapons systems and communications equipment is estimated at between \$220 and \$225 million.

## GOLD SUSPENSION LIFTED

Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Minister of Finance, announced on April 3 that there was no longer any need for the suspension of gold transactions which had been in effect in Canada since March 15, and that, for the present, the Mint would sell the gold it purchased from Canadian producers in the free market.

Mr. Sharp recalled that, on March 14, when the London gold market closed, he had asked Canadian banks and other gold dealers to suspend their gold trading. Subsequently, this suspension was relaxed in respect of buying and selling gold overseas as brokers