

ALBERTA TELEPHONES MODERNIZED

For many years in the pioneer era of Alberta, the single wire-grounded telephone systems, which perhaps had their lines running along fence posts or strung from tree to tree, were the sole means of communication for hundreds of remotely located residents of the province. Today, only three remain. Those at Manyberries, Spirit River and Youngstown are slated for extinction. They now serve only 54 of the 36,910 rural telephone subscribers in the province.

Decrease in numbers of the single-wire systems had been accompanied by an increase in the number of mutual telephone companies. An Alberta Government Telephones programme of conversion to automatic dial systems, coupled with funds available through the Rural Telephones Revolving Fund Act, has stimulated an upsurge in the number of these companies.

MUTUAL COMPANIES

At the close of the 1963-64 fiscal year there were 1,073 mutual telephone companies connected to AGT facilities. This represented an increase of 29 per cent over the previous year. Since then 58 new companies have been registered and are in various stages of planning and construction.

The Revolving Fund makes available to mutual telephone companies substantial loans, adequate to purchase good quality poles and materials, and to secure the services of competent telephone construction firms to build the lines properly, at a minimum initial outlay of cash per member.

Fifty-seven per cent of rural telephones in the province have been converted to dial systems, with the remainder using magneto (crank) sets. Eighty per cent of all new rural telephone areas are connected to dial offices.

With the conversion to automatic dialing, AGT is encouraging amalgamation of small groups into larger single companies. This provides a more economically feasible undertaking for the rural subscriber as AGT accepts responsibility for the portions of the operation the rural company is unable to finance.

IRON ORE

Shipments of iron ore by Canadian producers increased 19.9 per cent in May, to 4,203,165 tons from 3,506,599 in May last year, and 36.4 per cent in the January-May period, to 9,595,608 tons from 7,037,375

in the corresponding period of 1963. Producers' stocks at the end of May amounted to 5,192,033 tons, greater by 22.6 per cent than last year's comparable total of 4,234,513.

EXPORTS

May shipments of iron ore for export advanced to 3,791,966 tons from 3,074,429 a year earlier, and January-May export shipments climbed to 8,212,502 tons from 5,718,681 a year ago. The month's shipments to Canadian consumers fell to 411,199 tons from 432,170, while five-month shipments rose to 1,738,106 tons from 1,318,694.

May shipments were larger than a year earlier from mines in Quebec and British Columbia and smaller from mines in Newfoundland and Ontario. The month's totals were: Newfoundland, 1,300,540 tons (1,353,874 in May last year); Quebec, 1,801,779 (1,079,721); Ontario, 913,515 (947,895) and British Columbia, 187,331 (125,109).

CANADA BUILDS CEYLON AIRPORT

The Department of Transport is going to develop an international airport for Ceylon, which will be built under the Colombo Plan. The \$5,500,000 complex for Katunayake Airport, 24 miles northeast of Colombo, has been designed by DOT engineers and architects at the request of the External Aid Office.

FIRST STAGE

The Department of Transport will first strengthen and lengthen the existing 6,000-foot runway to 11,000 feet and construct a taxiway and aircraft apron to accommodate the long-range jets flown by international airlines throughout the Far East. The total cost of this work, together with access roads and other related works, is estimated at \$3,500,000.

SECOND STAGE

The second stage of construction will be a three-storey, air-conditioned terminal building, with a separate "V.I.P." pavilion. The total floor area of the passenger-handling facilities will be about 80,000 square feet, which is roughly equivalent to that of the Ottawa terminal.

Both projects will be carried out under Canadian general contractors, with supervision by the Department of Transport and the Foundation of Canada Engineering. A DOT engineer in the role of project manager is now in Ceylon carrying out preliminary studies prior to contract tender call.