

Canada-US join in ocean drilling

Canada will work with the United States in a scientific program of ocean drilling to probe deep beneath the sea floor, it was announced recently by Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Jean Chrétien. The announcement follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two countries, confirming Canadian participation in the planning of the United States National Science Foundation's Ocean Drilling Program (ODP).

"Canada stands to gain a great deal of valuable geoscientific information by participating in ODP," said Mr. Chrétien, "especially when you consider the length of our coastlines, our extensive continental shelves, and our increasing interests offshore."

Mr. Chrétien called the agreement "a very sound investment", with Canada contributing \$250 000 to the planning phase of the program over the next year. The US National Science Foundation will spend



Jean Chrétien

\$28.8 million over the same period, most of which will cover the refitting of a vessel to carry out the drilling program.

The minister pointed out that Britain was participating in the planning of ODP, and that Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and France also were expected to join the project. It is anticipated that the drilling phase will begin in the fall of 1984 and that the drillship will be working in the Labrador Sea during 1985. The knowledge gained here will contribute to an understanding of the geology of the Labrador Sea and help Canada in the search for hydrocarbons off Canada's east coast.

Plans will be developed for research off Canada's west coast in subsequent years to provide Canada with more detailed knowledge of seabed mineral deposits such as those recently found off Vancouver Island.

ODP is the successor to the highly acclaimed Deep Sea Drilling Project which was started by the United States National Science Foundation in 1968, with the participation of several other countries.

Potential for export

The Export Development Corporation (EDC) has recently approved export credits insurance and export financing transactions supporting potential export sales of \$304.7 million to 41 countries.

Export sales which will result if sales are finalized will create or maintain an estimated 10 500 person-years of employment in Canada and will involve 111 exporters and major suppliers.

The transactions involve potash; industrial machinery; automobile products; agricultural products; forest products; the engineering, manufacturing, installation and testing of telecommunications equipment; aircraft, product support services and spare parts; a drill rig for mineral exploration; radio telecommunications equipment and installation; the design and construction of a ten-storey office building; a truck-mounted drilling rig; goods and services for the expansion of a copper concentrator, and the turnkey supply of a professional training centre including construction and road equipment.

UN environment study urged

Federal Environment Minister Charles Caccia has called on the United Nations to create an international task force on the global environment.

While the study group would probably report in two years, Mr. Caccia suggested that there should also be a permanent world environmental protection board.

As things are, he told the UN, nations which are polluted by others "have no more effective recourse than moral indignation".

In what is believed to be the first speech by a Canadian environment minister to the UN, Mr. Caccia backed the idea of a special UN committee to report on the global environment into the next century.

UN Environment Program director Mostafa Tolba said he would like to see the committee created next year. He said there have already been promises of funds from Canada, Japan, Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands and possibly India. Canada has offered \$250 000 for the project, which is expected to cost up to \$3.5 million.

In his speech to the UN's economic committee, Mr. Caccia made a four-point proposal which the global study group could recommend:



Charles Caccia at the United Nations.

- the creation of an international environment board which could judge if pollution is having global effects and could use the UN's moral weight to ask countries to stop polluting each other;
- the setting up of regular international meetings on global environmental issues;
- the strengthening of the Global Environmental Monitoring System to provide more information on the biosphere; and
- asking nations to adopt environmental bills of rights which would help governments shape laws to protect the environment.

Mr. Caccia said the world is facing increasing environmental deterioration and "the survival of humanity hinges on initiatives of this kind".

Task force reviews technology

A new six-member task force has been created to review all of the federal government's internal science and technology activities and will report in six months to Donald Johnston, federal Minister of State for Science and Technology and Economic Development.

The task force is composed of three representatives from private industry, two from universities and one labour union representative. The task force, under the chairmanship of Douglas Wright, president of the University of Waterloo, will review the government's internal research and development programs and policies and make recommendations directly to Mr. Johnston, who is chairman of a Cabinet subcommittee on science and technology.