

News briefs

Petro-Canada will take up a 5 per cent interest in a consortium exploring for oil in a 125,000-acre block in the Norwegian area of the North Sea. The offer must be ratified by the Norwegian Government. Exploratory drilling would probably begin later this year, once the final approvals are granted. Other members of the proposed consortium would be Statoil, the Norwegian state oil company, 50 per cent; Union Oil Co. of California, 30 per cent; Norsk Hydro, Norway's electric utility, 10 per cent; and Deminex, a West German oil company, 5 per cent.

Travellers will continue to enjoy a suspension of Ontario's accommodation tax despite the October 8 return to 7 per cent sales tax for other items and services. Under the suspension, accommodation and meals offered on the American Plan are not subject to the current 7 per cent provincial sales tax. Continuing until December 31, 1979, the tax break, coupled with Canada's devalued dollar, will provide both domestic and foreign tourists with an attractive incentive to visit Ontario.

A group of investors headed by Marcel Dionne of the Los Angeles Kings hockey team is planning to invest about \$25 million in commercial and industrial ventures in Niagara Falls and Welland, Ontario.

Canada and Australia have agreed to refrain from trying to increase their shares of the international wheat market by undercutting each other's prices. Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board Otto Lang also said he had assured U.S. Agriculture Secretary Robert Bergland that Canada would not undermine any U.S. actions to bolster domestic wheat prices. The United States accounts for about 43 per cent of the international wheat trade, Canada 21 per cent, Australia 14 per cent and Argentina 9 per cent.

Canada Weekly is published by the Information Services Division, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, K1A 0G2.

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Cette publication existe également en français sous le titre Hebdo Canada.

Algunos números de esta publicación aparecen también en español bajo el título Noticiero de Canadá.

Latin American political prisoners, Moslem refugees from Burma and Bolivian flood victims will be the beneficiaries of a \$191,968-federal grant to the Red Cross, the Canadian International Development Agency announced recently.

A special U.S./Canada meeting was held in Ottawa in February on the subject of consensus in metric conversion. Highlighted were legislation, co-operation between customer and supplier sectors such as the railways, rationalized hard metric sizes for prepackaged products, consumer groups, construction industries, manufacturers and suppliers of motor vehicles, management and labour, standards and steering committee meetings.

The Alberta government predicted in its quarterly financial summary a surplus of more than \$4.5 billion by the end of the 1979 fiscal year March 31. Resource revenue contributed just more than \$2 billion to provincial coffers in the 1977-78 fiscal year.

France, in co-operation with Manitoba, is once again offering a four-week summer course for 21 Manitoba teachers of French. The program is part of the France/Canada Cultural Agreement. The courses will be held in Quimper, France, from July 2 to 28. France offers a bursary of 2000 FF (\$572) to each of the chosen candidates to cover tuition fees and allowances in France. The provincial government will assume travel expenses.

The provincial government of Alberta has approved an expansion of the Great Canadian Oil Sands Ltd. plant in the Athabasca oil sands which is estimated at \$185 million.

Funds totalling \$304,760 will be available to independent unions not affiliated to a central labour organization and to individuals under the federal Department of Labour's education program for 1979-80. The continuing program is designed primarily to enable present and potential union officers, and members of labour organizations, to learn about the labour movement and its relation to Canada's economic, political and social framework.

New postal rates became effective April 2. The new rate for a first class letter increased from 14 cents to 17 cents and from 30 cents to 35 cents for first class air mail letters overseas, excluding the U.S.

Imperial Life Assurance Company of Canada plans to make a tender offer for Continental American Life Insurance Co.

of New York of \$33 a share. The offer is conditional on Imperial's receiving at least 50.1 per cent of the total shares outstanding at a minimum cost of about \$13.2 million.

Canada will lend Pakistan up to \$10 million interest free to finance half of Pakistan's cost of buying 30 locomotives and parts to be built by the diesel division of GMAC Limited of Oshawa, Ontario.

The National Museums corporation has awarded \$475,000 to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic to help with renovations of historic buildings on the waterfront in Halifax and Lunenburg.

Sales of North American-built cars in Canada in February were a record 66,523 units, up 6.1 per cent from 58,930 in February 1978, according to figures released by the auto makers.

The Federal Government will spend \$9 million in a four-year program to support the development of Telidon, a two-way TV system, a spokesman for the Department of Communications announced recently.

A loan by Canada's Export Development Corporation to Contransimex, Bucharest, Romania, will support the \$1,018,735-sale of mechanized mail-sorting equipment, related spare parts and services to the Romanian state enterprise. The sale should generate 40 man-years of employment at Canapost and one other Ontario supplier.

Job creation in Canada will grow substantially in the next three months, mostly in the mining and construction industry, according to a survey of 940 companies conducted by Manpower Temporary Services in Toronto. The survey discovered that 30.5 per cent of companies contacted expected to increase their staff between April and June, while only 4.7 per cent expected layoffs.

CAE Electronics Ltd. of Montreal has been awarded a contract valued at about \$32 million to supply five flight simulators for the *Tornado* multi-role combat aircraft for West Germany.

Gilles Villeneuve of Berthierville, Quebec, led from start to finish to win the U.S. Grand Prix (West) auto race recently in his Ferrari 312T4. The race covers 80 laps of the 3.4-kilometre (2.02 mile) course through the streets of Long Beach, California, the fourth Formula One race in this year's world championship series. The track has 12 turns including two hairpin bends.