

## Communications network planned

The federal government will use Telesat Canada's *Anik B* satellite to provide communications services between some government offices in Canada.

The field trial will start in late 1981 with completion scheduled for September 1982. It will test the application of the most up-to-date satellite technology to government operations. The Government Telecommunications Agency will connect an experimental communications network already established within the Department of Communications.

The field trial will evaluate electronic distribution of documents and messages and will test satellite services for voice, computer communications and teleconferencing. The trial will also involve the Atmospheric Environment Service (AES) of Environment Canada and the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.

AES will evaluate the cost-effectiveness of transmitting weather maps between weather centres and of providing access by satellite to data stored in a central computer. The CEIC will evaluate the effectiveness of using satellite systems for improving its own administrative communications and its service to the public.

Earth stations, to be used in the system, will be erected in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Kitchener (Ontario) and Bathurst (New Brunswick).

## Home computer for blind

A Quebec inventor is working on a home computer terminal that will allow blind Canadians to gain access to the same kind of information banks that will be available to the rest of Canadians in the next decade.

Roland Galarneau of Hull is developing a computer terminal with a braille printer that will allow blind people to receive information from basic sources such as dictionaries and from data banks such as Telidon, which includes news stories, advertising and educational services.

His Microbraille terminal is the culmination of 20 years of work on various computer systems. Galarneau, who has just two per cent vision, developed a high speed computer in the 1960s to convert English and French into braille.

Galarneau's company — Services Converti-Braille-Cypihot-Galarneau recently received \$250,000 in federal grants to develop the Microbraille terminal. The terminal resembles a regular computer terminal without the viewing screen. Connected by phone to a data bank, it prints the same information in braille — at about one line per second.

Ten such terminals are being tested by blind people in Ottawa and five Quebec cities. If the trial is a success Galarneau hopes to begin production next year, using as many handicapped workers as possible.

## Funds help refugees adapt

The federal government will provide an additional \$4.3 million to help integrate Indochinese refugees into Canadian society as quickly as possible. The funds will assist 60,000 Indochinese refugees already in Canada and another 10,000 this year.

Of the total announced \$3.37 million is allocated to fulfilling the basic needs of newly-arrived refugees until their incomes can do this.

The remaining \$927,000 will fund the activities of various voluntary community organizations, contracted by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission to provide such services as reception, information, referral, translation, interpretation, orientation and counselling under the immigrant settlement and adaptation program.

More than 120 voluntary organizations are currently under contract to provide such community-based settlement services.

During the 1981-82 fiscal year, \$8.86 million has been approved for the adjustment assistance program, and \$1.67 million has been allocated to the immigrant settlement and adaptation program. Under the Indochinese refugees settlement grants program, which began in February 1980 and ended in March 1981, voluntary organizations across Canada were given \$710,000 in grants.

## Austrian minister visits Canada

Austrian Foreign Minister Willibald Pahr paid a visit to Canada, October 4-6.

Dr. Pahr met first with Austrian officials in Toronto before travelling to Ottawa where he met first with Secretary of State for External Affairs Mark MacGuigan and later with Minister of Trade Edward Lumley.

Drs. MacGuigan and Pahr discussed bilateral issues in addition to the North-South dialogue and the Middle East. The two also attended a working luncheon.

During their talks, Mr. Lumley and Dr. Pahr discussed trade and economic bilateral relations which they said were very good.

Dr. Pahr later toured Ottawa, visiting the Currency Museum and the National Gallery of Canada. The Austrian minister also visited with members of the Canadian Austrian community at the Maple Leaf Almrausch Club outside Ottawa.



(From left to right): Secretary of State for External Affairs MacGuigan, Austrian Foreign Minister Pahr, Austrian Ambassador August Tarter and Finance Minister MacEachen.