

THAILAND

Two representatives of a Canadian firm that has developed an unconventional fuel alcohol plant spent a week in Bangkok in February exploring market possibilities. Dr. John Hughes and Mr. Kirk Lawrie of Stanfer Manufacturing Limited of Montreal, Quebec, held discussions with Khun Tanoo Vicharangsarn, secretary of the Power Alcohol Committee in the Ministry of Industry, and other senior Thai officials, and potential investors.

Stanfer Manufacturing's new technology substantially reduces the conversion time from raw materials to alcohol. Regular machinery requires 72 hours for this process, but the Stanfer method takes only 12 hours. The key is a non-enzymatic method.

Much of the delay in establishing an alcohol factory in Thailand has been caused by the uncertain supply of enzyme chemical from abroad. By adopting the Stanfer method Thailand could be self-sufficient in all process and raw materials for the production of alcohol. Dr. Hughes estimates that one litre of alcohol could be produced for 25 cents worth of cassava, which would be the raw material used in Thailand.

As well as reducing the conversion time, the non-enzymatic method reduces the capital outlay required. A factory with an annual capacity of 38 million litres would cost about \$17.75 million and would require only 1,000 square metres in area, thus reducing the capital cost by 30 per cent to 40 per cent from methods presently in use. In addition, the start-up time for a Stanfer factory is only six months to eight months, as opposed to 18 months to 24 months for the conventional method.

A full-scale technical seminar will be organized, with the support of the Canadian Embassy, for local business and government officials when Dr. Hughes and Mr. Lawrie return to Thailand.

*

In early February the first of four buildings which will house the Christian Home of Education for the Blind near Khon Kaen, north-eastern Thailand, was dedicated by the Canadian Ambassador to Thailand, Fred Bild, on behalf of the donor governments and organizations.

The school for the blind is co-ordinated by Khun Prayat Punongong and is not only a remarkable endeavour because of its success to date but all the more so because Khun Prayat himself is

blind. His dedication to the cause of improving the well-being and education of blind children has caught the interest of national and international organizations and also foreign governments.

The project began when four acres of land were donated by Thai businessmen five kilometres outside Khon Kaen. A gift from the Christoffel Blindenmission of Germany has provided funds for the construction of the first of four units, which will eventually provide accommodation and training for more than 100 blind children plus staff.

The Canadian Embassy, through its Mission Assisted Fund (MAF) program, has provided funds for land fill, fencing, electrical and water installation along with an access road. A Khon Kaen university architect donated his services in preparing the plans for the school complex.

Prior to the commencement of the new facility, the Canadian province of Alberta's international assistance program assisted in providing classroom, dining, and craft centre facilities to serve students at the present school. With this aid Khun Prayat has been able to teach blind people to read and write in Braille and to learn trades for their future support.

Other supporters and helpers include the Bangkok Association for the Blind, the Foundation for the Blind in Australia, World Vision of Thailand, the Evangelical Church of Bangkok, a Swedish missionary, Mr. George Heckendorf, director of the Christian Bible School, and Mrs. Rose Lim, the director of orphanages in Bangret (Nonburi) and Mae Sai (Chiang Rai).

Films from the National Film Board (NFB) of Canada are being featured exclusively in a documentary film series on Bangkok's Channel 9 television station. The 30-minute-long program, screened at 10.00 a.m. on Saturdays, is produced and hosted by noted Thai film star and producer Khun Patravadi Sritairatana. She has chosen films from light animation to serious and probing documentaries using varied techniques, including even computer animation.

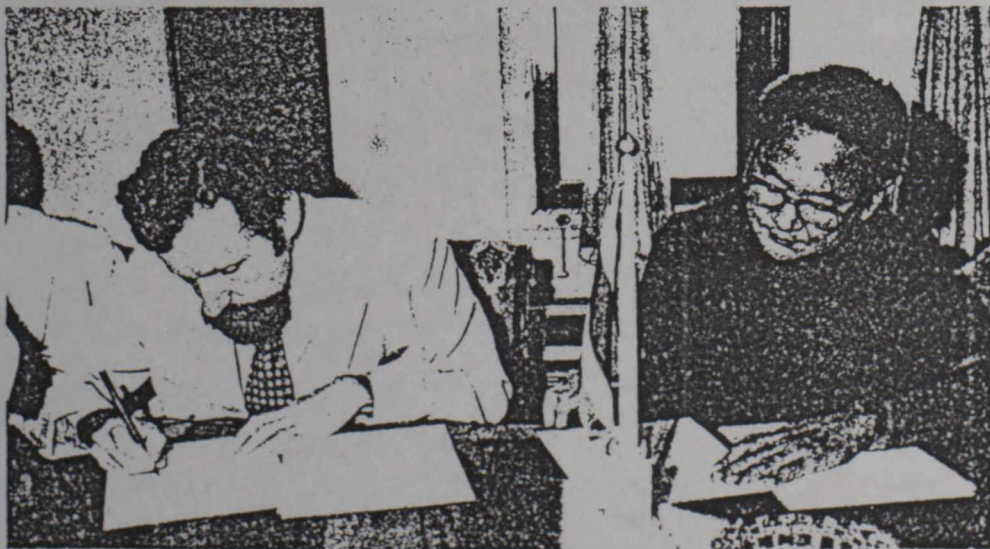
The NFB is an independent film production and distribution organization funded by the Canadian government to produce films about Canada and about our world as seen from a Canadian perspective.

*

Canadian Ambassador Fred Bild and Finance Minister Dr. Amnuay Viravan recently signed an agreement increasing Canada's contribution to the Provincial Electrical Authority's (PEA) accelerated rural electrification program by \$4 million. The total Canadian contribution to this program in Thailand since its inception now becomes \$14 million.

These additional funds made available by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will be used to purchase from Canada approximately 1,500 tonnes of aluminium ingots that will be transformed in Thailand into electrical cable for PEA's rural electrification program.

The total Canadian contribution of 7,300 tonnes of aluminum provides PEA with electric conductor cable required in its electrification program aimed principally at the 16 north-eastern provinces.



Thailand's Finance Minister Dr. Amnuay Viravan and Canadian Ambassador Fred Bild sign an agreement increasing Canada's contribution to the accelerated rural electrification program in Thailand.