
Canada broadens role in international energy research

Trees, waves, the sun and energy efficiency are the subjects of four new international research agreements signed by Canada on April 12 during the International Energy Agency's (IEA) governing board meeting in Tokyo. This will bring to 14 the number of IEA energy-research projects in which Canada, one of 19 member nations, participates.

The Canadian Forestry Service, a branch of Environment Canada, will take part in the "Forestry for Energy" or biomass undertaking with Sweden, the United States, Belgium, and Ireland.

A wave-energy project, led by the Japanese, will evaluate the performance of a barge-like float, the "Kaimei", which converts wave power into electrical energy, and, at the same time, acts as a floating breakwater. The National Research Council will supply instrumentation and data analysis to determine the actual energy content of the waves approaching the barge.

Canada and Britain will join Austria, Belgium, Denmark, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S. in three solar research tasks: the testing of solar collectors, the development of a handbook and instrumentation package on solar radiation and the use of existing meteorological information for solar energy applications.

Energy cascading — the use of currently wasted energy, usually heat, to generate electricity — is the fourth project to which Canada is newly committed.

Canada is already participating in ten IEA research agreements — four on coal, two on fusion and one each in the areas of nuclear safety, wind, hydrogen and building systems.

Communications contract

A \$23-million contract for the construction of transmission facilities for the Pan African telecommunications network (PANAFTEL), serving Senegal, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger and Benin, was signed April 13 by the Canadian International Development Agency and Elinca Communications Ltd. of Ottawa.

PANAFTEL, a large-scale project

costing an estimated \$150 million, is designed to improve communications among African countries by setting up a continental radio-relay telecommunications system. This system, which was developed over several years, calls initially for the construction of a 20,000-kilometre transmission corridor and 18 international switching centres to be located throughout the African continent. It should be completed in 1980. More than half of the \$23 million will be spent on equipment manufactured in Canada; the remainder will be for installation, engineering, administration and transportation costs as well as for the cost of support for the construction teams.

Film industry examined

Secretary of State John Roberts recently announced new government proposals to support the Canadian film industry. He told the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Film and Assistance to the Arts that, beginning immediately, the National Film Board would annually contract-out 75 per cent of the dollar volume of sponsored film contracts from federal departments and agencies in excess of \$4 million. The Board currently contracts-out 50 per cent of its total sponsored film volume.

A sponsor program review board comprising representatives from private industry and the NFB is being established to review and evaluate the Board's tendering and contracting procedures. The NFB will also ensure private producers competitive access to federal departments and agencies and will provide the private industry with information about departments' plans for film projects.

The NFB plans to develop a new pricing structure to support the use of all Canadian audio-visual material. Beginning this year, the Board will redirect its expenditures on goods and services to increase substantially the proportion spent on contracting or commissioning complete film projects from private film production companies. The Secretary of State will evaluate the result next year.

The Film Board will also produce an annual report, available to all interested parties, on its expenditures in the private sector, listing production companies receiving contracts to produce film.

Mr. Roberts told the committee that Canadian Broadcasting Corporation presi-

dent Al Johnson had agreed to a review of the corporation's "make or buy" policy to determine ways of increasing the amount of films bought rather than made and to review the number of co-productions with private producers.

The Minister also plans to raise with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, the problem of domination in Canadian schools of foreign educational films and to develop a proposal for a subsidy program to encourage increased production and use of educational materials made by Canadian film-makers.

A still-photography centre will be established as soon as the availability of funds permits. The Chairman of the NFB, now carrying out a four-month study, will make recommendations to the Minister concerning the location and costs of such a centre.

Investment, distribution to increase

Mr. Roberts announced that the NFB would continue to make feature films and that the Canadian Film Development Corporation would receive \$1 million in additional funds this year, some of which would be available for feature films made especially for first release on television. He urged the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association and the Motion Picture Association of America to take steps immediately to stimulate investment in Canadian feature films by their members.

On the subject of distribution and access of Canadian feature films the Minister announced that the CFDC would extend its parallel distribution network, now operating in Quebec as the Nouveau Réseau, to the rest of Canada. He said he had discussed the distribution problem with U.S. distributors and expected them to find methods to provide better distribution of Canadian films at home and abroad. He assured the committee that the distributors' response to this and the question of financing, would be studied with considerable attention over the next 12 months.

The Minister also stated his intention to renegotiate an improved voluntary quota for the showing of domestic films in Canadian cinemas.

Film co-production agreements will be examined, as will the question of whether expatriate Canadian citizens and landed immigrants should qualify in the same way as Canadian residents under the terms of the treaties.