

three-month trial conducted at oil-exploration camps in the MacKenzie Delta. Following this success, an initial prototype of the small AniKom terminal was installed to supply voice and teletype service to the PanArctic Oils Company's base at Rea Point, at 75 degrees North.

In late 1974, Telesat placed an order with a Canadian supplier for 15 AniKom stations for delivery in autumn.

Commercial operation of AniKom stations is said to be a world 'first' for Canada in the field of ultra-sophisticated satellite communications.

Canada joins European Conference of Ministers of Transport

Canada has joined the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) as an associate member, Transport Minister Jean Marchand announced recently.

ECMT membership will provide Canada with information on various aspects of transportation such as safety, pollution, education and research.

The move also means that Mr. Marchand becomes a member of the Council of Ministers, the senior authority of the Conference.

Canada, which has been an observer and informal participant in ECMT for several years, assumes the new status at the next meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark in June.

The purpose of the ECMT is to encourage and develop transportation among the countries of Europe. Canada is particularly interested in road safety, urban transportation and economic research in transportation.

The Conference now has 21 member nations; Canada is the third associate member, joining Japan and Australia.

Federal boost for fisheries

An amount of \$50 million will be used to strengthen Canada's fishing industry and will, for the first time, include direct assistance to fishermen, Roméo LeBlanc, the Minister of State for Fisheries, announced recently.

The new program, effective May 1, succeeds the short-term assistance measures in force since last January.

The plan for groundfish will provide

support of up to \$28 million for in-shore and offshore vessel owners and up to \$12 million in conditional grants to processing plants. Assistance to processors would be conditional upon their maintaining prices to fishermen which were in effect last July 1. A further \$10 million, set aside to help solve marketing problems, will help deficiency payments, inventory financing, and fish processing for use in food-aid programs abroad.

Task force study

The program is the first step being taken as a result of recommendations made by a task force set up by the Minister last autumn to study the troubled industry.

"Some of these recommendations call for better management of stocks and a reduction of effort in overcrowded fisheries, both national and international; fleet rationalization and development; entry control; an increase in efficiency in both primary and secondary industries; more orderly marketing; and a stabilization plan that would replace the current bridging program as soon as possible," Mr. LeBlanc said.

One of the recommendations — that there should be no increase in the number of vessels fishing groundfish species and stocks, which are at present fully exploited, will be implemented immediately.

The Minister said that the general economic downturn, declining catches, rising costs, and market slowdown had all contributed to the present ailing state of the industry. Moreover, there have been recurring crises, although less serious than the current one, during the postwar period.

"The groundfish-assistance aspect of this program applies to selective fisheries experiencing difficulties on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Groundfish provides nearly half the total value of our Atlantic fish production, and this is the industry that is in the most serious trouble at the moment," he added.

Almost 75 per cent of all Atlantic region communities (Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and parts of Quebec) are involved in commercial fishing. More than 20 per cent of these communities rely on fishing and fish-processing as their sole economic base.

Astrophysics institute named after Nobel prize winner

The National Research Council of Canada has announced the formation of the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics.

The new Institute is named in honour of Dr. Gerhard Herzberg, Canadian Nobel prize winner for chemistry in 1971 and a recognized international leader in the field of molecular spectroscopy. Dr. Herzberg occupies the position of NRC Distinguished Research Scientist, a position created for him when he retired in 1969 as Director of NRC's Division of Pure Physics.

Dr. W.G. Schneider, NRC President, said that it was the Council's aim to develop in Canada a centre of scientific excellence in astrophysics. Recent developments in this field, he said, had opened up exciting new challenges together with high promise of new scientific advances. For Canadian astronomers this promise was further enhanced by the future availability of the large optical telescope now under construction on Mauna Kea in Hawaii by Canada, France and Hawaii; the rapid developments in radio-astronomy, infrared, X-ray, and gamma ray astronomy; and the eventual accessibility to orbiting space telescopes.

Average house price up

The average price of a house sold through Multiple Listing Service (MLS) in Canada increased 9.2 per cent to \$43,785 during the first three months of this year from that of a year earlier, according to a survey by the Canadian Real Estate Association.

In the first quarter of 1974 the average price rose 40 per cent over the price in the first quarter of 1973. At the end of 1974 the average price of a house sold through MLS was \$41,577. At the end of the first quarter of 1974 the average price was \$40,067.

A survey by computer of all real estate transactions processed through the Metropolitan Toronto registry shows that the average price of a house in Toronto during the first quarter of 1975 increased 19 per cent over that of a year earlier.