

Italian and Canadian Defence Ministers meet in Rome



Barney Danson, Minister of National Defence (left), on a visit to Italy from December 12 to 16 holds discussions with his Italian counterpart, Attilio Ruffini (right). The two ministers conferred, among other things, on matters related to NATO and defence procurements. Mr. Danson was received briefly by Prime Minister Andreotti and he met also with Italian Transport Minister Vito Lattanzio. Besides Rome, Mr. Danson visited Florence, Turin, Venice and the Friuli region, where he was warmly greeted by the authorities and members of the community in recognition of the aid Canada provided to that region after a major earthquake in 1976.

Anti-inflation measures to ease off

Amendments to the Anti-Inflation Act to provide for an orderly withdrawal of prices and income controls were introduced in the House of Commons on December 19 by Finance Minister Jean Chrétien. Included in the bill are amendments introduced last summer in Bill C-59 which was not passed before adjournment of the session.

The amendments introduced for the first time are intended to provide for a smooth transition as controls are withdrawn beginning April 14. The first of these amends the act to ensure that parties file information through their last reporting period, since 75 per cent of the companies and 64 per cent of the employees covered do not emerge from the program until the last quarter of 1978. The amendment enables the AIB, the Administrator and the Anti-Inflation Appeal Tribunal to continue in office as long as

necessary to ensure compliance with the act. It does not extend the actual period of controls beyond December 31, 1978.

This amendment also disallows the "AIB clauses" that have been written into contracts during the period of controls. These clauses, which entitle groups to higher compensation upon termination of the program, are counter to the objectives of the anti-inflation program and are considered unfair to those groups whose compensation plans do not include such conditions.

The other new amendment recommended to the House clarifies the definition of "compensation plan", which had been subject to differing interpretations between the English and French versions.

Amendments being reintroduced will:

- provide a maximum of 30 days for parties to request referral to the Administrator after receiving notice of an AIB recommendation;
- clarify the authority of the Adminis-

trator to issue orders dealing with past, current or expected contraventions of the guidelines;

- give the Cabinet 30 days to deal with petitions from parties affected by orders of the Administrator;
- deem compensation agreements to have been amended in line with recommendations of the AIB or order of the Administrator to prevent groups from receiving the higher level of compensation as soon as controls no longer apply;
- establish an effective date of December 16, 1975, for an Order-in-Council that brought under mandatory controls various groups which bargain in association.

Nuclear waste sites now identifiable

Scientists from the University of Toronto have demonstrated a new technique for radiocarbon measurement, developed from a discovery last spring at the University of Rochester. The technique, which was confirmed independently at Hamilton's McMaster University, revolutionizes dating methodology by enabling the use of samples 1,000 times smaller than those studied in the past.

The breakthrough will permit testing of minuscule quantities of carbon from groundwater samples to determine encasement capabilities of underground storage areas for nuclear wastes.

Professor A.E. Litherland of the University of Toronto's Physics Department says, "The new method, which in my mind is a revolution in carbon-dating, has very important implications for archaeology, climatology and the authentication of art objects. The success is a tribute to research in nuclear physics by many scientists."

"Development of the technique attests to the value of the pure research which often has application far beyond the original area of study."

The testing compared findings of the old and new dating techniques on four geological samples with ages ranging from 200 to 40,000 years provided by the U.S. Geological Survey. The samples were taken from volcanoes and ice-age sites in North America.

Carbon-dating in the past required the use of relatively large samples of material. Under the old method, samples were converted into carbon dioxide and measured for radioactivity by geiger counter. Since