

GUEST STUDENT FROM GERMANY

Gerd Kohler, an 18-year-old student from Lahr, Germany, is in Canada as the guest of Canadian students and their parents.

The idea of bringing a German student to Canada originated with the 100-member band of Ottawa's Laurentian High School, which began a European tour at Amsterdam last June. In mid-July the band was in Lahr, where its members met Gerd, the boy who will be sharing this school year with them.

He was flown to Canada late in August aboard a Canadian Forces aircraft.

Gerd will receive a year's education, room and board and a Canadian winter wardrobe. He will also have his spending money provided by the boys and girls of the band, who raised it by selling tickets to the concerts they presented during their European tour.

(See *Canadian Weekly Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 12, dated March 19, 1969, P. 3.)



Major-General R.J. Lane, Commander of Canada's No. 1 Air Division in Lahr, Germany, congratulates German student Gerd Kohler.

CANADIAN MAPLES THRIVE IN U.K.

Although sugar-maple trees are uncommon in Britain, 100 of them are thriving on a hillside in Richmond Park near London. The trees, which were flown over last October as six to eight-foot saplings, had been grown by the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, and presented to mark the hundredth anniversary of Ontario's official representation in Britain.

EYE DAMAGE FROM LASER LIGHT

The Minister of National Health and Welfare, John Munro, has warned high-school teachers and students of the possibility of health hazards when using laser equipment in classroom demonstrations and experiments. He called attention to the fact that laser light could cause serious eye damage. The Minister was commenting on a bill, entitled "Radiation Emitting Devices", which is mentioned for presentation to Parliament in the legislation list tabled by the Prime Minister.

"A great many laser devices," Mr. Munro said, "are currently being promoted for classroom work and their uses are being enthusiastically explored by science students. They are exciting scientific playthings as well as important technical tools. One of their attractions is that they are easy to make and relatively cheap."

The Minister warned that these devices could be a serious hazard if used carelessly. The danger, he pointed out, was insidious since the victim may feel no discomfort at the time. In several cases a laser beam striking the eye has scarred the retina and caused an effective loss of vision. Even reflections from the beam can be dangerous. It has been reported that a beam reflected from a glass bottle caused an

experimenter to suffer a permanent loss of visual acuity. Early this year, a Canadian student required medical treatment after operating a laser that he had built for a science competition exhibition.

The proposed Radiation Emitting Devices bill is intended to ensure proper safety standards in the design and construction of X-ray, microwave and laser devices sold or imported into Canada. The Minister emphasized that equipment standards were only one aspect of the problem, and in the case of lasers, much of the responsibility for safety would still rest with the user.

ELECTRIC BRONCO

Calgary Power Limited recently acquired an electric automobile for showing at fairs and exhibitions. A converted four-door *Renault*, their "Electricar" is driven by a motor powered by 20 six-volt lead-cobalt-acid batteries.

The car has a range of 120 miles and a top speed of 60 m.p.h. Charging time for the batteries, which have a guaranteed life of 50,000 miles, is six to eight hours, though they can be restored to peak power in 46 minutes with special equipment. The charging is performed automatically when the batteries are plugged into a 240-volt receptacle.

Calgary Power made it clear at the auto's unveiling that they do not think the day of the electric car has yet arrived. Said executive vice-president M.M. Williams: "We are not going into the automobile business, nor are we suggesting that people rush out and buy electric cars. Our purchase is part of a continuing sales research and development program."

He added that the electric car could help to alleviate two major urban problems - noise and air pollution.