

GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT HUNTING

Aircraft manufacturers are being invited by the Federal Government to submit designs for a new, long-range patrol plane, equipped with a modern maritime-surveillance system to replace the existing fleet of 32 *Argus* aircraft that have been in service since the mid-1950s.

The new aircraft will serve a variety of Canadian requirements, both military and civil, in the late 1970s and '80s: besides military surveillance of Canada's east and west ocean approaches, and the Arctic, they will be used by the Ministry of Transport; the Departments of the Environment; Energy, Mines and Resources; and Indian Affairs and Northern Development. All rely on surveillance of Canada's coastal waters for data on ice formations, detection and assessment of marine pollution, monitoring of mineral exploration and compliance with fisheries regulations.

The Government is, in fact, looking for versatile aircraft that can be adapted readily to new requirements.

Builders of long-range commercial transports are also invited to submit proposals and, following an evaluation of responses, the Defence and Supply Departments will enter into the contract-definition stage. A procurement contract will probably not be awarded before early 1974, with delivery date expected to take place in 1976.

Owing to advances in technology during the past 20 years, fewer than the current holding of *Argus* aircraft will be required. The exact number of new aircraft to be procured, however, will not be determined until after a technical assessment of proposals has been made.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CHIEF

Donald MacDonald, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, was elected recently as the first non-European president of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions at the World Congress of this organization in London.

Mr. MacDonald, who headed the Canadian delegation to the five-day international meeting, has been a strong advocate of the ICFTU since the organization was founded in 1949. He was elected a vice-president in 1969 for a three-year term by unanimous acclamation of the Executive Board, of which he is a member – the first Canadian to hold this office.

The ICFTU, which represents 60 million workers in almost 100 countries, has its headquarters in Brussels. The CLC is an energetic member of the ICFTU, which carries out a vigorous program of the international trade union movement. Organizing and assisting in the formation of trade unions where they do not exist, and trade union education are two of the many areas in which the ICFTU is active.

NATIONAL AID PLANNED FOR DEAF

A federal welfare grant of \$50,770 and formation of a national consortium indicate advances in plans to form a national association for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. The grant, announced last month by Health and Welfare Minister John Munro, will be received by the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled, which will administer funds, hire staff and supply office space and working materials. Existing organizations for the deaf and hard-of-hearing are involved in the initial activities to be co-ordinated by a project director. The project will survey current programs in social services, vocational rehabilitation services, electronic communication, interpreters, training of professionals and others.

The project will be carried out in four stages, during which professional groups (medicine, social work, psychology, audiology, education) will be invited to attend a national consultation with lay and consumer groups, government and regional bodies and others.

It has been estimated that up to 873,600 Canadians are deaf or suffer from hearing defects.

WATERFOWL AND CROPS

Mr. Jack Davis, Minister of the Environment, and Mr. H.A. (Bud) Olson, Minister of Agriculture, have announced that the Federal Government is prepared to provide \$5 million for a five-year federal-provincial program designed to reduce the problem of damage to Prairie crops by waterfowl.

If accepted by the provinces, the plan will go into effect this year. Damage to grain crops during the five-year period of the agreement could be reduced substantially by "lure" crops, and the remaining damage would be covered by a form of crop insurance to farmers, which would be negotiated with the provinces. If agreements are reached, the three Prairie Provinces – Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba – would match the federal contribution to this program.

In the first year, the Federal Government would put up \$1 million and similar amounts would be made available for the following four years of the plan.

Mr. Davis and Mr. Olson said that the Federal Government had been concerned about the severity of the problem of crop-depredation on the Prairies, which are the major breeding grounds for ducks in North America. The annual harm caused by ducks in trampling swaths and eating unharvested grain has been estimated to average \$6 million. While the Federal Government is not legally responsible for damage caused by migratory birds, the Ministers point out that many Canadians who enjoy hunting water birds in that area would not want to see waterfowl populations seriously diminished in order to reduce economic hardships suffered by farmers whose grain is spoiled by ducks.