
Plans under way for re-entry of "Skylab" satellite

In the event that the U.S. *Skylab* space station plunges to Canadian territory later this year, Emergency Planning Canada has begun discussing contingency plans with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Departments of Defence, Communications, Justice and External Affairs, and provincial governments. The U.S. Government cannot predict where the satellite will fall, but some fragments, many weighing hundreds of kilograms, could hit Canadian soil.

Unlike the U.S.S.R.'s *Cosmos 954* satellite, which broke up over western and northern Canada a year ago, *Skylab* is not nuclear-powered.

"The U.S. has said it would assume responsibility for any damage caused and External Affairs and Justice are looking at the legal implications posed by that possibility," said a spokesman for the emergency agency.

As a signatory of the Space Liability Convention and the Outer Space Treaty, the U.S. is liable to pay for any damage caused by its space objects.

Skylab weighs about 76 tonnes and is 29 metres long — about the size of a three-bedroom bungalow — and is expected to re-enter the atmosphere between April this year and mid-1980.

Trade figures — December 1978

Canada had a seasonally-adjusted merchandise trade surplus of \$129 million in December, compared with an upward revised November surplus of \$423 million, reports Statistics Canada.

Exports declined 2.5 per cent to \$4.83 billion from \$4.96 billion in November. Imports rose 3.7 per cent to \$4.7 billion from \$4.53 billion.

For the whole year, Canada had a record surplus of \$3.52 billion. This compared with surpluses of \$2.92 billion in 1977 and \$1.34 billion in 1976 and a deficit of \$451 million in 1975.

Exports

Exports in 1978 totalled \$52.3 billion, up 17.2 per cent from \$44.63 billion in 1977, while imports totalled \$48.8 billion, up 17 per cent from \$41.7 billion.

In December the United States pur-

chased 72 per cent of Canada's exports and supplied 71.6 per cent of Canada's imports. Seasonally adjusted exports to the United States totalled \$3.53 billion, up 3.1 per cent from \$3.43 billion in November, while imports from the United States totalled \$3.44 billion, up 7.3 per cent from \$3.21 billion.

Exports to Japan totalled \$280.3 million, down 20.6 per cent from \$353.1 million in November, while exports to Britain totalled \$136.9 million, down 31.1 per cent from \$198.9 million.

Imports

Imports from Japan totalled \$195.2 million, up 13.3 per cent from \$172.2 million, while imports from Britain totalled \$167.3 million, up 5.5 per cent from \$158.6 million.

December exports of wheat dropped to \$108.2 million, from \$249.4 million in November and \$192.2 million in December 1977.

Crude oil exports totalled \$159.5 million, up from \$154.3 million a year earlier; natural gas \$200.1 million, down from \$205.8 million; iron and steel \$122.2 million, up from \$97.5 million, and chemicals \$216.1 million, up from \$147.2 million.

Crude oil imports totalled \$272.8 million, 10.6 percent lower than imports recorded a year earlier.

Exports of manufactured goods totalled \$1.69 billion, up 22.5 per cent from \$1.38 billion a year earlier. Imports of such goods totalled \$2.61 billion, up 23.6 per cent from \$2.11 billion a year earlier.

Seasonal farm workers from abroad

Canada Farm Labour Pools and Canada Employment Centres (Manpower Services), placed more than 100,000 Canadian workers in agricultural jobs in 1978, announced Employment and Immigration Minister Bud Cullen recently.

From Caribbean and Mexico

This year, as in previous years, workers from the Caribbean islands and Mexico will be allowed to enter Canada temporarily to supplement the supply of workers during peak harvest periods. Under the Caribbean and Mexican Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programs, 4,979 workers entered Canada in 1978, less than 5 per cent of the seasonal agricultural work force.

The programs, following a "Canadian first" policy, are dependent on the requirements of each commodity.

Fruit and vegetable farmers and processors will have access to foreign workers from April 1 — November 15; apple producers from March 1 — May 31 and September 1 — November 15; tobacco growers from August 1 — September 15; nursery operators from March 1 — April 30 and September 10 — November 10; and vegetable greenhouse operators from February 15 — August 15.

An agreement signed by both the employer and workers will ensure satisfactory accommodations and working conditions and that foreign workers earn the same wages as Canadians for similar work. If meals are provided by employers, they will be allowed to deduct \$3.25 a day from each worker's wages. Other conditions will remain the same as in 1978.

New housing program approved

The number of people living in co-operative housing in Canada could easily double from the present level of 50,000 to more than 100,000 persons over the next few years.

At a recent press conference to explain the features of a new co-operative housing program, Urban Affairs Minister André Ouellet added: "At the present time, many people in all income categories and in all parts of Canada live in co-operative housing. Most of these projects have been built during the past five years and there is no doubt in our minds that the new program we have worked out will add greatly to this number. The Government of Canada will almost double its financial assistance and discussions with the private lending institutions have borne out their willingness to invest as much as \$500 million in the next few years in support of co-operative housing."

Features of the new program include fewer controls by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation on project development; the opportunity for co-operatives to employ a wider range of procurement techniques based on the group's experience; greater choice between the acquisition of existing developments and the construction of new projects; a significant increase in the federal financial support to co-operative projects and a continued application of the residential rehabilitation assistance program.