

CANADA TO BUILD MORE SATELLITES

Canada's Defence Research Board has received Cabinet approval to conduct scientific discussions with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States, with the object of developing a further programme of ionospheric research - an extension of the successful joint DRB/NASA Topside Sounder project that orbited the "Alouette" satellite.

The success of "Alouette" has demonstrated Canada's capability in satellite design and construction, and the scientific data now being received at ground stations are emphasizing the need for continued studies of the ionosphere's characteristics.

In general terms, the Board's programme now envisages the design and construction of four satellites in Canada over a four-year period. The first launching proposed will take place late in 1964 or early the following year, to coincide with the end of the Quiet Sun Year and with the beginning of increasing sunspot activity.

Preliminary scientific discussions will shortly be held by DRB and NASA scientists. It is hoped that specifications will be developed for presentation to Canadian industry as soon as possible.

A new research objective of the Board's proposal is to determine the characteristics of the ionosphere at a very wide range of altitudes, varying from 250 to several thousand miles. Under the "Alouette" programme, scientific data are being received for seasonal variations for about a year's period only. The monitor satellites, which will be based on the "Alouette" design, will be modified to provide scientific information over a four-year period (or about half of the 11-year sunspot cycle). Another aim of the programme will be to provide a means of transferring the skills developed by DRB personnel in the satellite field to Canadian industry.

It is proposed that NASA provide launching facilities like those made available during the "Alouette" project. The existing 12 worldwide telemetry stations, including three in Canada, will be employed for the collection of the new data.

While the main technical effort will be provided by Canadian industry, the Board will retain supervising and directing responsibility for the programme. Canada's share of the cost is estimated at \$8 million, to be spread over the next four-year period.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The consumer price index was unchanged at 131.9 between November and December 1962. The December index was 1.6 per cent above the index of 129.8 a year ago. For the year 1962, the index averaged 130.7, 1.2 per cent above the 1961 annual index of 129.2. In the current period, fractional increases in the food and housing indexes balanced declines in the clothing and transportation indexes. The three remaining component indexes were unchanged.

The food index increased 0.1 per cent from 127.7 to 127.8, with higher prices for bread and most cereals, sugar, apples and most fresh vegetables, particularly tomatoes. Beef and pork prices receded further from their October peaks. Prices were also lower for eggs, citrus fruits, bananas and orange juice.

The housing index rose 0.1 per cent from 135.6 to 135.7 as both the shelter and household-operation components registered upward movement. In shelter, the rent index was unchanged, but the home-ownership index was higher. In household operation, higher prices for furniture, textiles, utensils and equipment outweighed lower prices for floor coverings.

The clothing index declined 0.2 per cent from 116.0 to 115.8. Lower prices for women's and children's wear, particularly winter cloth coats, offset increases for men's wear, footwear, piece goods and clothing services, including laundry, dry cleaning and shoe repairs.

The transportation index declined 0.3 per cent from 140.6 to 140.2 as a result of further price declines for gasoline. These latest decreases brought

the price of gasoline to its lowest level since 1949. Some price increases occurred for automobile tires.

The health-and-personal-care, recreation-and-reading, and tobacco-and-alcohol indexes all remained at their November levels of 159.8, 148.2 and 117.8, respectively.

ARMY SERVICE BATTALION

An Experimental Brigade Service Battalion is to be formed in the Canadian Army.

During 1963 the Army will test a new conception of supply, which has been under trial the past few years at Camp Wainwright, Alberta, and in 1962 at Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick. It is designed to provide more efficient support and greater flexibility to fighting units in the widely-dispersed and mobile battlefield envisaged in nuclear war.

In order to continue these trials and to carry out more comprehensive tests, the Experimental Brigade Service Battalion will function for at least one year. It will be formed at Camp Gagetown from service units now in the camp, and will not require additional equipment.

The purpose of the new unit will be to handle all supply, repair, administrative and medical evacuation functions. It will be adaptable to the divisional organization and be compatible for working with allied armies.

After the year's trials, it will be decided how much further the new organization will be extended.