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External Affairs
Canada

Affaires extérieures
Canada

- Canada and France to build telescope in Hawaii, 1
- Coast Guard graduate boom, 2
- Prince Edward Island centennial issue, 2
- Housing for the aged, 2
- Palme d'Or for Canada at Cannes International Film Festival, 3
- Queen Elizabeth to open Lester B. Pearson Building, 3
- Canada Council report on the dance, 4
- Germany buys flight simulators, 4
- Visit of Algerian trade delegation, 4
- Extension of Canada-U.S. fishing agreement recommended, 5
- Changing the Guard summer attraction, 5
- Record year for agricultural exports, 5
- Another Yukon gold rush?, 6

Canada and France to build telescope in Hawaii

C.M. Drury, President of the Treasury Board and minister responsible for the National Research Council of Canada announced last month that the Government had approved participation by Canada with France in the construction and operation of a large optical telescope on the 13,825-foot volcanic mountain Mauna Kea, on the island of Hawaii.

Agreements have been reached by the NRC, France's Centre national de la Recherche scientifique (CNRS) and the University of Hawaii under which Canada and France will share equally in the costs of providing the telescope, while the University of Hawaii will provide the site, access roads and local support facilities. After construction is complete in 1977 or early 1978, the three agencies will share operating costs and observing time, the University of Hawaii taking 15 per cent, NRC and CNRS taking 42.5 per cent each.

The total cost of the telescope and its associated buildings is estimated at \$18 million of which Canada will pay half. Canadian industry will participate in the construction and fabrication of the telescope, particularly in the telescope controls and in the main observatory structures, while the mechanical parts of the telescope will be made in France. The polishing of the main mirror, 144 inches in diameter, and made of special low-expansion glass known as Cervit, will be done in the NRC's Dominion Astrophysical Observatory in Victoria, British Columbia.

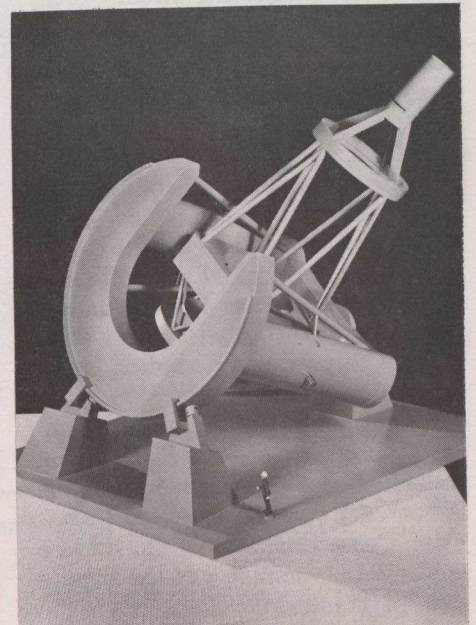
Non-profit corporation

A novel arrangement to take care of construction and operation of the telescope is a non-profit corporation expected to be established under enabling legislation in Hawaii. The three agencies will be the partners in the corporation and provision will be made for a board of directors and a scientific

advisory council, which will advise on technical details during design and construction and serve the function of a user's committee dealing with allocation of observation time and continuing development of instrumentation. This organizational structure is particularly advantageous from the Canadian standpoint as it will provide NRC with the opportunity to involve Canadian universities and the scientific community in general in direct participation and co-operation.

Advantages of site

A telescope in Hawaii will be able to observe the whole sky except for about 30 degrees near the South Pole. The Mauna Kea site is expected to



Model of the 144-inch telescope to be built jointly by France and Canada and erected on the mountain of Mauna Kea, Hawaii. A feature of the design is that the telescope will have interchangeable upper ends. The upper end shown in this photograph carries the prime-focus cage in which the astronomer may ride while making observations.