
Niger/Canada co-operation

"Canada has pioneered a new concept in the area of international co-operation." Mr. Djermakoye, Minister of External Affairs and Co-operation for the Republic of Niger, was referring to the recent decision of the Canadian Government to forgo all the loans made to Niger and other emerging countries and to consider them donations. The decision was labelled "historic" by President Seyni Kountché when he announced it to the Nigerian people.

At a meeting with Jean-Pierre Goyer, Minister of Supply and Services and Minister responsible for relations with francophone countries, Mr. Djermakoye expressed his country's appreciation for some of the Canadian achievements in Niger, such as the Route de l'Unité et de l'Amitié, the boats supplied for river transportation and the construction of the power transmission line from the Kaindji Dam.

Computers in the classroom

Last summer, Ottawa's Carleton University received a grant of \$22,000 from Labatts Breweries to design and implement a computer program that will help children overcome learning difficulties. Professor of psychology R.M. Knights, who developed the system, is now confident that an adult untrained in the teaching of remedial reading will be able to instruct pupils in basic reading skills by following the program provided on the computer terminal.

According to Professor Knights, "all the 'thinking' happens in the computer". If the child experiences difficulty in answering the prepared questions read by

the adult, the computer outlines suggestions for further study before proceeding to the next step. Both children and adults have adapted easily to the method, whose testing should be completed by next spring.

A computer terminal is also being used for the development of mentally retarded children's learning potential. Images and colours, accompanied by an audio track,

are presented to the retarded child, whose response is carefully monitored and accommodated by the sophisticated terminal. "In this case," says Professor Knights, "the computer is programmed to use very small steps and a teacher must work closely with the child." The project has been introduced at several schools and hospitals for the mentally retarded in the Ottawa area.

News briefs

The National Energy Board has granted a certificate to Manitoba Hydro allowing the construction, beginning this autumn, of a 500-kilovolt international power line south of Winnipeg. The NEB has issued seven new licences, effective May 1, 1980, allowing the export of firm and interruptible power and energy to the United States, up to a maximum combined limit of 12,000 gigawatthours a year. (A gigawatthour is one million kilowatt-hours.) Exports will be allowed only when they exceed the requirements of accessible Canadian markets. Deliveries will be subject to curtailment when the energy is required in Canada.

A new annex has been included in the joint Canada-U.S. marine-pollution contingency plan, extending coverage of the 1974 agreement to the waters off the Arctic coast of Canada and the United States in the Beaufort Sea. Previously, the plan applied to the boundary waters off the east and west coasts of Canada and the U.S. as well as the Great Lakes. The objectives of the plan and annex are to develop systems for the discovery and reporting of a pollution incident in the Beaufort Sea and to provide the means to restrict the spread of oil and provide for its disposal. The plan applies to all spills of oil and noxious substances in the Beaufort Sea whether the spill originates from drilling or shipping activities.

The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs has ordered an immediate investigation to identify the nature of gas emissions from the site of Dome Petroleum's Tingmiark K-91 exploratory well in the Beaufort Sea. Gas bubbles were discovered rising from the sea bottom at the site of the well which was suspended at the close of last year's operations. Subsequently, it was found that the water temperature near the wellhead was higher than the normal 0-degree Celsius. Results

of this investigation will be used to determine the environmental impact of the emissions and future action required to stop the flow.

Eleven government and industry representatives from China recently concluded a survey tour of Canadian agricultural industries, that included factories in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

Maurice Strong, chairman of Petro-Canada and former top United Nations official, has been named chairman-designate of the UN seminar on energy and human settlements which will be held here in October.

A grant of \$15,000 has been awarded by the Secretary of State to the Fédération Acadienne de la Nouvelle-Ecosse. The Fédération encourages Acadian people to participate in the social and cultural life of the province through development and educational programs.

The Federal Government will allow the export of 120,000 barrels a day of heavy crude oil to the United States during September, an increase of 20 per cent.

Canada's international trade surplus rose in July to \$328 million, more than triple the \$91 million surplus of June. Exports in July rose 4.5 per cent to a seasonally-adjusted level of \$3.72 billion while imports fell 2.2 per cent to a total of \$3.9 billion. Main sources of the increase were higher exports of automobiles to the U.S. as well as high U.S. imports of crude oil, lumber, newsprint, metals and petroleum products.

British Columbia's Social Credit government has completed its first fiscal year with a budget surplus of \$38.5 million. Major revenue came from rises in the provincial sales tax (from 5 to 7 per cent) and personal and corporate income taxes (up two percentage points) imposed by the government, which replaced the New Democratic Party in 1976.

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