

BILINGUAL ARMED FORCES

National Defence Minister Leo Cadieux, announced recently that, "in accordance with the Government's policy on bilingualism in the Public Service, enunciated by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on April 6, 1966", and as a means of encouraging French-speaking Canadians to remain longer in the Armed Forces, the Department of National Defence would this summer launch a programme "leading to a substantial improvement in the bilingual character of the Forces".

The programme is based on the conception of two working languages — bases and units predominantly French-speaking to work in French, and bases and units predominantly English-speaking to work in English.

Mr. Cadieux said that the programme provided for the establishment of French-language trades-training, as well as for the designation of a number of units specializing in a variety of military skills, in which the working-language would be French.

To foster the use of a second language, it is proposed ultimately to have at least 20 per cent of the strength of French-speaking and English-speaking bases and units made up of members whose parent tongue is the other official language. This will not be possible however, in the initial stages.

The Defence Minister emphasized that the choice of units and bases for designation as French-

speaking or English-speaking would not be restricted to any particular political or geographic division. The object was to create a force in which both the country's "official languages" were in everyday use and not to divide the force on a language or geographic basis.

Mr. Cadieux added: "This programme will make the Armed Forces more attractive for Canadian youth whose parent language is French. They can expect to take a substantial part of their training in French and serve for a good portion of their careers in units where French is the working language. At the same time, this programme will open the doors for both English- and French-speaking servicemen to learn a second language." The new programme has the immediate aim of increasing the number of units functioning on a predominantly French-speaking basis. English however, will continue to be the operational language of the Forces above unit level, and predominantly French-speaking air units will operate in the air in English, the air-communication language throughout most of the world by international agreement.

Mr. Cadieux stressed that the programme would be introduced gradually into the Forces and in such a way that military efficiency and career progression would not be prejudiced and with due regard for the rights and privileges of individuals.

VIETNAM BOMBING HALT

In a statement on April 1, Mr. Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, said that he had been heartened to learn President Johnson of the United States had suspended most of the bombing of North Vietnam and, at the same time, renewed his plea for peace talks. "I know that the decision could not have been an easy one for him to take," Mr. Martin said. "It is an act of courage on his part to take that gamble for peace." The Secretary of State for External Affairs continued as follows:

Last September, at the United Nations General Assembly, I urged that there be a halt to the bombing as a necessary first step on the road to de-escalation. I now urge the leaders of North Vietnam, and all those who have any influence in their counsels, to seize this opportunity swiftly so that the next steps can be taken which may quickly end the tragedy and the suffering of all the people of Vietnam, and allow them and all of us to turn our hands to the works of peace.

Canada, for its part, stands ready to do anything within its power which may contribute to the prompt initiation of serious talks. The possibilities include Commission contact with the North Vietnamese Government and action in the Security Council, perhaps with a view to reconvening the Geneva Conference itself. If it should appear that it would advance the prospect for peace, our Commissioner will proceed promptly to Hanoi.

NUCLEAR DESIGN MERGER

Agreement has been reached by Canadian General Electric Company Limited and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited to the merger of the nuclear-power system design and engineering groups of the two organizations, under the direction of AECL.

The object of the merger, which was announced on March 21 by Canadian General Electric President J. Herbert Smith, and Atomic Energy President J. Lorne Gray, is to consolidate and streamline nuclear design and engineering capability in Canada, in anticipation of the heavy volume of domestic orders for nuclear power plants forecast for the next ten years. A further aim is to strengthen Canada's position in competing for sales of nuclear-power systems overseas.

The five-year agreement is an example of co-operation between government and industry in an area where it is advantageous to use the resources of both to expand Canada's programme both nationally and internationally.

CGE TEAM

Canadian General Electric has built up an experienced group of nuclear designers at Peterborough who designed for AECL Canada's first nuclear-power plant, the reactor of the Nuclear Power Demonstration station at Rolphton, Ontario. CGE also designed and supplied the WR-1 test reactor for AECL's Whiteshell Nuclear Research Establishment at Pinawa, Manitoba.