

The plans for 1960-61 include Canadian university research groups for the first time. The National Research Council formed an Associate Committee on Space Research in 1959, which will co-ordinate experiments proposed and carried out by university groups and the NRC laboratories. It will make arrangements for supplying the university groups with rocket nose cones in which they can build experiments and then have them launched at Churchill.

At the request of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in the United States, a satellite tracking station is being built near St. John's, Nfld. While this is one of a world-wide network of tracking stations of United States design and the equipment is being supplied by them, it will be operated as a Canadian station. In the early days of Soviet satellites a great deal of tracking—visually, photographically and by picking up radio signals—was done in Canada. Tracking by visual and photographic means, if well organized so that the satellite can be located accurately, is still of considerable value and amateur groups who are interested can make important contributions.

Canada is also taking an active part in international organizations on space research, having membership in the Special Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and in the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

COSPAR being a committee of the International Council of Scientific Unions is purely scientific in nature. Membership in it is open to countries having space science programs which are recognized by the International Council of Scientific Unions. International Scientific Unions, and special committees thereunder are for the advancement of scientific activities and the representation on them is from National Academies or National Research Councils rather than from governments. Despite the non-political character of COSPAR, political questions arose in its formation. Its original constitution called for membership from International Unions and from National Academies in countries with space science programs. At the first meeting after an organization meeting, the selection of representatives from the International Unions was accidentally such that the U.S.S.R. had only one voting member while the U.S. and the U.K. had three or four each. The U.S.S.R. delegate objected to such a situation and many members felt he had some justification. It took about a year of negotiations to rectify this and a successful meeting of COSPAR was held in Nice, France, in January of 1960. A symposium on space science was organized in conjunction with the meeting and three papers were presented by Canadian scientists.

The United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was first formed as an ad hoc Committee by the Thirteenth General Assembly. The Committee consisted of 18 countries of which Canada was one. Political problems arose there again because of Soviet disagreement over membership and five member nations refused to take any part in it. Nevertheless the Committee met in 1959 and produced an informative and substantive report. Much of the Committee's work was done by two sub-committees, one technical and the other legal, each member country having representation on both. A Canadian scientist was elected chairman of the technical committee. The Fourteenth General Assembly of the UN accepted the report and formed a new committee of 24 nations again including Canada.

In many countries Astronautical Societies have been formed. Some of these require professional qualifications and some are for interested amateurs. The groups have an international organization known as the International Astronautical Federation. These organizations are not government-sponsored but form an important link in public and commercial interest in space. There are at least three such groups active in Canada, the Astronautical Society of Canada with headquarters in Montreal, the Canadian Astronautical Society with headquarters in Toronto and the Astronautical Section of the Canadian Aeronautical Institute.