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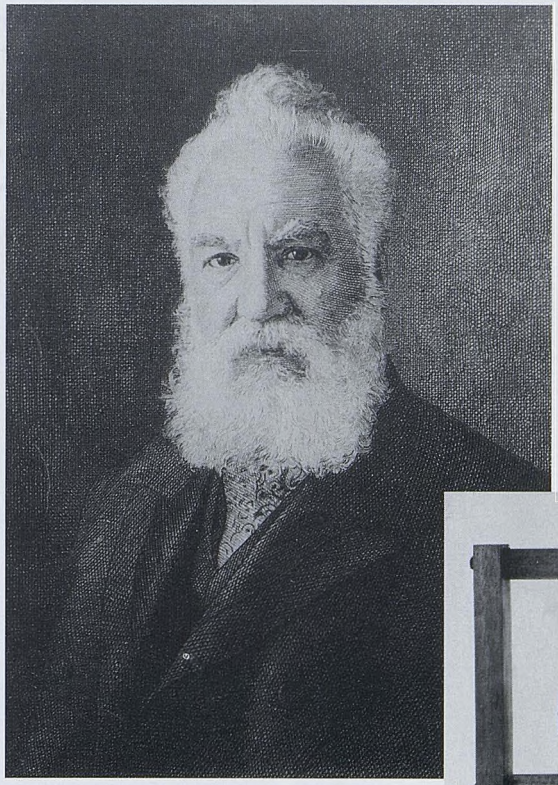
A Canadian welcome
to WTSA-2000

Issue No. 10/99 of *ITU News* announced that Canada would host the International Telecommunication Union's quadrennial World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly from 27 September to 6 October 2000 in Montreal, Quebec.

Industry Canada has been working with three leading telecommunication businesses in Canada (Nortel Networks, Bell Canada and Teleglobe), to ensure that WTSA-2000 is a memorable event. The Host Committee of WTSA-2000 Founding Partners (see page 8) has planned several events, most notably a reception to provide an informal meeting opportunity for Assembly delegates and Canadian experts in the telecommunications and communications technology fields.

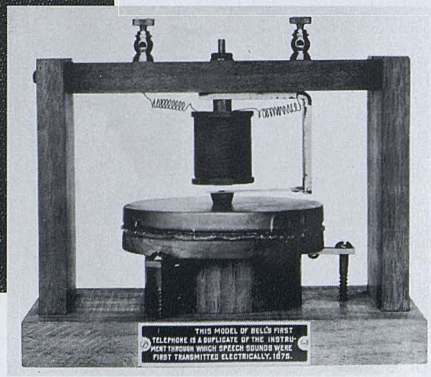
Other companies have recently joined the Host Committee team, including the Government of Quebec, BC Telus, Rogers AT&T, 360 Networks, Lucent, *Ericsson*, SR Telecom, AT&T, Intelsat, Clearnet and Crosskeys.

As the first ITU Member State in the Americas to host the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, we want to take this opportunity to share our telecommunication and communication technology expertise with other Member States and Sector Members attending the Assembly.



(ITU 77383 and 77303)

Canadians are recognized pioneers in the telecommunications sector. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone, and Reginald Fessenden successfully transmitted the first, two-way wireless voice message by radio in 1900. Canada has remained on the cutting edge of this vibrant industry. We are currently the only country running an all-optic research and development Internet network, CA*net 3, which is faster than any other next generation research network in the world. Canada is also using the latest satellite technology in the Arctic to enable callers in Nunavut to com-



Model of Alexander Graham Bell's original telephone, dismissed by Western Union in a memo of 1877 as "inherently of no value", with "too many shortcomings to be considered seriously as a means of communication". Contrary to this prediction, the world telecommunication network is now the largest man-made artefact

Source: American Telephone and Telegraph Company, New York

municate via a chain of low-Earth orbit satellites.

Canada's telecommunications system has evolved in a geographically diverse country stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and northward to the Arctic. We have invested heavily in fibre optics and high-speed transmission technology to build a telecommunications infrastructure that is seamlessly interconnected from coast-to-coast, and with every other part of the globe, providing leading edge capabilities.

In 1972, Telesat Canada launched the Anik-A1 satellite, becoming the first country in the world to have a satellite in geostationary orbit for domestic, non-military communications

Photo: Telesat Canada (ITU 000036)

Following the launch of our first satellite in 1962, a scientist by the name of John Chapman argued that Canada should use the knowledge gained through satellite technology to improve communications. So, in 1972, Telesat Canada launched the *Anik-A1* satellite, becoming the first country in the world to have a satellite in geostationary orbit for domestic, non-military communications. Today, the fifth generation Anik satellites are the largest, most powerful domestic communication satellites in the world.

Canadian companies continue to build on their technological excellence in many areas of telecommunications, including switching systems, broadband and multimedia products and services, fibre-optic cabling, rural communications, submarine cable systems, satellite networking, computer telephony integration, and mobile and cellular phones.

Canada views its telecommunications sector as an enabler of business activity and human interaction — a key ingredient in the country's employment, prosperity and global competitiveness. Both government and telecommunication companies work hand-in-hand to ensure our telecommunications infrastructure is always on the leading edge of this dynamic and futuristic global industry. For example, as part of its *Connecting Canadians* agenda, we fostered competitive and innovative telecommunications and communications technology industries for advanced infrastructure. As a result, Canada is one of the first countries in the world to have connected all of its schools and libraries to the Internet.

The global network connectivity via Internet is only one part of the connection equation. Standards for interoperable networks are also essential, and they are quickly becoming a pillar of the new global trading system. Decisions made at WTSA-2000 will set the pace for the evolution of key technologies that build Internet protocol-based networks, communications infrastructure of telecommunications and wireless technologies in the years to come. Canada's telecommunications industry has played a key role in the development of global telecommunication standards since 1932, and we currently have 15 businesses and three organizations that are ITU Sector Members.

Industry Canada's portfolio includes the Standards Council of Canada to implement our national standards system. The key elements of this strategy include our participation in the development of international standards, and a desire

to forge partnerships and strategic alliances among current and potential participants in standardization activities. Our participation in the ITU demonstrates this commitment.

Standards provide a basis for fair competition. By fostering global network interconnectivity and facilitating global service interoperability, ITU voluntary standards, in the form of recommendations, serve to protect users from experiencing incompatibility problems between systems. The centrality of communications to our nation's social, economic and political development and the world-class calibre of our telecommunication manufacturing and service industries are reflected in our interest and involvement in the ITU. We believe in the critical role the ITU plays in the development of global standards as information and communication technologies evolve at an unprecedented rate.

Canada has invested heavily in fibre optics and high-speed transmission technology to build a telecommunications infrastructure that is seamlessly interconnected from coast-to-coast

Photo: Telecom Canada (ITU 910038)

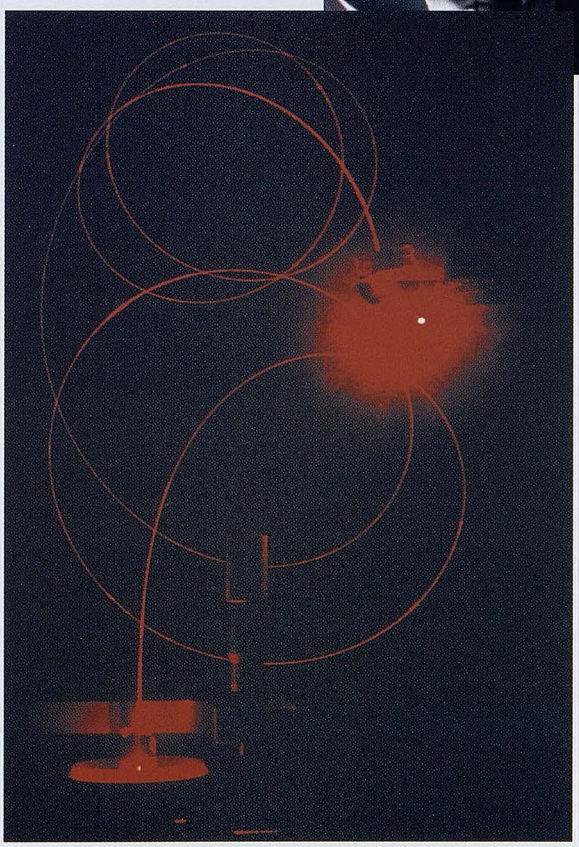


Photo: Bell Laboratories, United States (ITU 800135)

Relative to its size in the international economy, Canada is an effective player in the standards arena. We want to influence the formation and evolution of global standards that are important to Canada to meet the needs of an evolving regulatory and policy environment.

By positioning standardization processes as a necessary complement to regulatory processes, we encourage the use of standards in the development of Canadian policy. In 1998, the World Trade Organization (WTO) adopted the "Canadian model" of regulation, when the historic agreement intended to liberalize the international trade of basic telecommunication services came into effect. Specifically, the signatory countries agreed to change the structure of their regulatory authorities to establish a body to regulate independent telecommunication services, separate from all suppliers of basic telecommunication services.

Since the signing of this agreement, delegations from all over the world have consulted the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) on our regulatory model in broadcasting and telecommunications.

In 1998, the CRTC received the international *Carl Bertelsmann Prize* for its standing in the new global information infrastructure. The Bertelsmann award recognized the advantage of being a single regulatory agency overseeing both broadcasting and telecommunication matters. This has allowed us to develop a sophisticated understanding of convergence and how traditional barriers between telecommunications and broadcasting, and between their respective markets, are breaking down. Our unique structure also helps us to make decisions efficiently, to build consensus and to find the best solutions.

Canadians have built a strong and dynamic economy based on our expertise in areas such as telecommunications and communications technology. We are pleased to host WTSA-2000 and to welcome ITU Members to our country. Look for our welcome booth at Montreal's Dorval International Airport upon your arrival, and for more information about our planned events, please visit our website at http://www.wtsa2000.org.

WTSA-2000 Founding Partner profiles

Industry Canada's mission is to foster a growing competitive, knowledge-based Canadian economy. The department works with Canadians throughout the economy and in all parts of the country to improve conditions for investment, enhance the country's innovation performance, increase Canada's share of trade and build a fair, efficient and competitive market-place. Programme areas include developing industry and technology capability, fostering scientific research, telecommunications policy, promoting investment and trade, promoting tourism and small business development, and setting rules and services that support the effective operation of the market-place.

Nortel Networks is a global supplier in telephony, data, wireless and wireline solutions for the Internet. Today, the company is creating a high-performance Internet that is more reliable and faster than ever before. It is redefining the economics and quality of networking and the Internet through unified networks that promise a new era of collaboration, communications and commerce. Nortel Networks has offices and facilities in Canada, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Caribbean and Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and the United States.

Bell Canada is Canada's largest supplier of telecommunication services. With one of the world's most robust and reliable public switched networks, the company provides advanced voice, data and image communications to more than eight million business and residence customers across the country. Bell Canada is a subsidiary of BCE Inc. (80 per cent) and SBC Communications Inc. (20 per cent). In March 1999, the company announced a strategic partnership with Ameritech Corporation (which merged with SBC Communications on 8 October 1999) to expand its business potential.

Teleglobe is a global provider of broadband services with an extensive global Internet network. The company delivers advanced broadband applications to customers in more than 100 countries. Moving swiftly during the 1990s to expand its presence in liberalizing markets around the world, Teleglobe currently holds operating authorities in 27 countries, including 15 in Europe, and has an extensive in-country sales presence with 53 offices in 42 countries.