

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER GENERAL
CANADIAN WORLD EXHIBITION, MONTREAL, 1967
800 VICTORIA SQUARE, SUITE 2022
MONTREAL 3, P.Q., CANADA

SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS

Two powerful new communications satellites over the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans now extend commercial satellite communications to more than two-thirds of the world. These satellites will also provide valuable service to NASA in its Apollo moonlanding program. Eventually, these and later satellites will be used in relaying communications between the moon and many different points of earth.

Early Bird, the world's first commercial communications satellite, was launched on April 6, 1965. It links North America and Europe with 240 channels of all forms of communication — telephone, telegraph, television, radio, data and facsimile reproduction. Early Bird is in a synchronous circular equatorial orbit at an altitude of 22,300 miles. In such position, it rotates at a speed of 6,900 miles per hour, sufficiently faster than the rotation of the earth to stay in what seems to be a stationary position.

Lani Bird, a new and more powerful satellite, was launched from Cape Kennedy on October 26, 1966. It did not achieve the desired synchronous orbit. Instead it is in an elliptical orbit. Therefore, this satellite provides communications service during predetermined periods of time each day between earth stations as these come within its line of sight.

Early in 1967, two new satellites were launched in this program. The New Pacific Satellite went up January 11, 1967, and is stationed over the Pacific Ocean in circular synchronous orbit at an altitude of

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22,300 miles linking North America with the Far East.

The new Atlantic Satellite joined Early Bird on March 22, 1967, in circular synchronous orbit at an altitude of 22,300 miles over the Atlantic off the west coast of Africa. This satellite will expand communications between North America and Europe, and also link-in Latin America and Africa when earth stations are constructed in those regions.

The launching of still more powerful 1,200-channel satellites, beginning in 1968, will create a global communications satellite net-work. This net work will be available to all nations on a non-discriminatory basis.