

The Satellite Earth Station at Prospect Pen in St. Thomas Parish, built for Jamaica International Telecommunications Ltd., was officially opened on February 17th by the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Rt. Hon. Hugh L. Shearer, accompanied by the Minister of Communications, the Hon. N.C. Lewis.

Six hundred invited guests attended the celebrations, the importance of the occasion being marked by the presence of the Governor General, Sir Clifford Campbell, members of the Diplomatic Corps, senior Government officials and prominent members of the business community, together with twenty communications executives from Canada, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The ceremony commenced at 3 pm and was carried live over J.B.C. Television with the highlight occurring half an hour later, when Mr. Shearer opened the television link through the 'Intelsat IV' satellite, 23,000 miles over the Atlantic, speaking to Jamaica's Ugh Commissioner in London, Sir Lawrence Lindo. This was followed by exchanges between Mr. Lewis and the Chairman of Cable & Wireless Ltd., Colonel McMillan and between Mr. Dujon, Chairman of Jamintel and Mr. Victor Page, one of the leaders of the Jamaican community in Great Britain.

From 3.45 pm until 4.15 pm, the BBC transmitted in colour, the latest edition of the popular science feature, "Tomorrow's World", the linkman in London being the popular Jamaican broadcaster, Louis Marriott, but unfortunately, only those persons attending the ceremony at Prospect Pen were able to see the programme in colour, through the agency of special television receivers flown in from the United States. The rest of the island had to be satisfied with normal black and white transmission.

This is the third major development in Jamaica's international communication links since Jamintel was formed in April 1971 and represents a total investment of over J\$9,000,000. In November last, the Montego Bay marine radio station was opened for modern communication with world shipping and in December, a new undersea cable was laid between Jamaican and the Cayman Islands with a capacity for 120 voice channels. Nearing completion in Kingston, is the company's new technical and administrative headquarters costing J\$2,700,000 and including the installation of the end link connecting the new Satellite Earth Station with the national telephone system. The opening of the station means that Jamaica's international communications will now rank amongst the finest in the world.

THOMAS FOSTER, Kirk Ella, February 1972.