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U.S. Traffic Controls Firm Will Open Subsidiary Here

An American firm specializing in modern electronic traffic control systems will soon begin operation in a subsidiary plant in Belleville.

The announcement of the new industry for the city was made today by Mr. L. M. Rodgers, Assistant General Manager of the Automatic Signal Division of Laboratory for Norwalk, Connecticut.

Mr. Rodgers also announced that W. Dallas of Belleville, a long-time employee of the local Northern Electric branch, will be the manager of the new firm. The company will set up operations in a building on Adam Street, used for some time by Northern Electric for part of its production.

Although the firm has no official name, pending approval from Queen's Park, Mr. Rodgers said that the first Canadian division of Automatic Signal will probably begin production by the first of June.

Automatic Signal manufactures what it refers to as a "sophisticated system of traffic control" which makes the present system of automatic traffic light synchronization virtually obsolete.

COMPUTER-REGULATOR

Employing diverse types of magnetic, sonic, pressure, or

radar detecting devices to be placed at each approach to an intersection, the Automatic Signal equipment becomes "informed" of the speed and volume of traffic approaching that intersection up to a distance of 500 feet. This information is then relayed through a computing process which changes the traffic lights accordingly.

The system has proved effective in removing traffic bottlenecks in such Canadian cities as Vancouver, Edmonton, and Calgary, and Mr. Rodgers noted that it has come out on top when compared to "manual" traffic control by police officers.

The connection between Automatic Signal and the Belleville area dates back to 1939, when Northern Electric became a licensee of the American firm in the field of traffic control equipment. For the next 25 years, Mr. Dallas was prominent in Northern's transactions with Automatic Signal until retiring. Northern Electric will be continuing its work in the distributing field for Automatic Signal, with the difference being that it will now be dealing with a Canadian-made product.

Part of "multi-thousand" personnel corporation, Automatic Signal has subsidiaries in California and Italy, with

the head office in Norwalk, Connecticut, and supplies traffic control equipment throughout the United States, part of Europe and also Canada.

Mr. Rodgers, describing the new Belleville firm as "basically a growth organization," said that while the company will probably employ about 20 persons in a few years, this factor and the sales volume will depend on "the demand for sophisticated traffic control." Although the operation's patents and engineering are inherently American, Mr. Rodgers stressed that the Belleville enterprise is entirely a Canadian concept and is intended "to put Canadian content into the product."

Credit for bringing the new industry to the city was given to Belleville's Industrial Commissioner, Mr. E. Kneisel. The co-operation of the local Northern Electric management was also mentioned as a factor in the company's decision to set up a plant here.

Mr. Kneisel said that the addition of yet another electronic firm in the city will increase the "labor pool" of that industry, bring a number of "technical visitors" to the city, and could eventually make Belleville a "demonstration area" for the modern systems of traffic control produced by Automatic Signals.