Also speaking at the ceremony was Mike Butler, immediate past division manager at the plant, now vice-president in charge of operations in the company's subscriber equipment division.

Butler traced the success story of the SL-1 from its early development at Belleville where, as one official commented, it came from almost the only Northern plant which was not involved in telecommunications equipment at the time.

"The Belleville plant has an enviable record of technological achievement over the last 36 years beginning with fire alarm devices, traffic signals, radios, dictation systems, radio-based navigation systems, video switches and the INTeL satellite system, said Butler.

Sl-1 is linked to the revolution in electronics that has taken the company from the transistor to the silicon chip, said Butler.

"It is a product of, and a product for, the information age...the merger of telecommunications and computers around digital technology. It came from the evolution of silicon and software applying computer technology to the telephone switching system," he said.

He noted that when Bell-Northern Research, the specialized research and development centre near Ottawa, was set up in the 1960s, its core of electronics expertise was built from the high technology work in electronics done in Belleville.

computer and data functions associated with the constantly changing SL-1 which contributes to its sales track record, Butler explained.

The most recent SL-1 models take up "50 per cent less floor space and use 20 per cent less power" than earlier models, he noted..

Memory packs with the Sl-1 have undergone a 12-fold increase with some 192,000 words of memory storage. And creating a solid base for Northern's sales it is its "evergreen" philosophy, or making sure that all SL-1 models can always be updated and upgraded and still used

with all existing systems.

But he reminded the large audience of employees, company officials and local and provincial government representatives that there are "some 200 other PBXs out there all looking to develop a market share."

Dec 17/84

While including computer functions in a switchboard began at Northern in the mid-1960s, it was 1972 that the first fully electronic exchange, called Pulse, was manufactured in Belleville and was a major market success in many export markets, said Butler. Then in December of 1975--"just nine years ago, we announced the world's first fully-digital PBX (private branch exchange) --the Sl-1," said Butler.

In the ensuing years, that basic system, devised basically as a voice system: has been greatly expanded in scope, while whittled down in size, "to address what we saw as the emerging world of digital voice and data."

It is the increasingly versatile and expanded