

# Bullet-holed buoy hits Thursday Island



*A recovered Hermes buoy is displayed in the lobby of the AES building, Downsview.*

An AES Hermes buoy, deployed four years ago in the South Pacific under the First GARP Global Experiment (FGGE) was recovered this fall in bullet-riddled condition by Australian weather officials after it was washed ashore on Thursday Island off north east Australia.

On hearing of the find, AES officials in Downsview, Ont. requested that the buoy's equipment: transmitter, antenna and pressure sensor be returned to Toronto for possible reassembly into another buoy.

The buoy, deployed by a container ship in December 1978 as part of FGGE's "Global Atmospheric Research Project" had a weather observing life of 316 days. Then from October 1979 until its recovery, it just drifted aimlessly in the Pacific.

Australian weather officials reported that the buoy was in good condition "apart from some bullet holes below the waterline."

Canadian officials speculated that the buoy might have been used for target practice by local sharpshooters who possibly mistook it for a wartime mine.

Dr. John Garrett of the Institute of Ocean Sciences, Victoria, B.C., says that recovery of FGGE buoys in Australasian and Indian Ocean waters was not all that uncommon. (Canada

alone had deployed 69 of them). However, he added that this was probably the

first time a buoy's equipment had been shipped all the way back to Canada.