

follows another around the clock. In their off-hours they have films to watch, cards to play and, always, food to eat. Every three weeks they get one off with pay. A helicopter picks them up and takes them to St. John's, Newfoundland, and later carries them back.

Life at the Arctic drilling sites is more varied and less comfortable.

The seismic crews, the men who set off buried explosives so geologists can analyse the resulting sound waves, sometimes sleep in tents but more often in pre-fabricated modules. A basic one—with a centre space and two side rooms—can be used for sleeping, cooking and dining quarters or for offices. In dormitories the central space has wash basins, a shower and a toilet. Each side room holds four crowded bunks. The modules are mobile, some self-propelling, some hauled by tractors. When a survey is finished, the whole camp moves on. When self-propelling units are ready to move, the bunks are collapsed, the walls of the side rooms are folded in and a mechanic takes his place at the controls. They get hot as they move; it may be  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  outside and  $30^{\circ}$  above within.

The tractor train modules have larger rooms with panelled walls, a closet, a table and a heater. There may be a game room with darts, card tables and miniature curling.

The crews on the big rigs and artificial islands

in the Arctic tend to be older than the seismic crews and their living quarters more elaborate, as well equipped as those in the North Atlantic. There's an abundance of rich foods—four thousand pounds are flown in weekly to a typical rig. There are four main meals, breakfast, lunch, dinner and another dinner at midnight, and sandwiches and soup are served at 4 a.m. Coffee, milk, juices, and cold cuts, bread and freshly baked pastries are available around the clock in the mud room, where the men keep their coats and boots.

The men in the crews may be farmers from the prairies, or city bred. The farmers, used to the loneliness of flat land and prairie winters, complain less. Alcohol is banned and some alcoholic crew members find that the enforced dry periods stabilize their lives. Some crew members are ex-convicts, and their talk often centres on the merits and failings of various judges and penal institutions.

Some crew members are experienced, some are not. Either may have problems—one veteran driller who flew from Egypt to Houston, to Calgary and then by Twin Otter to a camp north of Sachs Harbor in five days, spent several days in a zombie-like daze while his thyroid adjusted. One new recruit arrived at a camp in a poncho, sandals and beads, when the temperature was  $40^{\circ}$  below. He went back on the same plane.



*Seismic surveyor.*