

Research in Artificial Insemination at the Grace

by Jenn MacLeod

Without continuing research, infertility will remain irreversible in many cases, says Dr. W. Wrixon, director of the infertility clinic at the Grace Maternity Hospital in Halifax.

Much popular reading leads people to believe that any infertility problem can be corrected, Wrixon says, but this is simply not true. For example, at this clinic, approximately 60% of women treated with artificial insemination achieve pregnancy, leaving a wide margin for further advance-

ment in the field.

The infertility clinic at the Grace has not been extensively engaged in research in the past, says Wrixon, but it becoming more so. Studies are being done on micro organisms that are suspected of causing infertility and on new methods and drugs for inducing ovulation.

The Grace unit does not include a sperm bank of frozen specimens, but relies on immediate donors for each particular case. Donors are mostly medical students, physicians, and other persons from

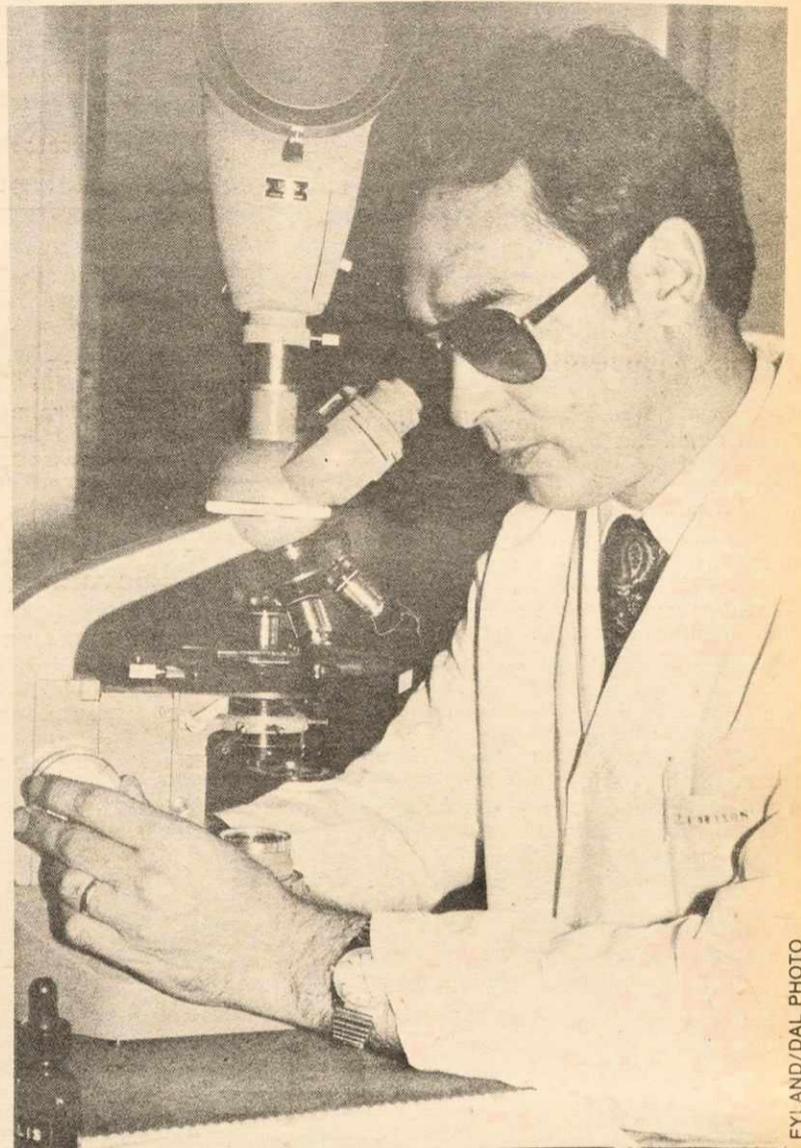
the university or hospital setting.

Acceptable donors are not easy to attract, says Wrixon, and the clinic must often advertise on campus. Anyone from the community wishing to donate may be accepted for screening, he says, but time limits the clinic to soliciting donors from the university campus. Students and others often donate for monetary reasons, since the clinic offers \$25.00 per specimen. Testing is done at the Tupper Building next door, says Wrixon, and it is most expedient to have affirmed donors nearby and readily available when the need for a specimen arises. The clinic studies the medical history of perspective donors to ensure that they are generally in good health and have no trace of syphilis or other diseases.

The hospital also includes a gynecology and endocrinology clinic for treatment and research. A similar program exists in Saint John, N.B., but it does not perform artificial insemination. Patients from throughout the region are referred to the Grace. The number of inseminations performed has increased from 52 in 1975 to 155 in 1979, although insemination must often be performed twice for each patient.

The Grace offers artificial insemination for unmarried couples as well as married. The clinic has had requests from single women and lesbian couples in the past, says Wrixon, but does not accept such cases. There is not time or sufficient necessity to deal with them when so many male-female couples are in need of assistance, he says.

The clinic makes an effort to match the physical characteristics of donor and male partner, as well as the blood group of the mother. Nevertheless, patients must sign a contract releasing the



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Immigration policy protested

by Alan Christensen

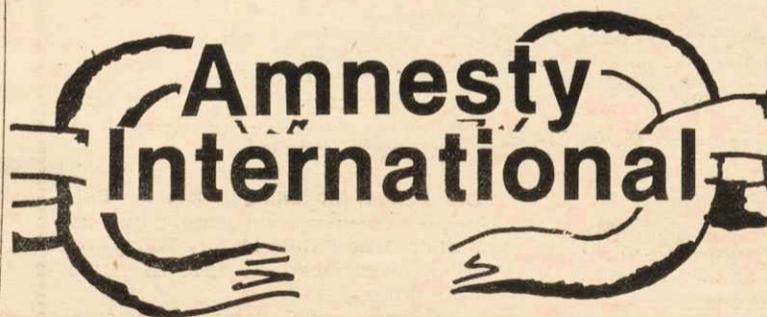
Amnesty International is protesting a change in immigration policy brought about by the Clark government in December, 1979. The new law drops Chile from the list of countries whose citizens do not require a visa to visit Canada.

This, said Peggy Matthews, a member of the private human rights groups' section, means that Chileans can no longer come to Canada to declare refugee status because they would have to go to the Canadian embassy in Chile and apply for a visa and "it is well known that foreign embassies are closely watched, and anyone entering or leaving them is under surveillance."

A letter was sent to the new Liberal Minister of Immigration, Lloyd Axworthy, asking that Chile be restored to the list in lieu of the increased

They also point out that the domestic situation in that country has deteriorated over the summer and will probably continue to do so.

Since June, Amnesty International estimates that between one and two thousand people have been detained by the secret police in an apparent crackdown on opposition. According to Latin American Weekly Report, 200 people were arrested on June 7 in Santiago's Florida district. One of these was Jose Miguel Benado who was tortured and nearly killed during his stay in prison. The archbishop of Santiago protested the fact that church sanctity was violated when Benada was apprehended within the walls of a church. He was told to mind his own business by members of the government. On the 30th of July two church journalists were kidnapped by members of Covema, a right-wing ter-



number of human rights violations being reported in that country. A reply was received by W.K. Bell, the Deputy Executive Director of Refugees, stating that the matter had been reviewed by the minister. He said in the letter that a team of "impartial observers" had been sent to Chile to study the situation. Following their report, he said, the minister decided that the embassy could "deal fairly and expeditiously with cases of genuine persecution." Thus the visa requirement was to remain in place. He promised to review the situation "should there be significant changes in the domestic situation in Chile."

Amnesty then sent a reply wondering about the identity of the "impartial observers" and the content of their report.

rorist group which many suspect is connected with the police. They were tortured and asked about "left-wing groups" before being released.

Also in June, thirty people were arrested for belonging to an alleged "Communist" group. Ninety students were arrested during a folk concern held to raise money for exiled or expelled students. On July 14 campesino (peasants) leaders were arrested in Talca and 12 other people were arrested in Antofagasta.

Even Roger Fontaine, a foreign affairs advisor to Ronald Reagan, has admitted that "no political reconstruction (of democracy) is going on." He was comparing Chile to Argentina and Brazil which, he said, have achieved progress.

More charges laid against Guy Heroux

MONTREAL (CUP)—Université de Montreal student Guy Heroux may spend the next two semesters in court.

In addition to the charge of the theft of \$70,000 in cheques and money orders, the prosecuting attorney in Heroux's preliminary hearing is pressing for a charge of theft of \$600 in cash and \$380 in services property.

According to testimony given by the director of residences, Gilles Morrisset, \$600 was taken from an unlocked cash box in his office during a one month occupation of the residence administration offices by 40 students last spring.

As well, during the 26 day protest against increases in residence fees, Morrisset charged, \$380 worth of photocopies were made on the office's xerox machine.

hospital from any responsibility for the physical and other characteristics of the baby.

No records are kept of donors. Attempts to do so in the past have deterred would be donors. Wrixon says such records would jeopardize the privacy of both patient and donor. He says he disagrees with those who feel that anyone should be able to find out who their biological father is, and says that artificial insemination must be considered very different from adoption in this respect.

There is a theoretic task of

selective breeding when one is dealing with artificial insemination, says Wrixon, but the number of births resulting from the scale of treatment performed here does not provide a practical risk. Moreover, he says, the donors accepted are relatively average people.

Wrixon says he does not foresee the Grace clinic expanding much more since it is now able to accommodate a large number of patients with only a six week waiting period. In other parts of the country, couples often must wait up to a year for help.

Sources say that Morrisset was contacted by U de M student representatives shortly after the occupation ended April 2 to establish a mechanism to return the missing money. According to the same sources, Morrisset never responded to the offer. Morrisset denied any such communication had taken place.

The defense said there was no basis to accuse Heroux of the theft because there were several hundred persons who had access to the room containing the cash box during the occupation.

Crown prosecutor Raymond Proulx argued that, as a spokesperson for the group occupying the offices, Heroux was "prima facie" responsible for everything that happened on the premises.

"It was Heroux who carried out the mandate of the general assembly (of residence students) to occupy the offices. Had he not done so, he would not (be accused) here," said Proulx at the October 24 hearing.

Proulx said he was amazed the university did not use force immediately to end the occupation.

"I fail to understand that in 1980 (a university administration) waits 26 or 27 days to dislodge a group of students from its offices when that occupation is disrupting the renting policy. We live in a disturbed society," he said.

On another front, several Quebec groups in, Sebel revealed that a petition urging the charges against Heroux be dropped now contains 11,000 signatures.