

# CHERNOBYL BRAVERY REWARDED



On June 14, 1989, Mr. Hector Cowan received a Merit Award from the Right Honourable Joe Clark in recognition of his bravery and service during the Chernobyl crisis.

Hector Cowan was dispatched to Kiev in the zone of the grave nuclear accident at Chernobyl. Cognizant of the serious radiation problem, he readily accepted the task of locating 49 Canadians dispersed throughout the Ukrainian Republic, advising them to leave the area despite contradictory information from Soviet sources. Mr. Cowan and the embassy arranged for their evacuation from the emergency zone to Moscow and Canada. Under the circumstances then prevailing, this was a particularly courageous and commendable act. By placing the welfare of 49 others ahead of his own, he brought visible credit to the Canadian Public Service during a major, internationally recognized event.

PHOTO:  
Mrs. Mariana Duffney  
being presented with  
a Merit Award by  
Consul General John  
Blackwood, Min-  
neapolis.



Mr. Cowan noted that the task was a shared responsibility by all persons at the embassy, who were on call 24 hours a day. In spite of the potential risk, he felt it was a privilege to serve. He is honoured to be the recipient of this recognition and shares the Merit Award with all those who participated in the event at the embassy.

Mrs. Hilda Cowan commented that this award was an unexpected honour. During their time in Moscow she recounted how daily life was lived and how she relied on the foreign community for moral support and information. The children, Victoria, age 5, Hannah, 7, and Moira, 11, are very proud of their heroic dad. Mr. and Mrs. Cowan are expecting their fourth child in July.

Mr. Cowan, a foreign service officer of the department of External Affairs, was assigned to the Canadian Embassy, Moscow, as Counsellor and Consul. He held dual responsibilities for the social affairs (immigration) and consular programmes in the USSR.

## LES AWARD WINNER

Mrs. Mariana Duffney, the locally-engaged (LES) office manager at the Consulate General in Minneapolis, was presented with a Departmental Merit Award in April 1989.

Mrs. Duffney, through her own initiative and determination developed a computerized financial program for use in compiling, sorting and reporting Mission accounts, locally-engaged payroll and special project budgeting reports. This system greatly reduced the time and associated costs in the transmission, calculation and reporting of these items. Mrs. Duffney's programs are now being implemented at 11 other consulates in the United States.

Mrs. Duffney was presented with a Merit Award Certificate and an Incentive Award of \$2,500.