

employment than do men.

"In 1975, unattached males in the labour force received about one-third more total income than did their female counterparts," it adds. "Among the male-headed families who experienced unemployment, the average family income in 1975 was nearly \$5,000 higher than the income of female-headed families with no unemployment."

The Council says unemployment has — since the Depression days of the 1930s — been regarded as an indicator of social distress.

But, the report says, the unemployment rate, now running about 8.5 per cent, highest since the 1930s, is not a good indicator of hardship. A similar line has been taken recently by Federal Cabinet ministers.

"Many fully employed people exist on incomes that border on the poverty threshold, and many among the unemployed have no really severe financial problems at all," the report says.

The Council studied data for the years 1971 and 1975 and concluded that only 3.4 per cent of families in 1975 experien-

ced both unemployment and hardship, compared with 5.7 per cent in 1971.

The study used Statistics Canada low-income levels, which in 1975 were \$3,481 a year for individuals and \$7,655 for a family of four.

Most of the social security programs, designed to meet the needs of special groups, such as the elderly, the ill, young people, the unemployed and women with dependent children, are not specifically aimed at the poor.

The result is that the universal programs have been only "modestly progressive" with net benefits flowing to the middle class as much as to the poor.

An example is unemployment insurance, which is often not paid to the poor because they are not members of the labour force because of age, disability or the need to care for children.

"The majority of the unemployed are members of households in which others are working," it says. "Under these conditions it comes as no surprise that a substantial proportion of unemployment insurance benefits flow to families in the middle- and high-income brackets."

Planning for emergencies

The preparation for possible future disasters — both natural and man-made — is being studied by a group of professors and students at the Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Toronto.

Emergency Planning Canada has extended its post-graduate fellowship program from a U.S. institution to the University of Toronto, awarding a special fellowship to William Needham of Vancouver for his study of the transportation of dangerous, noxious and radioactive materials by rail or road. Previous fellowships were given for study at the Disaster Research Center, Ohio State University.

Professor Ian Burton says the Institute is concerned with finding solutions to disasters and relating emergency planning to other disciplines such as sociology, urban and regional planning, political science, economics and geography.

Potential disasters of interest to the Institute include:

- accidents in the transport of hazardous materials (toxic and flammable chemicals);
- unanticipated emergencies such as the fall of the Soviet satellite in the Northwest Territories this past winter (a disaster which could have occurred in a populated area);
- widespread systems failure, such as power, transport and communications systems;
- complications that might occur when two or more emergencies coincide.

Sixteen-year-old mountaineering veteran determined to reach the top



Toronto Star

Wayne Eastman, 16, of Toronto, gets help from the local fire department climbing team after getting stuck on the side of the Scarborough Bluffs. He spent more than two hours perched on the cliff, 30 metres above the waters of Lake Ontario, before he was rescued. Eastman has been climbing the bluffs since he was eight, and says he won't stop now because he wants to become a mountain climber.

Medical research financing explained

Health Minister Monique Bégin recently announced a five-year plan to provide regular annual increases in grants for medical research.

The grants, to be provided through the Government's Medical Research Council, will be increased based on the inflation rate plus the economic growth rate minus 1 per cent.

Miss Bégin said further grants could be provided in the five-year period "for research in areas of national concern or consideration of the most appropriate indices for cost increases".

The Council will receive a 9.6 per cent increase to \$68.8 million for the 1979-80 fiscal year. Some 100 new jobs are expected to be created each year.