

CIRCULAR DOCUMENTS OF INTEREST TO EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

The Department now has a "Direct On-Line Pay Input System".

This new system promises to reduce the processing time required for pay actions by at least one-third.

The information will be transferred electronically within the Department for verification and audit, then be transferred, electronically to DSS for final processing and cheque issue where required.

Given that this is a completely new and automated system, extensive training will be required. Your patience, cooperation and understanding during this training and start-up period will be greatly appreciated, in anticipation of much improved service thereafter.

A FEW WORDS OF PRAISE

(Editorial in the Citizen, February 24, 1986.)

Consulates do the least glamorous work of diplomats. Some days it is also the best work that External Affairs does. Officers in Ottawa, Nassau and Jamaica all helped last week to arrange an air ambulance home for Sharon Mitchell, the Ottawa woman wounded by a thief in the Bahamas. Bahamian officials had demanded a cash advance for the flight. External signed all the papers and made all the assurances to get the victim promptly on her way. It was the sort of public service that Canadian missions abroad perform routinely. In such untrumpeted but life-saving work, they remind us vividly how our "cookie-pushers" often more than earn their keep.

POLICY ON EVENING AND CORRESPONDENCE COURSE REIMBURSEMENT ADMIN. NO. 29/85 (ADT)

This document outlines the policy of the Department of External Affairs on subsidization of academic and foreign language training courses taken outside working hours. The policy does not cover courses sponsored by the Department and taken during working hours, nor foreign language training required for a confirmed posting.

The program is intended to encourage employee participation in educational activities that a) will improve employee job performance; or b) complement individual career Development interests. The extent of subsidization offered will reflect the benefit the department can expect to derive from the knowledge and skills acquired by employees.

Locally engaged staff abroad, who have been appointed to a position on an indeterminate basis, may also receive financial support while participating in the Evening and Correspondence Study Program. Courses chosen, however, must relate directly to the employee's current duties where the skills acquired will be immediately applied.

For courses offered by recognized academic institutes, the Department may subsidize tuition fees, non-discretionary institutional fees and the cost of textbooks prescribed as essential course requirements. Prior authorization from APDT/APDF must be provided before reimbursement may be granted. Payment will be made only upon proof of successful completion of course.

CONDOMINIUM CONSTRUCTION IS ON THE VERGE OF A BOOM

If all the planned projects go ahead, there could be at least 1 140 new highrise condominium apartments, 460 midrise units and 500 lowrise units built. That could be good news for consumers thinking about buying a condominium this year, but bad news for builders and investors who may see unit prices drop. "Then," says Brian Card, a market analyst with Corporate Staff consultants, a firm that specialized in the highrise condominium market, "supply will exceed demand and we'll have a buyer's market for the next two to three years". Condominiums are relatively new to the Ottawa market. The first ones were built in 1969 and since that time only 8 241 have been built and sold. Adding over 2 000 in this year alone, could inundate the market. "Last year," says Card, "there was very little activity because interest rates had forced the developers to call a halt to new construction. Thus, this year some projects may be put on the shelf for a while as developers assess the market to see how many of those units already under construction have sold."

Prices for existing mid-rise to high rise condominiums range for \$101 000 to \$203 000. Lowrise, from \$88 900 to \$285 000. The new and proposed mid-rise and highrise will range from \$64 000 to \$305 000 and the lowrise from \$75 000 to \$400 000. In terms of resale, most units are now listed for \$20 000 to \$30 000 more than they originally sold for less than a year ago. Investors, up until now, who bought from plans and resold the units just made good returns on their investments.

GOOD CANADIAN NAMES

Mamadou, Estralita, U Win Thein, Auti: a name often denotes a nationality.

And in Canada? What names are Canadian parents currently selecting for their children? According to the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, which recorded 134,000 births across the province last year, it seems that biblical names are big and some of the old standbys are still around, but the names of soap opera stars are starting to capture the hearts of Ontario parents.

The Marys, Roberts, Lindas, Karens and Richards of a decade ago have been tossed aside by parents who are naming their newborns Ashley, Ryan, Andrew, Amanda, Brandon, Vanessa and Justin.

Jennifer and Michael, two solid, long-standing favorites still took top laurels among the names recorded; biblical names such as Matthew, David, Sarah, Rachel, Rebecca, and old favorites like Lisa, Laura and Kevin, are holding their own; but a number of soap opera-inspired ones including Kyle, Cory, Amanda, Crystal and Jessica have dethroned Susan, George, Mary and Richard in the affections of Ontario parents.

Rosemarie Drapkin, deputy registrar-general of the name recording program, says primetime and afternoon television soap operas such as *Dynasty* could be changing the way children are named.

"There's an Ashley on *The Young and the Restless* a Jessica on *General Hospital*

and an Amanda and Crystal on *Dynasty*. It's amazing."

Ashley was the second most popular name in Ontario last year — 1,752 girls were given it. In 1964, Susan was the second most popular name. Last year, Susan ranked 84th.

Slowly but surely, however, the Tylers, Ryans and Kyles are sneaking from afternoon and evening television onto a list once dominated by Peters, Pauls and Patricks.

And foreign service families? Are they giving their children good Canadian names, or are they being influenced by the posting they are currently on, or have been on? It could make an interesting study.