

## News briefs

Canadian producers will sell 300,000 metric tons of sulphur to China in 1979 under terms of a new sales contract negotiated by Cansulex Limited of Vancouver. The contract is valued at about \$13.5 million.

Defence Minister Barney Danson recently accepted the first of a new family of armoured vehicles general purpose (AVGP) produced in Canada, at the General Motors' Diesel Division plant in London, Ontario. The new vehicles (a fire-support vehicle called the *Cougar*, an armoured personnel carrier, the *Grizzly*, and a maintenance and recovery vehicle, the *Husky*) can travel at speeds of up to 100 kph, have a normal range of 600 kilometres and provide protection against small-arms fire and artillery shell fragments.

An 80 percent growth rate in the air transport industry between 1971 and 1976 was reported in a survey of real domestic production released by Statistics Canada. This was followed by a 75 percent rate for management consulting services and a 72 percent rate in industries supplying amusement and recreation services. These compared with a growth rate of 29 per cent for all industries.

Under an agreement signed in Islamabad on January 15, Canada will lend the Pakistan Oil and Gas Development Corporation \$15 million during the next three years to purchase equipment for development of oil deposits.

New motor vehicle sales reached 95,948 in November, down 10.6 per cent from 107,291 a year earlier. A temporary retail sales tax reduction in effect in most provinces during September and October created unusually high sales for those months.

Mexico has agreed to undertake a \$2-million study of the Candu nuclear reactor system. The study, arranged during

a recent mission to Mexico headed by Energy Minister Alastair Gillespie, will assess the benefits of the Canadian heavy-water and natural uranium reactor system, compared with the U.S.-style light-water reactor system, which uses enriched uranium fuel, and will consider building reactors at specific sites in Mexico.

The quarterly study of job vacancies for professionals done by the Technical Service Council found that, at the end of December, job vacancies for professionals were 29 percent higher than they were a year earlier and 10 percent higher than they had been at the end of the third quarter. Statistics Canada's index, based on the volume of "help wanted" advertisements in Canadian newspapers, puts the seasonally-adjusted index for the fourth quarter of 1978 at a level 23 percent higher than it was in the fourth quarter of 1977 and 19 percent higher than it was in the third quarter. The recent increase in manufacturing production, the strongest gain since 1969, is the main reason for the strength in the job market.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will lend \$50 million to Egypt for the purchase of 65 diesel locomotives and parts from General Motors of Canada Ltd. Egypt has decided to use GM locomotives exclusively, said CIDA. Of Egypt's 569 locomotives, 486 were made by GM. Final delivery of the locomotives and spare parts is expected late this year or early 1980. The 30-year loan calls for repayments to start after the seventh year with annual interest at 3 per cent.

The Bank of Montreal plans to end its branch banking activities in the Netherlands and shut down its Amsterdam branch on April 1, because changing business conditions no longer justify keeping the branch open.

Quebec's language law has been broken by 12 large companies and 171 smaller ones, which did not obtain certificates showing they had begun to make French their language of business. Quebec government officials said they would not prosecute. "Our attitude is to try and negotiate with and discuss with people to reach an understanding," a spokesman said.

The value of construction starts increased to \$12 billion in the first nine months of 1978 from \$11 billion a year earlier.

Farm cash receipts reached a total of \$8.58 billion from January to September

1978, up 14.3 per cent from \$7.51 billion a year earlier.

A pollution-control and energy-conservation program that will cost Imperial Oil Ltd. \$60 million at its Dartmouth, Nova Scotia refinery began recently. Much of the cost involves installation of pollution-control equipment. The work should be finished late next year.

H. Basil Robinson became Special Adviser to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, effective January 15. Mr. Robinson, whose last appointment was as Northern Pipeline Commissioner, is a former Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Ontario children suffering from a deficiency in human growth hormone will soon be able to obtain the substance, used to prevent pituitary dwarfism, thanks to an amendment to the province's Coroner's Act. The law now allows pituitary glands from all coroners' autopsies to be used for medical purposes unless a dead person's or family's wishes prevent the removal of the gland. The hormone, which cannot yet be manufactured in a laboratory, is also obtained through donations under the Human Tissue Gift Act.

Former Justice Minister Ron Basford, who resigned his Vancouver Centre seat in the House of Commons, became a partner in a Vancouver law firm on February 1. He resigned his Cabinet position on August 2, to spend more time with his family.

The National Energy Board has approved the export of 20 million cubic feet a day of extra Alberta natural gas to Montana for 60 days.

A new lightning strike detector, used by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, plotted 20,000 strikes in the northeastern part of the province last summer. The detector — a position analyser and high-speed print-out machine hooked up to two antennas — will be able to direct men and fire equipment to hard-hit areas immediately after a storm.

Deep snow in northern Ontario is threatening the welfare of whitetail deer in the North Bay and Parry Sound regions. The provincial ministry of natural resources has cut trees and bulldozed trails to expose brush for the stranded and hungry animals, and is setting up grain feeding stations in some areas.

*Canada Weekly* is published by the Information Services Division, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, K1A 0G2.

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*Cette publication existe également en français sous le titre Hebdo Canada.*

*Algunos números de esta publicación aparecen también en español bajo el título Noticiario de Canadá.*