

is being viewed.

(3) A light beside the character is switched on to verify the unit's accuracy.

(4) The user activates the typewriter or computer terminal, using a special breath-operated device that resembles a drinking straw.

This entire operation can be performed at such a speed that an experienced operator can type between 20 to 30 words a minute.

The method by which the EMCCA can identify the symbols viewed by the user is based upon the differential reflection of light from the pigmented iris and white sclera of the eye.

Mr. Vasa emphasizes that ease of operation and accuracy, as well as speed of operation, were the dominant design factors.

A bank of small solenoids placed over the keyboard operates the keys of an IBM 2741 terminal or standard *Selectric* typewriter as employed for previous aids in the series. The *Selectric* was chosen because of the need to use continuous stationery from a bulk supply and because the interchangeable type ball permits rapid conversion to character sets including mathematical symbols.

The system requires no modification of computer terminal or typewriter so that these devices can also be used by non-handicapped individuals.

Air-transportation tax

A tax on air transportation will be levied in Canada, effective October 15, in place of a previously announced \$2.80-airport charge, Transport Minister Jean Marchand announced recently.

The amount paid or payable in Canada will be 5 per cent of the air fare up to a maximum of \$5 on any ticket sold for air travel within the designated taxation area, and a specific tax of \$5 for international trips ending outside the taxation area. (The taxation area includes Canada, the United States (except Hawaii), and the French Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.)

The tax, which will be shown separately on tickets, will be collected under authority of the Excise Tax Act, Part II as provided for in legislation passed by Parliament in December 1969. This legislation, however, did

not provide for any limitation on the application of the 5 percent *ad valorem* rate. The Government has been concerned that full application of this rate would have been too expensive on longer routes and therefore, will ask Parliament to pass the necessary amendments to the legislation to provide relief. No one, therefore, will be required to pay more than \$5 and, in most cases, considerably less regardless of the length of the journey and the corresponding cost of the ticket for air travel in Canada and the U.S.

User pays

The airline industry and related associations have already expressed their preference for the air-transportation tax, which will help defray part of the annual deficit incurred in operating Canadian airports which, for the fiscal year 1973-74, amounted to \$106 million. This is in line with the Federal Government's policy of the "user will pay" instead of air-transport costs becoming a burden on the general taxpayer who may not choose to travel by air. Mr. Marchand said that while about 13 per cent of Canadians take one air flight annually, only 8 per cent fly regularly.

The practice of levying charges to cover the costs of air transportation is already in use in over 100 countries, including the U.S., France, Israel, Japan, Brazil and Italy. The present cost of operating airport facilities in Canada amounts to about \$186 million annually, while revenues total only \$80 million. The new tax should reduce this deficit by some \$30 million in the first full year.

Design Canada scholarships

Thirty-four "Design Canada" scholarships for advanced studies in design, totalling \$134,725 were announced by Industry, Trade and Commerce Minister Alastair Gillespie last month. Twenty-five students will study abroad, the majority going to the United States and England. Others will study in Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands and nine will attend schools in Canada. The candidates are studying in various fields of design with 15 in industrial design, eight in graphics and in education, textile, interior, industrial ceramics and other disciplines.

July housing starts

Housing starts for all areas of Canada were at an annual rate of 218,400 dwelling units during July, according to preliminary figures released last month by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Actual starts during the month in the urban areas numbered 16,138, a decline of 28 per cent from the 22,417 total for July 1973. Cumulative starts during the first seven months of 1974 totalled 107,154, a drop of 7 per cent from the 114,639 figure for the comparative period last year.

The January-July total this year reflected an increase of 4 per cent in the volume of starts on single-detached houses and a decline of 14 per cent in multiple-housing.

Female police

"You've come a long way, officer," might be the best way to describe the recent full-fledged female move into law enforcement. In separate but coincident decisions, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Ontario Provincial Police are now accepting qualified female applicants as recruits.

This month, women — both single and married — will join male recruits at the RCMP's Regina barracks in a six-month training course for the first time in the federal force's 101-year history. Recruits successfully completing the training rigours will then go on field duty. Uniforms for the women constables had not been announced at press time, but it is expected they will receive, in addition to their duty uniforms, modified versions of the famous RCMP scarlet tunic, complete with breeches, boots, and flat-brimmed stetsons.

A 65-year period of male domination in the Ontario Provincial Police ended in May when 15 women were accepted as policewomen recruits.

The women, including a mechanic's wife, a college student, a boutique manager, a store detective and a factory worker, will be treated equal to and paid the same as male constables. They will carry service revolvers, billies and handcuffs, and will receive extra physical training with the emphasis on self-defence.