CANADIANS SMOKE LESS

Since 1966, there has been a 7 percent decline in the *per capita* consumption of cigarettes by persons 15 years of age or older in Canada.

"Canadians are now aware of the risk to health from smoking cigarettes," Dr. Ernest A. Watkinson, director-general of the health services branch of the Department of National Health and Welfare, told the twenty-third World Health Organization national assembly in Geneva.

According to a report in *The Medical Post*, Dr. Watkinson attributes this decrease in smoking to the support of the Federal Government's efforts by provincial health departments, various agencies and educators. The Government has aimed at informing the public about risks, encouraging discontinuation of the habit, dissuading the young from adopting it, and reducing the incidence of associated diseases.

RESEARCH NECESSARY

Twice a year, the Federal Government releases tar and nicotine reports on popular cigarette brands. It also carries out surveys, supports experimental programs, and provides grants to universities that wish to study the motivational aspect of smoking, Dr. Watkinson told the international meeting.

Dr. Watkinson believes that research should also be carried out to determine which parts of this strategy have been most effective, and says that "increasing attention must be paid to reducing the hazards for those who unfortunately continue the habit".

CANADA PRAISED

Canada was praised by numerous national delegations for its remarkable progress and its unusually informative report. Documentation and program materials have been offered, through WHO, to any other nation wishing to follow a similar strategy.

Canada, said the report in *The Medical Post*, also welcomed the summary by the WHO scientific task force, and believed that sponsorship by WHO would have a world-wide impact on smoking.

PESTICIDE ELIMINATION

This year Canada will become one of the first nations to adopt procedures designed to destroy specific environmental pollutants.

Batch shipments of about 107,000 gallons of DDT formulations, previously used by the Department of National Defence for the control of biting flies at military installations, were shipped for destruction to the Defence Research Establishment Suffield (DRES), near Medicine Hat, Alberta late last month. The process will be carried out in a specially-designed "destructor" plant. The majority of DND stores of DDT will be neutralized by December in the destructor system, which cost $150,000.

The neutralization program, necessitated by the restrictions imposed on the use of DDT in Canada, represents a collaborative effort involving the Defence Research Board, the Surgeon-General's Branch of the Canadian Armed Forces and an industrial firm in Burlington, Ontario, which is designing and fabricating the plant.

FOUR-STAGE PROGRAM

The pesticide-destruction program will proceed in four stages. First to be neutralized will be DND's formulations of DDT in kerosene and part of the existing stocks of DDT emulsion concentrates; next the chlorinated pesticides held by other Federal Government departments; then, materials stored by the provinces, and finally, destruction of those now held in storage by Canadian cities and municipalities.

DRB and Armed Forces specialists began investigating requirements for the plant about a year ago.

The general project began when DRES was instructed to conduct a literature search and to follow every available lead in planning a procedure for destroying the hydrocarbon pesticide combinations held by the Department.

The destructor will resemble a water-pipe seven feet in diameter and 15 feet long, with a vertical scrubbing-tower at one end 27 feet high and seven feet in diameter. The installation resembles a single-stage jet engine with a vertical tower at the exit end.

The DDT combinations will be injected into the destructor and atomized in a high-temperature refractory, where complete combustion will take place. Water, to serve as a coolant, will be introduced at the top of the tower and will flow through a Teflon filter. This will cool and liquify the combustion products which will then leave the system as a harmless dilute acid.

Destruction will be achieved at a rate of 100 gallons an hour. It is estimated that with operations scheduled to begin about July 1, neutralization of the Department's surplus DDT stocks should be completed in December. The operation will be carried out on a continuous basis.

When similar formulations to be shipped to DRES by other Federal Government departments, the provinces and municipalities have been destroyed, the scientists will then determine the recalibrations necessary to modify the system for the destruction of compounds with different combustion products.