

Chinese oceanographers tour Canada

Seven oceanographers from the Peoples' Republic of China, who arrived May 5, are on an intensive 28-day tour of Canada.

Their itinerary includes visits to Federal Government marine science establishments, as well as universities and private industries. They also attended some sessions of the International Hydrographic Technical Conference in Ottawa, May 14-18.

Heading the delegation, which includes one woman, is Chai Chen-jui, Director of the Department of Science and Technology in China's Bureau of Oceanography.

Among the federal institutions being visited are the Bedford Institute of Oceanography, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, the Canada Centre for Inland Waters, Burlington, Ontario, and the Institute of Ocean Sciences, Patricia Bay, British Columbia.

The delegation also made an excursion to Gravenhurst, Ontario, birthplace of Dr. Norman Bethune, the Canadian doctor whose memory is greatly revered throughout China.

After attending sessions of the thirteenth Congress of the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, the group was scheduled to return home from Vancouver at the beginning of June.

Skate money

Skate Canada will receive financial sponsorship for the first time in its five-year history. The Alberta Gas Trunk Line will provide a total of \$175,000 for five successive competitions commencing October 1980. The first sponsored event will be held in Calgary — the sponsor's home base. The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company will also present a team trophy to the country with the highest point total.

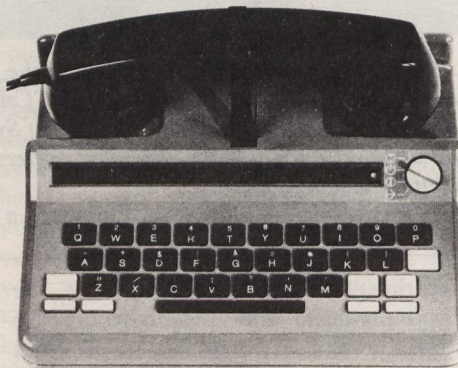
Skate Canada is the only invitational senior international competition held annually in North America and ranks immediately after the World and European Championships. About 60 of the world's top skaters will compete. The 1979 Skate Canada competition was previously cancelled owing to a conflict with the pre-Olympic competition, Flaming Leaves, scheduled for September 17-23 in Lake Placid, New York.

New hope for the deaf

Since 1977, the Department of Communications has been involved in a project to improve existing devices to help the deaf use the telephone.

Developmental work has now been completed and licensing arrangements between the Federal Government and the Ontario Mission of the Deaf (OMD) have been announced for the manufacture, marketing and distribution of a new device.

The Visual Ear is a combination keyboard and alphanumeric display unit which is acoustically coupled to the phone. It is light (about 1 kg including batteries), portable and a user can set it up by simply placing it next to a telephone in a store, home, or even a telephone booth.



By typing messages, hearing- and speech-impaired people will be able to "talk" to anyone who has a Visual Ear or compatible device, such as revamped teletype machine. Messages appear electronically on the display unit much the same way news is spelled out on cable TV sets, with a maximum of 24 characters shown at once.

Under a research contract funded by DOC, Health and Welfare Canada and Supply and Services Canada for \$729,000, Bell Northern Research developed production prototypes. It is expected that the Visual Ear will retail to the deaf for \$300-\$400.

The device operates at three speeds: 60 words a minute, which is compatible with the deaf teletype network, and 100 and 300 words a minute, which are computer compatible.

The idea for a lightweight, inexpensive, and portable Visual Ear was first developed by the Ontario Mission of the Deaf.

Ice-breaking breakthrough

Three Canadian ice-breakers will soon be smashing the winter ice of the Great Lakes with a new \$1.75-million ice-breaking bow built by Hoverlift Systems of Calgary, which can break ice up to one metre thick by pumping air under the ice to force down water levels. Without support, the ice simply breaks under its own weight as the ships plough along.

The air-cushion bow consists of three buoyant pontoons surrounded by a flexible "skirt". Pressurized air is pumped into it from three diesel-powered centrifugal fans for injection under the ice.

More than two miles of heavy-duty plastic skirting material, four feet wide, is being delivered from Britain this month to make the skirts for the Canadian ships — the *Alexander Henry*, *Griffon* and *Montmorency*. "Even 100 degrees below zero conditions don't affect the heavy plastic," say the British manufacturers, Avon Industrial Polymers, Ltd.

Implications of new Soviet citizenship law studied

Recent news reports have suggested that a new citizenship law in the U.S.S.R., due to come into effect on July 1, will extend Soviet citizenship to many Canadians who do not already possess it. Since the new law was announced, the Department of External Affairs has been examining its possible consequences for Canadians. The information available to the Department of External Affairs suggests that, while the new law may be somewhat more specific than earlier legislation, the intention behind it appears to be essentially to consolidate past legislation.

The Department is in touch with Soviet authorities concerning any implications the new legislation may have for Canadians which go beyond past practice. Meanwhile, the Department will continue to monitor the situation. The Department notes that the Soviet Government has traditionally continued to recognize the Soviet citizenship of nationals living abroad and has considered citizenship to devolve on children whether born in the Soviet Union or abroad. Accordingly, the Department has advised and continues to advise Canadians who may have queries about the subject of Soviet citizenship to communicate with the Soviet Embassy.