

Human Rights Act or threaten the safety of any individual or disclose correspondence between a member of the public and a Member of Parliament or the Government;

(e) impede the functioning of, or the examination of a case or issue before, a court of law, a quasi-judicial board, commission or other tribunal, or any inquiry established under the Inquiries Act;

(f) disclose legal opinions or advice provided to a government institution or privileged communications between lawyer and client in a matter of government business;

(g) disclose financial or commercial information which: would jeopardize the position of a government institution in relation to contractual or other negotiations or the position of any other party to such negotiations; or would result in significant and undue financial loss or gain by a person, group, organization or government institution; or would affect adversely a person, group, organization or government institution in regard to its competitive position.

An eighth exemption would cover the need to preserve the fullness and frankness of advice serving the decision-making process, particularly in relation to advice to or by ministers, deputy heads, and senior officials, to preparation of legislation, or to the conduct of parliamentary business. This exemption would parallel the United States exemption which applies to: inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency. An alternative formulation is provided by the proposed Australian exemption which exempts documents containing: matter in the nature of opinion, advice or recommendation; or other matter, reflecting deliberative or policy-making processes.

A final exemption might apply to documents whose disclosure would be prohibited by any federal enactment.

Complaint review

The green paper discusses various options for review of complaints by applicants who have been denied access to government documents. The options include:

(a) Parliamentary review of the administration of the legislation.

(b) An "information auditor" with powers to monitor the administration of the legislation, similar to the powers of the Auditor General in respect of financial management.

(c) An information commissioner who would act as an ombudsman to consider complaints from applicants, examine in camera the documents requested, and issue public advice to the Government as to his agreement or disagreement as to the application of the exemptions to the documents in question.

(d) An information commissioner with powers to consider complaints from applicants, examine in camera the documents requested, and issue a binding order to the Government to release a document where he does not agree with the Government's position as to application of the exemptions.

(e) Review by the courts of the administration of the legislation.

Reduction of the use of antibiotics in animal feeds

Health and Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde and Agriculture Minister Eugene Whelan recently announced that the Health Protection Branch, Health and Welfare Canada, is instituting a policy to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics in animal feeds.

Public concern regarding indiscriminate use of antibiotics in animal feeds has been expressed by scientists and consumer groups, since it is known that this practice may cause in animals bacteria that resist antibiotics. The antibiotics used in human medicines and in animal production are to some extent the same. There is, therefore, concern that if man is infected with resistant organisms of animal origin, and if disease occurs, it may be resistant to treatment by antibiotics used in humans.

The Health Department says however, that based on available evidence, a total ban on the use of antibiotics in animals is unwarranted. These substances are essential for the production at reasonable costs of animal foods under the large scale, intensive conditions utilized by Canadian farmers.

The Health Protection Branch will reduce unnecessary use of antibiotics for growth promotion and disease pre-

vention by: (a) continuing the policy of permitting new antibiotics useful in human therapy to be sold only on prescription when used on animals; (b) requiring manufacturers to produce new supporting data on the efficacy of all antibiotic growth promotants used in Canada and banning those shown not to be effective; and (c) requiring manufacturers to produce new supporting data for selected antibiotic uses in feeds where there are doubts regarding their efficacy in disease prevention. Uses which are not justified by these new data will be prohibited.

A whale of a baby

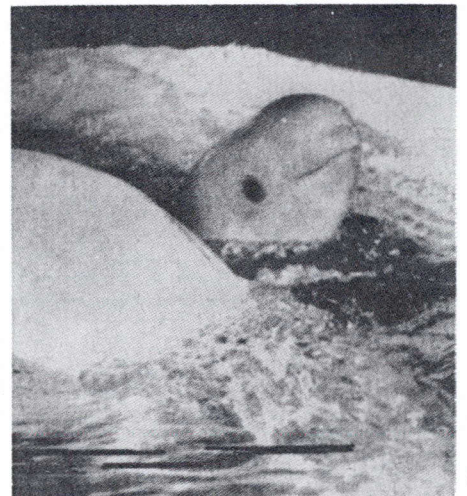
Vancouver Aquarium officials say a newborn 75-pound Beluga whale has a good chance to become the first to survive birth in captivity.

The calf was born on July 13, three hours after its mother, a 1,250-pound Beluga captured last year in Hudson Bay, went into labour.

"We're tickled pink. The calf looks fine and so far we're quite pleased," said curator Gil Hewlett. "Right now we're just leaving it alone and letting it nurse from its mother." The mother, Kavna, was reported to be doing fine.

"It was pretty exciting. Kavna released water and we could see her beginning contractions. The calf came out head first which is unusual," Hewlett said.

Aquarium staff members watched in delight as mother and four-foot-long son frolicked in the aquarium tank.



Kavna (right) and her 75-pound son frolick at the Vancouver Aquarium.