
Oil spill clean-up passes test

A test and demonstration of the Canadian Marine Drilling Ltd. (Canmar) contingency plan and oil spill clean-up equipment at Tuktoyaktuk Harbour, held in the Northwest Territories last month, has met all requirements of the operating conditions of the Federal Government. It was observed by officials of the Canadian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries and the Environment and Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. (Canmar, a subsidiary company of Dome Petroleum Ltd., is the firm which conducts the drilling of exploratory oil and gas wells in the Beaufort Sea.)

Because earlier tests this year at Tuktoyaktuk met with only partial success, Canmar was directed to repeat the exercise. Last month's test was the culmination of two weeks of intensive exercises and training.

Dockyard spills

The procedure for dockyard spills involves a 500-foot long, 38-inch Navy boom, which is permanently attached to the dock, and deployed from the pre-positioned containers by a small craft to surround the dock-handling area. Deployment time is about two minutes. The spilled product is then extracted from the contained area by a Spate pump and is either disposed of or reprocessed.

Inshore booms

For protection of environmentally-sensitive areas such as shorelines, fish spawning and habitat areas, areas used by marine mammals, marshes and waterfowl nesting areas, etc., a 1,000-foot boom is towed by a Northern Transportation Company barge and deployed by the barge or by jet-powered craft in waters too shallow for the barge.

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In the latest test, the boom was placed in one shallow bay of Tuktoyaktuk Harbour, anchored to the shoreline, released, towed to a second site some 400-500 yards away, redeployed and anchored. The complete exercise, which was conducted to test the capability of responding quickly to changing conditions, took only two hours.

Pollution-barge test

The principal line of defence against pollution from a major offshore spill or blow-out is the pollution barge.

The large craft (about 100 by 50 feet),

manoeuvred by a separate tug, contains two Arctic booms and an oil-skimmer. The two booms are towed by other tugs in a "Y" configuration into the path of an oil spill, so as to direct the spill towards the skimmer equipment.

The crude oil or product is then taken aboard the pollution barge, heated to a combustible temperature, and disposed of by burning from elevated flare nozzles.

To provide this type of protection in ice-covered waters, a \$7-million program of research and equipment development was approved by the Federal Government in 1976.

News briefs

Federal Finance Minister Jean Chrétien recently stated at a federal-provincial finance ministers' meeting that over the next few years the real growth of the economy could reach an annual average of 5.5 per cent. He added, however, that the short-term outlook was disturbing. The economy would grow only moderately over the next 18 months, which would not be enough to have a major impact on unemployment. The ministers also discussed the future of wage-and-price controls but remained undecided on the question of when they should end.

The flow of immigrants to Canada will be restricted by legislation passed earlier this year linking immigration to economic conditions, according to Bud Cullen, Minister of Employment and Immigration. The act has made provision for acceptance on compassionate grounds for displaced or persecuted persons.

The Export Development Corporation has approved loans totalling \$413 million supporting export sales of aircraft, ships, equipment for the chemical, pulp and brewery industries, and prefabricated housing. The long term loans, foreign investment guarantees and export credit insurance will facilitate exports, valued at approximately \$506.5 million, to Argentina, Hungary, Poland, India, Trinidad, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Zambia, Thailand, Turkey and Indonesia.

André Therrien, Commissioner of Penitentiaries for nearly three years, died recently, leaving his wife and four sons. Solicitor General Francis Fox, offering condolences to the family, praised Mr. Therrien's "great humanitarianism which he brought to bear on each day and on each

decision, however difficult".

Scientists at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography in Halifax, Nova Scotia, have discovered a marine worm (the common *arenicola marina*) that thrives on oil pollution. In fact, a heavily polluted area near Nova Scotia's Chedabucto Bay (plagued with bunker C oil from the sunken tanker *Arrow*) supports one of the largest colonies of marine worms the scientists have seen. Although the *arenicola marina*'s future as an agent in the fight against oil spills is yet to be determined, scientists are certain that its body absorbs hydrocarbons from the sediment it takes in.

The Federal Government has named a mountain in British Columbia after Manzo Nagano, the first Japanese to settle in Canada 100 years ago. The peak is about 400 kilometres north of Vancouver, near the region where Japanese immigrants pioneered the commercial fishing industry along the Pacific coast.

Joe Morris, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, has been elected chairman of the International Labour Organization. The United Nations Agency conducts discussions with governments, employers and workers on shared concerns.

The Canadian auto industry closed its 1977-model year in September with a record 25 percent sales increase for the month, compared with figures for a year earlier. Sales of North American-built cars totalled 49,819 units, compared with 39,849 units in the previous September, while truck sales jumped 26 per cent to 20,576 units from 16,286. According to William Hawkins, vice-president and general manager of Ford Motor Co. of Canada Ltd., "the Canadian automobile industry surpassed the one million car sales mark for the first time".