
Leather footwear import quotas expanded

Canadian companies will be allowed to import a further 1.9 million pairs of leather footwear bringing the total quota allowed for the period December 1, 1982 to November 30, 1983 to 11.4 million pairs.

The increase in the quota was announced February 2 by Minister of State (International Trade) Gerald Regan. Mr. Regan said that with this final allocation he expected that the import trade would

now be in a position to ensure that consumers' footwear needs are met within the over-all quota restraint on leather footwear imports.

The minister also announced that effective December 31, 1982 leather shoes and sandals valued for duty at \$45 (Cdn) and more a pair and leather boots valued for duty at \$75 (Cdn) and more each pair are exempt from the quota on imports of leather

Mystery of multiplying caribou baffles wildlife officials

Baffled wildlife officials say it seemed impossible but a herd of barren ground caribou in Canada's North — thought to be steadily declining in number — apparently has tripled in population in the past five years.

The caribou herd, called *kaminuriak* by inland Inuit in the Northwest Territories and the far reaches of northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, was down to 40 000, according to a 1977 survey.

However, results from a spring 1982 survey, with officials using the same procedures, shows there now are 130 000 of the animals in the region — all of which leaves Harvey Payne, northern wildlife specialist with the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources, quite puzzled.

"From what we know about caribou populations, they just do not grow that quickly," Mr. Payne said. "Caribou never have twins or triplets like the white-tailed deer population."

Mr. Payne said there were indications that calf survival had been particularly good in recent years and that the popula-

tion of wolves, the caribou's chief natural enemy, had been reduced at the same time.

"So, if there was going to be a slight increase in the herd, it wouldn't have surprised us one bit," said Mr. Payne. The results of the recent study were "difficult to explain".

Mr. Payne said the survey, carried out at the herd's calving grounds in a remote area in the Northwest Territories, is 95 per cent accurate.

While admitting that the spring survey could be wrong, he said it also was possible that past surveys had been incorrect and the recent one accurate.

Another survey, although expensive, is planned for next spring to see if the result is the same. If last spring's results are borne out, the department will have to evaluate its testing procedures.

Mr. Payne said it was possible that a neighbouring herd migrated to the calving ground at the time of the survey for one reason or another, but this had never been observed in the past.

footwear. Those goods will continue to require import permits, but permits will be issued without restraint. In the recent past, imports of footwear above these prices have totalled approximately 500 000 pairs annually. The over-all yearly level of the leather footwear quota remains unchanged at 11.4 million pairs.

As well, Mr. Regan announced that effective immediately, separate categories for boot imports have been established, so that timely information will be available on boot imports, as distinct from imports on shoes and sandals. This information will enable the government to determine whether separate quotas need be established for imports of boots, as opposed to the present system of allocating quota for boots, shoes and sandals together.

In announcing these changes in the quota administration, the minister indicated both domestic and international considerations had been reviewed. The changes were made in accordance with Canada's rights and obligations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and followed meetings Mr. Regan has had with various trade, consumer and union groups representing the footwear sector.

Videotex service planned

Infomart of Toronto plans to offer a full consumer videotex subscription, including news services, for less than \$15 a month by no later than next year, said company president David Carlisle.

A market study recently completed in Los Angeles shows US consumers are willing to pay significantly more than \$15 a month. That rate is competitive with pay television in Canada, Mr. Carlisle said in an interview with the *Canadian Press*.

He said the company has not decided whether the full service would be carried in Toronto by Bell Canada or several cable TV companies. A variety of videotex packages may be offered and it is possible a deluxe version could cost more than the basic rate of \$15.

In the Los Angeles study, the features most frequently used by 350 customers were news and interactive services such as home banking.

The US trial ran 250 000 words of news a day, offering content from wire services and major California daily newspapers, in addition to stories written by local reporters for the videotex trial.



Caribou herds in Canada's North are increasing at a rate that is baffling wildlife officials.