

## News of the arts

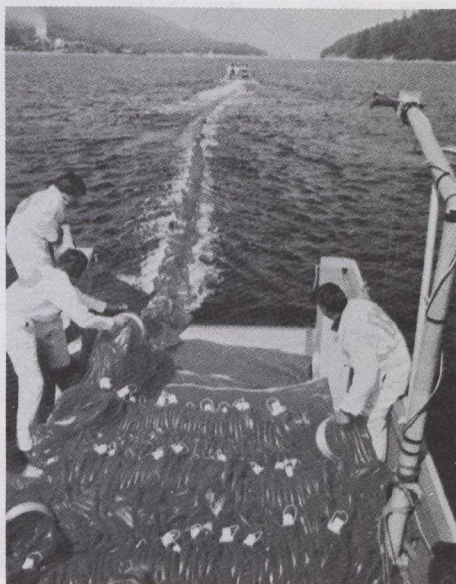
### Oil spill clean-up zooms ahead with new equipment

Harm to bird, animal and marine life from oil spills may be largely averted with the use of a self-inflating ZOOM boom and disc oil skimmers made by Bennett Pollution Controls Limited of Vancouver.

Bennett devised the remarkably effective ZOOM following a massive clean-up after the devastating oil spill off the coast of Santa Barbara, California in 1969, for which he was the prime contractor.

The compact, light equipment needs only 10 per cent of the storage space of conventional oil spill containment booms. Simple tension causes it to inflate, without the use of air compressors or gas cylinders; while deflated, large quantities may be easily packed into aircraft and delivered quickly to the spill area.

The new skimmers are also designed to save space. The MI 30 model, for example, 1,270 mm (50 inches) high, can recover 30 tonnes an hour of floating oil with a water content of only 2 per cent. They operate in debris, since waves do not affect them and they function on the principle that while oil will stick to their rotating discs, water will not. Although this principle is not new, the skimmers have several unusual features, including linear disc shifts in a triangular con-



*The ZOOM boom is packed in compact casing that releases miles of fencing to trap and contain an oil spill. Disc oil skimmers recover the oil before it can do any harm.*

figuration, each with its own drive motor. Another advantage is the positive displacement pump that is built into the skimmer, eliminating the suction-lift restrictions of skimmers that use separate pumps.

### National Research Council program aids unemployed scientists

Almost \$6 million has been approved to continue a new National Research Council program designed to stimulate employment among Canada's scientific and engineering graduates.

In its first year, the plan considered to be an important part of the effort to expand Canadian technical capability, has resulted in more than 400 unemployed scientists and engineers being placed with 300 Canadian companies.

The scientific and technical employment program (STEP) is aimed at creating permanent jobs in private industry for unemployed graduates in scientific and technical fields. STEP allows researchers to develop their skills by providing salary support to a maximum of \$15,000 for each researcher. This allows companies otherwise unwilling or unable to absorb costs for the usual training period to place such employees on staff. While training on the job, a STEP-assisted re-

searcher also achieves an indirect aim of the program — stimulation of secondary jobs resulting from his research. Since STEP's inception, permanent staff have been hired by client companies in sales or other capacities.

In the case of a small financially-troubled company, Analytic Systems Ware Limited of Vancouver, a STEP researcher was hired to help rectify technical problems with a new electronic navigator. The result was an electronic course-setter that could be used in small vessels such as fishing boats or pleasure craft to check their position without having to make tedious sightings and calculations. Sales of the unit are now rising quickly and the STEP researcher is already engaged in other tasks with the company.

Applicants are assessed along the lines of future value for both the company and the economy. Company initiative can in-

clude anything from new products to the establishment of a first-time quality control facility to enable the firm to reduce costs from returned or rejected products. Electric engineering firms with less than 25 employees dominate the program with mechanical (machinery and metal fabricating) companies close behind.

### Tourism bargaining in Montreal

Buyers and sellers of tourism from many parts of the world met in Montreal recently in a government-sponsored marketplace that is expected to bring Canada's tourism industry \$40-million worth of new business.

The event was the third annual Rendez-vous Canada, sponsored by the Canadian Government Office of Tourism (CGOT) and provincial, territorial and municipal governments in co-operation with private industry.

The five-day meeting brought together Canadian sellers of tourism products and services — representatives of governments, carriers, hotels and outfitters — with the buyers, foreign marketers of tourism to Canada from major world markets.

### Computer matched participants

They were paired off by computer for bargaining on a trading floor area where strict confidentiality was maintained between the buyer and seller by restricting floor access to all but registered delegates. In this confidential atmosphere, pre-arranged meetings matched Canadian products and services to the market needs of the foreign buyers with resulting sales reaching millions of dollars.

The first Rendez-vous in Toronto in 1977 generated sales of Canadian packages totalling \$20 million. Last year in Vancouver the figure was \$37 million.

Sellers representing 143 organizations in Canada have been matched by computer with 177 buyers from such countries as the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, Mexico, Venezuela, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Hong Kong.

In the matching process, priorities are assigned according to each organization's meeting preferences. This manual pairing takes about 15 days; the actual computer run, which arranges the appointments, takes less than one minute.