

Mosaic

NEWS



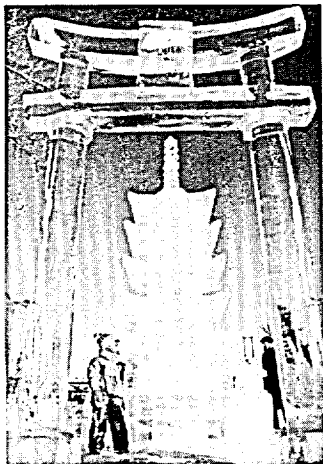
Spring 1986

Canada-U.S. freer trade talks are scheduled to begin; Liberal, Joseph Ghiz, has been elected Premier of P.E.I., and EXPO 86 in Vancouver, B.C., is now in full swing.

TECHNOLOGY

LP's probably have another 15 years in them, but already compact disc players and compact disc recordings, or CDs, are standard audio equipment in 100 000 Canadian homes.

The CD is a miniature record that has less than half the diameter of an ordinary record album yet holds more music on one side than could be crammed onto two album sides (up to about 75 minutes per side) and the disc itself is virtually indestructible.



Winterlude ice sculpture

Some of the advantages are that there is a virtual absence of background noise — tape hiss or needle drag — plus it comes with a scanner which, at the push of a button, can jump from one band to the next, forward or reverse plus skip across a band to find the exact passage desired. There are about 5 000 compact discs currently on the market, evenly divided between classical and pop. The discs run between \$20 to \$30 each and in 1985 over two million were sold as compared to seven million LP's. The machines currently retail for between \$400 to \$1 000. Predictions are rampant that the CD system will make the turntable and LP obsolete by the year 2000.



Compact disk player and recording.

Cash. Starting this spring anyone with a bank machine card will be able to get cash from virtually all of the 3 200-odd machines in Canada through a new inter-bank network called Interac. In the United States, it is also possible to get cash using Canadian cards. The Bank of Montreal and Royal Trust have become part of the Cirrus network with over 8 000 bank machines in the U.S. and the Royal Bank has joined the Plus network which has over 6 000 U.S. machines. Both American systems allow cardholders to withdraw the equivalent in U.S. funds of up to \$500 Canadian from their accounts in Canada for a \$2 transaction fee.

Kodak can no longer make or sell instant cameras and film. In January 1986, a federal appeals court ruled that the company was infringing on Polaroid's patents. Thus, for the first time in 55 years, Eastman Kodak Co. has posted a quarterly loss. Shares are down from \$3.80 in 1985 to \$1.46 in 1986.

Money talks. True, but who has actually heard it and ... this being Canada, does it speak bilingually? Since 1981, Carleton University and the Bank of Canada have been looking into ways to differentiate bills so that the 40 000 Canadian people with serious visual problems will know how much money they have. "It is not a question of them being cheated," says Mr. Adolph from the Bank of Canada, "rather of them not having personal independence". Various solutions were suggested — using Braille, but the handling deforms the markings; changing the size of the bills, but this would create problems in counting and storing the bills. They eventually settled on a lightweight, cheap, portable, low power, talking money counter which shines light through the bills then tells their value. Now several years and more than \$50 000 later, prototypes of the machine have been completed and 25 of them will be distributed to centres across the country. Money carrying codes that can be read by these machines is now in circulation.

LAW

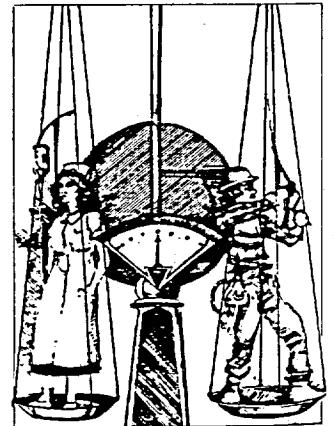
Children's names. Ontario mothers can now give their babies their surname regardless of their marital status, so ruled the Ontario Supreme Court in February 1986. They join the ranks of mothers in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec and the Northwest Territories, who have similar legislation.

An Equal Value Pay bill was introduced into the Ontario government on Tuesday February 12, 1986 and the Liberal government is determined to enforce the legislation.

Sceptics say that it is impossible to determine which two jobs should be considered work of equal value. How can you compare the value of the jobs done by a secretary and a construction worker?

Labor ministry officials have already turned to Minnesota state experts for guidance in implementing the first piece of legislation, a bill aimed at bringing the wages of 24 000 women in female-dominated public sector jobs, mainly clerical and secretarial staff, in line with male-dominated occupations that are judged to be of equal value.

A later bill will cover other public sector workers such as hospital, municipal workers and teachers as well as private sector employees.



Rent Reforms. Landlords can now automatically raise rents 4% a year in rent-controlled buildings, a decrease from the old guideline of 6%. This applies to all rent increases given after August 1, 1985.

The legislation also puts all units renting for more than \$750 a month under review. The remaining proposals, including the extension of rent review to all units, are expected in legislation this spring. Now only units built before 1976 are covered.