

## INVENTIONS WANTED

Beside such Canadian discoveries as insulin, pabulum, the telephone and the cobalt bomb used in cancer treatments, a new type of can-opener sounds pretty insignificant. David Dubeta of Edmonton, who has designed it, however, figures it's the best can-puncturing device on the market, because it improves the flow of liquid from the can.

Noel Labonté, of Jonquière, Québec, has invented a new type of double-bed to keep restless sleepers apart. Monsieur Labonté says a cushioned separator, running like a hump down the length of the bed, should keep one sleeper from disturbing the other.

Anne Lambrecht, of Ceylon, Saskatchewan, has developed a new tricycle. The idea is to mould an animal's shape over the three wheels so a child can ride a horse, elephant or camel if he chooses, and steer the trike with reins or handlebars.

And Alberta rancher George Connell, who runs 100-head of cattle in Stavely and spends more time in the saddle than out, has produced an idea involving "sure-grip" saddle-chaps. His chaps reduce slippage between rider and saddle and make horse riding less of a punishment and more of a Pullman coach ride.

While these inventions don't approach the social impact of the first sewing machine, the first telephone exchange, the first electronic microscope, the first electric cooking oven, the first speedometer, the first snowmobile, the first television camera or the first sulphur matches other Canadians invented, they do follow a tradition by making a contribution to human progress and convenience.

By seeking a patent from the Canadian Government they protect the fruits of their inventive genius.

## PATENTS AND PROTECTION

For offering full disclosure of the invention and its workings, the Canadian Government gives the inventor 17 years' worth of protection. In this period, the inventor alone can commercialize on the patented idea. After 17 years the protection ends and the invention is open for anybody to use without paying any licence fee.

This is what the Federal Government, through the Patent Office, which comes under the administration of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, granted Messrs. Labonté, Dubeta, Connell and Anne Lambrecht patents for their inventions. They were only four of hundreds granted, and Canada issues about 30,000 patents a year. Most of the patents issued and most of the 30,500 applications for patents received last year originated from abroad, with the United States leading the way.

Last year's patents reflected areas of social concern and comfort - anti-pollution devices for exhaust controls, synthetic foods, antibiotics, refuse-compactors, tobacco substitutes, seat-belt retractors,

ski boots and tape cassettes. One idea that may be patented in Canada this year is an American engineer's idea for taking the static electricity out of carpets. He says that insulated copper wires laid in rugs will eliminate this insignificant but trying problem.

## AN IDEAS SHOP

Canada's Patent Office in Ottawa is essentially an ideas shop for scientists, technicians and manufacturers. The patent library is an information mine offering details on the latest technological advances man has devised.

Only a small percentage of patents granted are commercially successful; some are quickly superseded by better inventions and others fail to win public acceptance.

The patent issued by the Canada Patent Office only protects the inventor's rights in this country. If he wants world-wide protection then he must patent the invention in every country.

At least half of all the patent applications filed in Canada concern mechanical matters, 30 per cent are chemical in nature and about 17 per cent are electrical. The Department's 200 patent examiners, who are scientists or engineers, determine basically two things - is it new and useful, and, does it possess inventive ingenuity. Occasionally it takes months of research to determine the presence of these factors in a patent application.

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## ST. LAWRENCE CLEAN-UP

(Continued from P. 2)

Increasing concern has been expressed recently about the deteriorating quality of the water, with serious questioning of its ability to satisfy fast-increasing demands. Although most uses are under provincial control, the Federal Government's responsibilities for navigation, fisheries and international matters make the St. Lawrence River one of national concern.

The 100-mile stretch covered by the interim agreement is a small part of the River's total length. It presents, however, numerous complexities in water-management, arising out of the infusion of Ottawa River water, high-population density, concentration of industry, major port developments and the influence of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The present agreement was initiated last August, when the Canada-Quebec Consultative Committee on Water recommended that a Joint Working Group on the St. Lawrence be established. Within a month one was set up consisting of officials from Environment Canada, the federal Ministry of Transport, the Environmental Protection Service of the Government of Quebec, the Quebec Department of Natural Resources and the Quebec Water Board.