

Employees face hazards to fertility in the workplace

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women has released a new study, *Reproductive Hazards at Work: Men, Women and the Fertility Gamble*. In her announcement of the publication, Council president Lucie Pépin stressed that "all workers must be alerted to the danger of this issue. We have found that almost all workplaces contain hazards to the reproductive system — not only factories, nuclear plants or mines, but also hospitals, offices and schools. These hazards do not simply harm pregnant women, but other women, men and future generations as well."

The report analyzes these different hazards, unveils discriminatory practices which prevent women from entering certain jobs because of their reproductive physiology, and underlines the risks in-

volved for the male population. The author outlines the obstacles to establishing a safe working environment and actions that can be taken in this regard in Canada and abroad. The report concludes that the co-operation of workers, employees and governments is necessary to ensure the establishment of strict protective standards in the workplace.

"The situation is of grave concern," stated Mrs. Pépin, "because the well-being of the entire population is at stake. The Council has formulated recommendations for action on this issue, particularly in the areas of discrimination, protective standards and statistics on workers' fertility."

The study was prepared for the Council by Nancy Miller Chenier, a nurse and health and safety consultant who is cur-

recently specializing in research on women and health.

For more information contact the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 66 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H1, Canada.

Bomb-sniffer ready to test

The first of the federal government's new bomb-sniffing devices is expected to be in trial use shortly.

The device's inventor, Dr. Lorne Elias of the Canada's National Research Council, said the council would lend six or seven of the "in-house" devices to government departments interested in trying them out.

Dr. Elias named the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Department of National Defence, the Customs and Excise Department, Canada Post and Canadian embassies as the probable recipients of the bomb-sniffers.

The device, used to detect the location and amount of explosives, can trace explosives ten to 100 times better than existing commercial devices.

The sniffer is small enough to fit in an attaché case but exact details of how it works could not be given for security reasons. NRC and Transport Canada have spent about three years developing it.

Once the first devices are in use, it will be possible to determine if any changes have to be made when they go into production.

Canadian food aid for Mozambique

A grant of \$6 million to supply food aid to Mozambique has been announced by Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan J. MacEachen. The funds, supplied by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), cover the purchase and transportation of Canadian wheat.

Mozambique is facing severe food shortages, particularly in Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces in the north and Inhambane province in the south where drought conditions have seriously reduced crop production.

Mozambique's National Commission for Natural Disasters will have the responsibility for co-ordinating the distribution of food aid, while the World Food Program will be responsible for monitoring the Canadian food aid on behalf of CIDA.

Cheaper skate blades stay sharp longer

In 1975 Roger Baikie, a Montreal bottler of Coca Cola and Canada Dry, gave his brother Hugh, a natural-born tinkerer, \$60 000 to try to make a better ice-skate blade.

Hugh spent \$500 000 and came up with what he called the Tuuk (it rhymes with book), the Inuit word for ice chisel. The blade is made of plastic with a Swedish surgical steel runner and can be bolted to any leather or plastic boot.

The plastic top is merlon polycarbonate, molded in hollow, lopsided cups at heel and toe. The shape is designed to distribute the weight evenly on the outside of the foot.

The most remarkable thing about the blade is the runner: whereas traditional carbon steel ones need to be sharpened frequently, often after every game, the Tuuk needs sharpening only five or six

times a season. The Tuuk is also cheaper to build, rustproof and 40 per cent lighter.

The Tuuk caught on with the Montreal Canadiens hockey team and later with the other National Hockey League teams. Soon all the principal skate manufacturers were putting Tuuk blades on their best skates.

In 1979-80, Tuuk produced 570 000 pairs of blades itself and Bauer, a skate manufacturer which it had authorized to manufacture Tuuks, added another million.

Tuuks come in a variety of types, including figure blades and blades for goalies, at prices up to \$50.

For more information write or call CANPRO Sports Inc., 5790 Ferrier, Montreal, Quebec H4P 1M7, Canada (514) 735-2277.

