



Swinging bus

This new bus, developed in the U.S. for both the Seattle and the California Department of Transport may soon grace the highways and byways of Ontario. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation wants to see what the bus can do, and will test it on GO Transit routes near Toronto. The hinge allows designers to stretch new models and provide 50 per cent more seats than conventional buses. Ontario is in the market for 40 of the buses.

Solar energy's future is bright

WASHINGTON (AP) — Solar energy's future is sunnier than ever, thanks to President Carter's dramatic presentation of United States energy woes and the desire of Americans to keep down their heating and electricity bills. "Business has exploded," says Walter Barrett, operations manager for the solar energy division of Columbia Chase Corp. in Braintree, Mass. His company has been getting 500 letters a day since Carter's energy speech last month.

But the optimism is tempered with concern that consumer demand for solar devices (expected in 1977 to be double 1976 sales of \$70 million) is growing faster than the industry can handle.

Rhett Turnipseed, a Washington-based solar energy expert with the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA), said Carter's goal of 2.5 million installations of solar energy devices by 1985—and his proposed tax credit of up to \$2,000 for a family that purchases a solar heating system—have spurred the industry. An estimated 30,000 solar units now are in use, mostly to heat water.

But Turnipseed said high utility bills and dwindling natural gas supplies last winter also attracted interest in solar energy.

The typical water heater costs \$1,600 or more, and spaceheating systems may be purchased for \$10,000, installed. But the savings in electric-

ity or heating fuels can amortize the investment in 15 years or less, a U.S. government study showed.

Basically, solar energy involves capturing the sun's light, converting the light to heat and then using the heat to warm water or space. It also may be used to provide air conditioning and generate electricity, but that technology is not as well developed yet.

In a typical water-heating unit sunlight strikes roof-mounted collectors and is trapped as heat by a special coating on the collectors. Water from a storage tank is pumped through the collector and absorbs the heat. The water then is stored until it is pumped through again for reheating, or used.

Electricity still must be used to run the pump and to heat the water when there isn't enough sun. But experts say a solar device can cut water-heating costs by 50 to 80 per cent.

Industry officials expect the research will help cut the price of equipment by as much as 75 per cent in coming years. They hope the price of an average water-heating system can be cut down to about \$1,300 including installation, by 1979.

Experts say almost every area of the U.S. can benefit from solar energy. The only possible exception is the Pacific northwest, which has cheap hydroelectric power and frequent cloud cover.

Meanwhile, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has proposed putting scores of solar collectors in orbit above the earth.

Each collector, six miles wide by six miles long, would generate between five and 10 trillion watts of electricity, once the system is ready in the year 2007. About 100 collectors would provide all of the electricity the U.S. would use in 2007. The cost would be about \$1 trillion.

SAFARI PLANNED

TORONTO (CP) — If Florida failed to ward off the February blazes, the Metro Toronto Zoological Society has an idea for February, 1978—an East African Safari for its members. For \$1,194, members can escape to Kenya for a 17-day holiday, pursuing such creatures as the blue-necked Somali ostrich, long-necked geronuk, the white rhinoceros and the bongo.

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Margaret 'is happier with her life'

WASHINGTON (CP) — The Washington Star reported today that Margaret Trudeau told a dinner companion that the recent switch in her lifestyle has made her happier than she has ever been.

The wife of Canada's Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau attended the Thursday banquet of the White House News Photographers Association as a guest of People magazine. But she declined to give any interviews during the evening.

"The wise man said follow me and then walked behind," she said in turning down one interview request. The Star did not say which of her dinner companions quoted the remark about her being happy.

Mrs. Trudeau also balked when asked to pose for photos with the banquet's other popular figure, U.S. President Carter's brother, Billy.

"I will not be manipulated," she said when asked to stand beside Billy.

Carter, however, agreeably sidled over to her and photographers got their pictures.

Mrs. Trudeau also complained about autograph-seekers, saying "it's a sort of silly way to relate to people."

Carter, who was seated at the same table as Mrs. Trudeau, agreed: "It really is a pain signing autographs. Almost as much a pain as talking with reporters."

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Accounting training and experience is required for this position.

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Mr. Paul Mignault
Director of Financial
& Administrative Services
School District No. 57
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