

Abortions Sought Abroad

► HUNDREDS of U.S. women are reported to have sought abortions in Sweden following a publicized 1962 operation there to end the pregnancy of an expectant mother who had been given thalidomide.

In a study of the problem of unwanted pregnancy in America, Dr. Judith L. Rapoport, Stockholm, stated that hundreds of foreign abortion applicants went to Sweden following the 1962 case and "about half were American citizens." Dr. Rapoport's study, reported in *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 13:24, discussed 56 of these cases which represented a "unique opportunity" to collect relevant data on a relatively unavailable group in the United States.

"The magnitude of the problem," she said, is considerable in the United States. She cited a previous study disclosing that 10% of the white unmarried girls in college or beyond had become premaritally pregnant and that nearly 95% of these pregnancies ended in abortion.

Of the 56 cases studied at the Karolinska Hospital, 19 came from cities with a population of over a million. Twenty-five women came from the East Coast and New England. Eleven came from the Midwest and the rest from the remaining areas of the country.

For 39 of the group, fear of social disgrace or conflict between pregnancy and life plans were the prime reasons given for seeking abortion.

Twenty-six of the 39 women were unmarried. Two of the married women wished abortion because it would be obvious that the child was a product of an extra-marital affair. Five women planned divorce and did not wish to go on with the birth.

Twenty women relied on the "rhythm method" of birth control or on preventives used by the man. Twenty-two had at some time used a diaphragm but only four women were using the device at the time of conception. Of four women who used oral contraceptives, all admitted to "carelessness."

For the great majority, conflict over sexual behavior or conflict with the male partner had produced carelessness.

• *Science News Letter*, 88:63 July 24, 1965

PUBLIC HEALTH

Czechs Impose Curbs On Cigarette Smoking

► REGULATIONS to curtail cigarette smoking are being imposed by the Czechoslovakian Government.

As in the United States, the emphasis is on curbing smoking by youths. Unlike the United States, where the effort is based largely on persuasion and education with only feeble Government regulation, the Czechoslovakian campaign is based on orders from the Communist Government.

The steps to be taken are:

1. A law is being drafted making it a punishable offense to sell tobacco products to youths under 18.

2. Cigarettes will not be sold in food shops.

3. More restaurants will cater to non-smokers.

4. Legal measures will be taken to stop smoking in schools and in public transport.

The new Government orders were disclosed in an issue of the *Prague News Letter*.

• *Science News Letter*, 88:63 July 24, 1965

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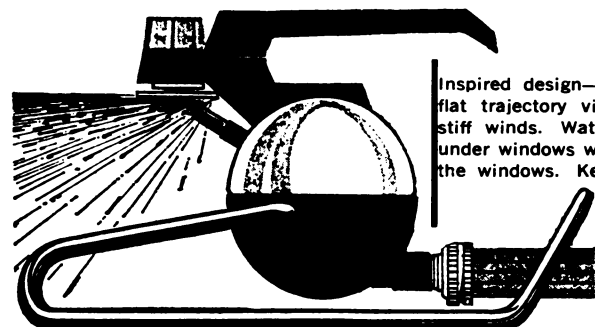
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