

# An *me* appealed to gov't to hold off on smoking ban

(from page 5)

which has been embraced by the Montreal based International Civil Aviation Organization as a prelude to a global ban on in flight smoking by July 1, 1996. The other sponsors were Australia, the United States, Antigua, Chile, Namibia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Paraguay and the Russian Federation.

"You can imagine our disgust when

we discovered that changes were made under the cover of the July 1 holiday and that smoking would still be allowed," Hendrick said.

## Japan routes

Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada said the cabinet-level decision was in response to an appeal by Canadian Airlines International Ltd., which sought a six-month extension for its Japan routes. Transport Minister Jean

Corbett gave both CAIL and Air Canada a one-year extension.

Citing the ICAO resolution, Dr. Mark Taylor of PSFC said the move effectively tells other countries that "it is acceptable to disregard health concerns at the first sign of displeasure by an airline."

Hendrick concedes that the major Canadian airlines, which lost a combined \$568 million last year, are having "financial difficulties," but she

pointed out they have had three years to develop policies that would keep passengers on Asian routes.

When the ICAO resolution was adopted, Corbett described it as "the culmination of an initiative taken by Canada in 1989 to have the international community address the health hazard of environmental tobacco smoke onboard aircraft."

Explaining the last-minute change of heart, Patrice Miron, a spokesman for the minister, said it was crucial to maintenance of Canadian carriers' competitiveness with other carriers that still permit smoking.

"It would be a mistake to proceed in such a manner that would have a serious impact on an industry that is already seriously hit," Miron said. "I mean, do we want to put the Canadian airline industry at a disadvantage against other carriers? Health and safety issues are a concern... but we just felt we had to reach a balance here."

He also pointed out that smoking is still banned on Canadian airlines flights of less than six hours and that no more than 5% of seats can be set aside for smokers on longer flights.

Hendrick said CUPE's plan for the time being is to work with groups such as PSFC, the Heart and Lung Association and the Canadian Cancer Society in pushing to have the extension cancelled.

## Canadian Airlines gets stay of execution on smoking ban

BY KEN POLE

OTTAWA — Having eradicated smoking on all but a handful of international flights, the federal government has quietly backed away from a complete ban which was supposed to come into effect Canada Day.

"A total surprise" said Donna Hendrick, president of the 8,000-member airline division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), which has lobbied aggressively on the issue for years.

"We had been assured as recently as the week just before July 1 that because of the government's international position, smoking would be ended on all flights."

Hendrick was referring to a resolution, co-sponsored by Canada, (see Airline—page 76)

Medical Post

July 26/93

500818743