

And now, the 'safe' cigarette

By NOEL WRIGHT

Warnings of the dangers of cigarette smoking may not have had much noticeable effect on public health, but they have certainly worked wonders for the creative powers of cigarette manufacturers. The only problem is that it is seemed hitherto that the more innocuous the cigarette, the less flavor.

But one manufacturer has licked the problem, and, starting in January, Montrealers will get a chance to test his claims.

The French tobacco monopoly (La Régie des Tabacs) has produced, and is currently test-marketing, the Gallia, a cigarette it describes, engagingly as "three times less harmful than the average cigarette." Originally the idea was to test market in the Montreal



area starting next week, but the test smokers' strike has held the program.

The Gallia is a very special kind of cigarette, its makers claim. First, the tobacco is different. The plants are specially selected, and the method of cultivation leads to a lower nicotine

concentration. The curing process reduces the nicotine content still further.

Not that all. The end product has no less than three filters: two acetate filters remove carcinogenic smoke particles, and a coconut filter absorbs certain "gaseous substances."

Marketing of the product in Canada will be handled by Bastos du Canada of Louisville, Que. Parimly owned by the Régie des Tabacs, Bastos already makes Gauloises and Gilanes for sale in Canada and the United States.

Test marketing of Gallia in France has been successful, company spokesmen claim. In fact, while they were selling in its test area of Marseilles at the regular prices, they were selling for twice that on the black market in Paris.

Gallia's taste more like American cigarettes than

French, but one thing is certain, they are very unlike a Canadian cigarette. Given that the market for French and American cigarettes is already small in here, what chance does a specialized brand have in the market?

Dominique Capletti, advertising manager of Bastos, believes that the new brand might even appeal to Virginia smokers who want a cigarette that they can taste but which won't necessarily shorten their lives over much.

He hastens to add, furthermore, that there are only two brands of cigarettes on the Canadian market that have lower tar and nicotine than Gilane, best selling of the brands his firm makes.

Bastos currently sells over 80 per cent of its production in Canada, with the balance in the U.S. For the foreseeable future Gallia will have to be imported from France, but should they catch on, there is no reason why they shouldn't be made here. In fact, it is not impossible that they could someday be made with Canadian tobacco.

Chamber rethinks on controls

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, which in the past has been opposed to wa-

will forward an opinion to the national meeting of the chamber's board of directors

"under existing conditions." However, the Chamber of Commerce of Victoria, B.C.,

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