Competitive edges

MacDonald adds that the Canadian operation edged out the competition with advantages in the following areas:

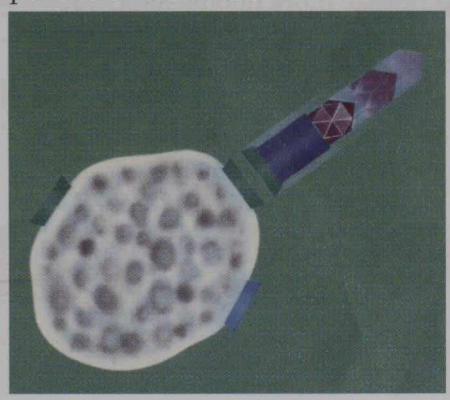
- **Canada's intellectual property** regime which now offers particularly strong protection for pharmaceutical patents.
- **Workforce performance.** "The skill and performance of our people was a tremendously important factor," says MacDonald. "Even with existing equipment, installed in the 1960s, our plant at Kirkland has become recognized as one of the most efficient and cost-effective pharmaceutical manufacturing units in the Merck world."
- **Research strength.** On the decision to locate the new process lab at Kirkland, MacDonald says that here too a superlative track record won the day. "Our existing basic research unit is one of the most productive anywhere in Merck. That reflects the calibre of our scientific and technical staff. And that, in turn, is partly a function of location. We are, figuratively speaking, a stone's throw from first-rate research centres at the universities of McGill, Montreal, Laval and Sherbrooke. These assets have helped us to attract some of the best scientists that Merck has anywhere. And, with the addition of the process chemistry lab, we will have a fully integrated research facility here at Kirkland.

Merck Frosst expects the expansion projects to run into the next century. ◆

Seragen invests $30 million to establish branch in Montreal

Seragen Inc., the U.S. biopharmaceutical company, has announced it will spend $30 million to establish a Canadian subsidiary based in Montreal. The investment includes $15 million for construction of a new plant.

The new company, Seragen Biopharmaceuticals Ltd., will conduct research and development as well as clinical trials of Seragen's proprietary fusion toxin products in Canada.



Fusion toxins have the ability to attack diseased cells and avoid healthy ones.

Fusion toxins are high-precision therapeutic torpedoes that can zero in on diseased cells and avoid healthy ones. One such Seragen product, Interleukin-2 (IL-2), has been attracting international attention recently as a promising treatment for dermatological problems and for certain forms of cancer.

Announcing the investment, Seragen President and CEO, George Masters, said: "We have a great opportunity here to take advantage of the attractive economic and scientific environment for our work in Canada, particularly in Quebec."

A prominent feature of that landscape is the renowned Biotechnological Research Institute (BRI) operated by Canada's National Research Council. Spokespersons for the company said the presence of the BRI in Montreal was a major factor in the company's decision to locate there and Seragen will build its plant close to the Institute. ◆

"We have a great opportunity here to take advantage of the attractive economic and scientific environment for our work in Canada, particularly in Quebec."