

In the case of projects of wide public interest, the Minister of the Environment and the minister of the initiating department may appoint an external review board, which could hold public hearings.

"By subjecting the Federal Government's activities to close environmental scrutiny, we are...taking the lead," Mr. Davis said. "I hope that the provinces will follow us closely in this regard."

Ottawa's new environmental assessment and review process will apply not only to federally initiated projects, programs and activities but also to those for which federal funds are committed or federal property involved.

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### French official language of Quebec

Legislation establishing French as the official language of Quebec is to be introduced in the province's National Assembly this spring. In the speech opening the Assembly's 1974 session, the provincial government promised extensive legislation not only to promote and protect the French language in Quebec but to re-define the status of English within the framework of the new policy.

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### Loan to Brazil

Canada's Export Development Corporation will lend up to \$40 million to a Brazilian utility to cover 90 per cent of the cost of orders for goods and services placed with Canadian suppliers for a hydroelectric project at Itumbiara, Brazil.

The loan to Furnas-Centrales Electricas S.A., a Rio de Janeiro public utility company, will be used primarily to purchase Canadian supplies of electrical-generation and transmission equipment. Last year, the Canadian agency lent the utility \$10 million to cover Canadian equipment and services for another hydroelectric project.

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### Canadian travel book

*Explore Canada*, a book published by *Reader's Digest* in conjunction with the Canadian Automobile Association, describes Canada's beauty from coast

to coast. Its 476 pages include anecdotes and features of Canadiana that are illustrated with 700 photographs, most of which are in colour.

The new travel guide is the result of more than two years of effort by some 40 editors, writers, artists, photographers, map-makers and researchers. It was designed to be of value not only in planning trips but also in schools and libraries.

Five leading Canadian photographers — Paul Baich, John de Visser, Pierre Gaudard, Freeman Patterson and Richard Vroom — who were specially commissioned for the work, spent a total of about 20 months to create the pictorial record.

The first portion of the book is "The Shaping of Canada", an illustrated story of the geological forces that contoured the land over millions of years, leaving mineral-rich mountains and fertile plains, craggy sea coasts and pastoral valleys.

"The Heritage of Canada" tells about Canadians, from the first nomadic band that ventured across the Bering Strait, to the Vikings who settled in Newfoundland at what is now L'Anse aux Meadows, to Cartier and other explorers who opened the land for settlement. It describes the many ethnic groups that make up the modern Canadian mosaic.

The 386-page gazetteer, "The Places of Canada", lists more than 1,200 places, most of which are located on one or more maps in a 40-page atlas. Symbols on the maps show the attractions of all places named.

The gazetteer is followed by "The Buildings of Canada", a collection of 100 sketches that highlight the distinctive features of pre-twentieth-century Canadian houses, churches and other structures.

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### Indoor walking record

Corporal Russ "Roadrunner" Phillips of Canadian Forces Station Alsask, Saskatchewan, has established an unofficial indoor walking record of 104 miles, 2,190 feet, in a 24-hour period. He completed 2,397 laps of the station gymnasium from noon Saturday, recently until noon Sunday.

The walk, which had a secondary purpose — raising money for the military police blind-children fund, yielded

\$680 for needy blind children across Canada.

A claim for ratification of the record is being submitted to *The Guinness Book of World Records*. No record for indoor long-distance walking exists.

Previous walking accomplishments by the corporal include a 225-mile walk from Brandon, Manitoba, to Regina, Saskatchewan, and walks of 62 and 90 miles in Winnipeg to support minor sports programs. In 1973, along with 11 of the world's best walkers, he took part in a 24-hour event in Aintree, England, during which he covered 99.5 miles.

Russ can run too. In 1972 he completed the 1½-mile fitness test in eight minutes and 57 seconds, the fastest time in Air Defence Command for his age group.

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### Huge office building for Ottawa

A major office complex is to be built close to the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, at an estimated cost of \$50 million, Public Works Minister J.E. Dubé announced recently.

The proposed structure, which will provide general accommodation for employees of the Federal Government, will contain about 900,000 square feet of office space on 11 floors; about 200,000 square feet of public and commercial space above, at, and below grade on three floors; and another 300,000 square feet for underground parking of 500 cars over three floors. All truck docking will be below grade.

Demolition of buildings is already in progress and will be completed in August, and the complex should be finished by 1977. To expedite work, phased construction techniques will be used, whereby separate tenders for various construction "packages" will be called.

The building will be rectangular and indented twice to accommodate the elevators, which will be constructed of glass.

Mirror glass will clad the exterior of the office areas reflecting images of the city and the building to passers-by. A 15-foot wide sheltered arcade around the building has been designed, as well as a public area to be located on the lower commercial floor. The large roof area will be used for recreational facilities.