

delivered to specific institutions by the International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies and their local affiliates.

The need for food during the first months of independence has also been a priority. The Canadian Wheat Board provided lines of credit worth US \$1.5 billion for the purchase of Canadian grains and wheat. Canada's Export Development Corporation extended a line of credit to Russia worth \$150 million for the purchase of food supplies such as corn, vegetable oil and meat.

Humanitarian assistance is just one part of Canada's commitment to help the people of the former Soviet Union. The main emphasis is on transferring expertise and know-how, rather than money or hand-outs. The centrepiece of this effort is a three-year \$25-million technical-assistance package. The program, operated by the Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe, is designed to support the transition to a market-based economy and to promote democratization. By the end of 1991, 40 projects worth around \$7 million, initially focusing on the critical agriculture, environment and energy sectors, had been approved.

Among the first projects announced was a \$1-million initiative to assist victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. In co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Canada is supporting a medical treatment centre for children in Kiev and three community-based rehabilitation centres for relocated Chernobyl victims in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. In addition, the Alberta Wheat Pool is part of an international consortium that has developed a package of technology to aid in the rehabilitation of contaminated agricultural lands.

Other Canadian projects in Ukraine include a \$3-million project to train faculty at two



Ukrainian post-secondary education institutions on curriculum development, as well as expert assistance in reforming the banking system. Radio Canada International is set to launch an educational "English As a Second Language" radio series in autumn 1992.

Drawing on Canada's world-class expertise in the oil and gas sector, a training program for well-head operators in Russia and Kazakhstan, focusing on occupation health and safety, environmental procedures and equipment operations, was launched by the Petroleum Industry Training Service of Calgary, Alberta, in October 1991.

In support of democratic reform, the Canadian Bar Association's Legal Internship Program, which for two years has enabled lawyers from Central and Eastern Europe to hone their skills in internship

Canadian Governor General Ramon Hnatyshyn (left), Honorary Patron of the Canadian Bar Association's Legal Internship Program, presents Czech and Slovak intern Jozses Marusak with a certificate.

with Canadian legal firms, will open its 1992 program to participants from the former U.S.S.R. For the first time, in 1992, representatives from the region will also attend the Canadian Human Rights Foundation's prestigious International Human Rights Course, which draws participants from around the world.

Canadian technical assistance is also visible in the Baltic States. A Canadian constitutional expert advised the Estonian government in drafting its new constitution, and Canada is providing expert organizational and technical

assistance to the three national parliaments. Energy and utility officials from Lithuania and Estonia have received training in Canada, and a \$2-million technology transfer and business management project is providing training to dairy extension specialists and veterinarians in Latvia.

It is often said that 10 per cent of Canadians can trace their roots back to Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. It is not surprising, then, that Canadians are keenly interested in the new events. The multicultural nature of Canada — with its linguistic, cultural and social links to these former homelands — provides ready-made assets as the country launches an ambitious campaign to help the country states of the old Soviet Union take their rightful place in the community of nations. 🍁