Government agency leader in development information

"The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is one of the very few development assistance organizations to have a program and budget specifically devoted to the information sciences, which has permitted it to become something of a leader in this field," according to the Centre's 1979 review of its activities.

The IDRC, a public corporation, was established in 1970 by the Canadian Government to conduct research into the problems of developing nations. Excerpts from the Centre's annual review entitled, Searching *follow:*

During the 1978-79 fiscal year the information sciences division supported 20 new projects and, over the past nine years, has been responsible for about 12 per cent of the Centre's project budget.

The work of the division is wide ranging, and its choice of subject areas often reinforces the activities of the other three program divisions:
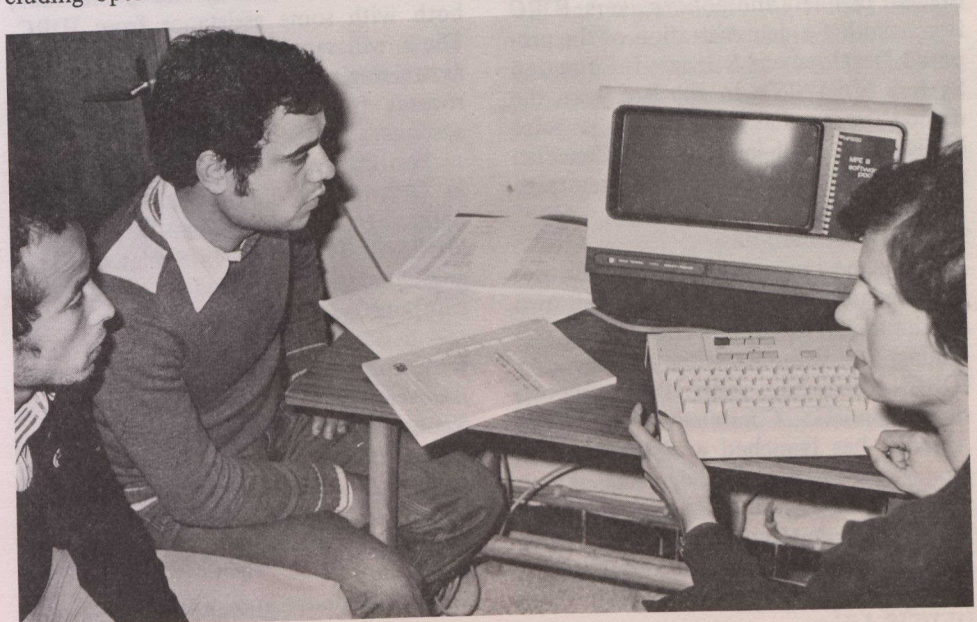
• support for international information systems, either global or regional, with particular emphasis on assisting developing countries to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from such systems;

• support for specialized information centres dealing with topics of importance to international development;

• improvement of library services, including operation of IDRC's own library to serve as a resource for both the Centre and the development community;

• industrial extension services, especially for small-scale or rural-oriented industries in developing countries;

• cartography, especially the development of teams to apply the data obtained from satellites in order to produce thematic maps; and

• computer science, the application of data-base management systems to the storage and retrieval of information in developing countries.

International co-operation

International co-operation in information work has remained the main focus of the information sciences division over the past year, particularly through co-opera-

Instructor trains Tunisian students on MINISIS system.

One-hundred-and-nine-years ago this week... An Act establishing uniform currency in the Dominion was passed. Before this law, chartered banks could issue their own currencies and people were free to also use American or English currencies.