

news of the arts

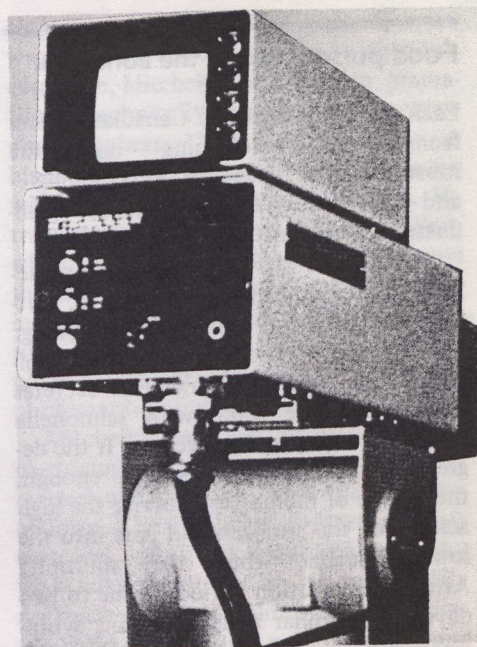
medicine experiments are being conducted by the University of Western Ontario in London and by Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland.

At the first, the principal experimenter, Dr. Lewis Carey, provided medical consultation by satellite. The experiment began on October 19, 1976, and continued until February 26, 1977.

Medical consultants at the University Hospital receive video transmissions from the Moose Factory General Hospital on the shores of James Bay. London, Moose and the remote nursing station at Kashechewan are interconnected by audio links. The experiment includes a wide variety of consultation; a normal morning's work might include haematology, dental surgery, general practice, orthopaedics, obstetric ultra-sound, radiology and psychiatric consultations.

At the second, the Newfoundland experimenters are using *Hermes* in support of a continuing medical education program for doctors, teachers and school nurses. This experiment began March 28, 1977.

Specialists at the Health Science Complex at Memorial University in St. John's send programs to four remote hospitals in St. Anthony and Stephenville on the island and in Labrador City and Goose



Bay in Labrador. They use one-way video and two-way audio links to present and discuss patients and their case histories. The experiment also includes community health education programs, teleconsultation on medical education programs and the transmission of charts, X-rays and other medical data.

What is the future of telemedicine in Canada? At this stage, the answer remains



in doubt. The need for improvement in the delivery of medical services is apparent, but many technical, medical, legal and financial problems need to be cleared up before telemedicine services can play a major role in a well integrated Canadian health delivery system. These problems are indeed soluble, but not without making significant changes in the present health-care structures and procedures.

## CIDA chief joins IDRC board

Michel Dupuy, president of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has been appointed to the 21-member board of governors of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

The IDRC is a public corporation, established by an act of Canadian Parliament in 1970 to support research designed to adapt science and technology to the needs of developing countries. In accordance with the act, governors are appointed by the Government of Canada.

Eleven of the governors, including the chairman and vice chairman, must be Canadian citizens. It has become the practice to draw the other ten governors from among people from other countries who have made notable contributions in the field of international development. Four of the present governors are from developing countries.

Mr. Dupuy, who joined the Department of External Affairs in 1955, was

economic counsellor in Brussels from 1965-68. He became minister and deputy permanent representative of the Canadian delegation to the North Atlantic Council until 1969, when he returned to Ottawa to assume duties as director general of economic affairs. He was appointed assistant under-secretary of state by Prime Minister Trudeau in 1971, and president of CIDA in March 1977.

## Pesticides in time capsules

Tiny time capsules developed by drug companies for slow-release cold medications may also have a use in agriculture. Instead of medicine though, the pinhead-sized capsules will contain pesticides.

"Many pesticides now used break down rapidly once they're applied in the field," explains Ian Williams, a pesticide chemist at Agriculture Canada's Vancouver Research Station.

"This makes them safer for the environment than earlier chemicals such as

DDT and dieldrin, but farmers have to apply the new pesticides more than once during the growing season to get good insect control. The added cost is borne first by the farmer and later by the consumer who buys the food the farmer produces."

But time capsules could prolong the effectiveness of pesticides. Mr. Williams says small droplets of an active compound can be covered with an inert and protective material. As the protective substance breaks down, the pesticide will be released.

In addition to controlling the rate of release, the capsule coatings would make the chemicals safer for farmers to handle.

"Encapsulated insecticides are already being used for foliar sprays. The capsules stick to plant leaves where insects eat through them and consume the toxic chemicals," Mr. Williams says.

Scientists at the Vancouver station are studying encapsulation of soil pesticides.

"It is too early to predict unqualified success with the capsules, but our results are promising, says Mr. Williams."