

cast industry, advertisers and the public to help combat the incidence of violence on television.

#### Ontario royal commission

Meanwhile, wide-ranging changes for Canadian media have been proposed by the Ontario royal commission on the media's exploitation of violence, led by Judy LaMarsh, a former Secretary of State.

The report states: "Media violence can lead to aggressive or violent behaviour, although not in everyone all of the time."

Among the recommendations of the three-member commission (Miss LaMarsh, newspaper columnist Scott Young and Family Court Judge Lucien Beaubien), was that two public networks should replace all public and private stations to eliminate the violent programs made in the United States, which the commission found most offensive. The two networks would be responsible to Parliament through a Cabinet minister.

#### Diabetic drug product withdrawn

Health and Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde recently announced that Arlington Laboratories Division, USV Pharmaceuticals of Canada Ltd., was voluntarily withdrawing phenformin from the Canadian market. The drug is used by diabetics to control blood sugar levels.

An association between the use of phenformin and a serious complication known as lactic acidosis has been observed. The onset of lactic acidosis is associated with non-specific symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or malaise. As a result of its concern over the safety of phenformin, the Health Protection Branch (HPB) asked a special advisory committee of the Canadian Diabetic Association to review its use, and that of metformin, a related drug.

The committee concluded that patients taking phenformin can be adequately managed by other forms of therapy, and that non-availability of phenformin would not present a hardship to patients with diabetes. Patients taking phenformin are advised to discontinue using it until they have contacted their physician for alternative therapy.

#### Bell Canada breakthrough

Bell Canada has just introduced an improved mobile-telephone service it claims as a breakthrough in North American mobile telecommunications.

The "Access 450" mobile-telephone service, which will soon be available in Toronto, Hamilton and Montreal, will enable users to place local and long-distance calls directly through the telephone network by means of a base-unit computer that acts as an electronic switcher. Previous vehicle radios required an operator to complete calls.

Significant features of the system are rapid channel availability, total privacy from other mobiles, and customer "TouchPhone" dialing of local and long-distance calls.

At the heart of "Access 450" is a

"fail-safe" computer terminal, located in Toronto, that performs switching, control and accounting functions.

Illegal users can be identified and denied service.

The terminal automatically performs diagnostic tests and identifies malfunctions to maintenance personnel through a teletype printout.

#### Special features

Other features of "Access 450" are: a digital read-out to verify the dialed telephone number; greater ease of use than in previous mobile telephones owing to hands-free operation until a called party answers; an external sounder to let a caller who has had to leave his car for a short time know that his phone is ringing.

#### Royal Canadian Mounted Police horses royal favourites

*Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh and Prince Charles, leaves Buckingham Palace for the annual Trooping the Colour ceremony in London on June 11. The Queen rides "Burmese", a Royal Canadian Mounted Police horse, which has been a familiar figure at the ceremony for many years. But it was only the second royal occasion for Prince Charles' horse, "Centennial". He was chosen by Queen Elizabeth during her Canadian tour in 1973; and having completed his training by the RCMP was presented to the Queen at Windsor Castle on May 15 this year. Prince Charles rode "Centennial" during the Queen's jubilee parade to St. Paul's Cathedral on June 7, while the 36-man troop of RCMP in Britain on a jubilee tour led the Queen's procession. The Mounties were the only non-U.K. contingent in the procession.*

