

Earthquake relief to Italy

The Canadian government airlifted emergency supplies from Canadian Forces Base Lahr in Germany to Bari in southern Italy, December 1, to help victims of the recent earthquake in that country, Secretary of State for External Affairs Mark MacGuigan and Minister of National Defence Gilles Lamontagne have announced.

The supplies, including blankets, warm clothing and foodstuffs, will help to meet the full requirements of the first emergency phase of operation in the earthquake-stricken area.

On November 20, Minister of State for Multiculturalism James Fleming, on behalf of his department and the Department of External Affairs, announced a \$1.8-million Canadian contribution to Italy.

Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy also said he was prepared to issue minister's permits in unusual cases to help would-be immigrants to try to leave the affected area.

The National Congress of Italian Canadians in Toronto is co-ordinating a national campaign to raise private funds to aid victims of the disaster.

Information materials available for the blind

Health and Welfare Canada is now making available the first in a series of information packages for the visually handicapped.

In a recent ceremony in Montreal, Health and Welfare Minister Monique Bégin presented a sample to Yvonne Raymond of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and co-chairman of the Canadian Organizing Committee for the 1981 International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP).

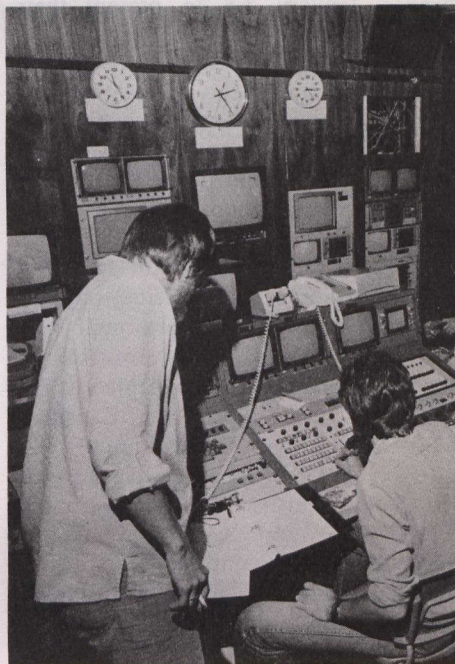
The initial package of material is entitled *Income Security Programs of Health and Welfare Canada*. Future packages will deal with other services provided by the department.

In each case, the material is being produced in three forms in both official languages: a large-print pamphlet, a tape-cassette, and in braille. The material will be available without charge through Health and Welfare Canada offices across Canada and from all agencies and associations for the visually handicapped. The braille and the tape-cassette will be supplied on a loan basis.

First televised medical symposium

The Canadian telecommunications industry recently broadcast for the first time in Canada a live, four-city, interactive and televised medical symposium.

In all four cities — Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax — doctors gathered in front of television monitor screens in hotels to watch three hours of speeches, discussions and interviews from conference centres. In other communities across Canada, doctors and others could watch local cable TV stations within the Cable Satellite Network, even joining in with questions to speakers over telephone lines specially linked to the centres.



The medical symposium's busy production centre in Toronto.

From the centres to the central production studio in Toronto, signals were co-ordinated by CNCP Telecommunications, travelling by Telesat *Anik B* satellite from Vancouver and by terrestrial circuits from the other cities. Packaged into program format in Toronto, the symposium was then sent terrestrially for rebroadcast by *Anik A*, using a transmitter installed temporarily for the occasion.

A major pharmaceutical firm sponsored the nation-wide symposium while organization, production and transmission were carried out by Broadcast Holdings (CDN) Inc., Cable Satellite Network, a wide array of cable TV systems, CNCP Telecommunications and various TCTS companies, including Telesat.

IDRC agreement with China

The International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC) has concluded an agreement with the State Scientific and Technological Commission (SSTC) of the People's Republic of China.

The agreement, the first of its kind concluded by China with an agency other than the United Nations, provides for co-operative research activities in China, in other developing countries, and in Canada.

The agreement was signed in Beijing by Ivan L. Head, President of IDRC, and Wu Mingyu, Director of the SSTC, in the presence of Vice-Premier Fang Yi. It followed several days of talks in China by senior scientists of IDRC and their counterparts in a number of Chinese scientific institutions.

IDRC was established in 1970 by the Canadian government for the purpose of initiating, encouraging, supporting and conducting research into the problems of the developing regions of the world. It has engaged in more than 1,000 research projects in some 100 developing countries, but has not previously been active in China. IDRC's regional headquarters for Asia and the Pacific region is situated in Singapore.

The SSTC has the responsibility for the organization and co-ordination of scientific and technological activities within the People's Republic of China and for the liaison of these activities with foreign governments and institutions.

Co-operation is envisaged in activities falling within IDRC's programs in agriculture, health, information and social sciences. The agreement also provides for co-operation between Chinese scientists and IDRC in other developing countries.

Heart attack deaths decline

Deaths from heart attacks have declined sharply in some countries, including Canada, according to a statistical report by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WHO report showed a substantial decline in heart-attack deaths in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and Norway.

The report was based on death certification information submitted by 27 countries to the organization, which is an agency of the United Nations.