

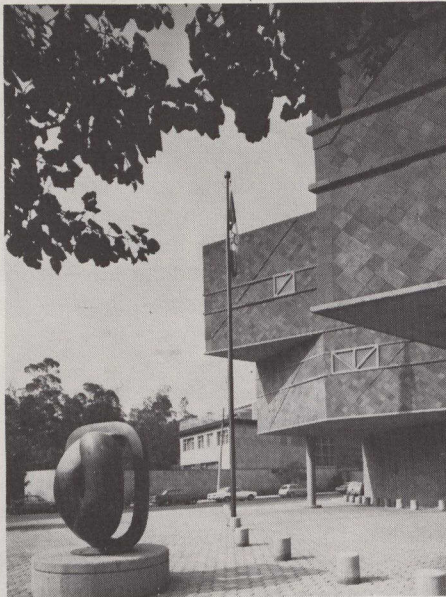
## New embassy opens in Mexico

Canada's new embassy in Mexico City is a monument to the interconnection of Mexico and Canada, according to its architect Etienne Gaboury of Winnipeg.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau opened the new embassy on January 15, during his visit to Mexico for meetings with President José Lopez Portillo.

The three-storey embassy stands on a trapezoid-shaped site behind the Museum of Anthropology near the Paseo de la Reforma. Gaboury's many-angled Cartesian design expresses the geometry of the site, which has one 60-degree corner and one 90-degree corner. These angles are repeated in the elevations, the offices and just about everything else with the exception of the plants; for variety the architect superimposed a grid of 45-degree angles in the lighting and mechanical systems. A more practical reason for the generous use of the diagonal, said Gaboury, is to fortify the embassy against seismic activity for which Mexico City is noted.

Symbolically the embassy was designed to express the interconnection of Mexico and Canada. The facade was inspired by the ancient Mayan city of Uxmal in the Yucatan and the blasted rock Canadians see from train windows. It is made of grey-brown-rose stone of varying thickness, mined from a mountain in Tlalpujahuac in the state of Michoacan. It took a team of 60 Mexican stonemasons over three months to chip it

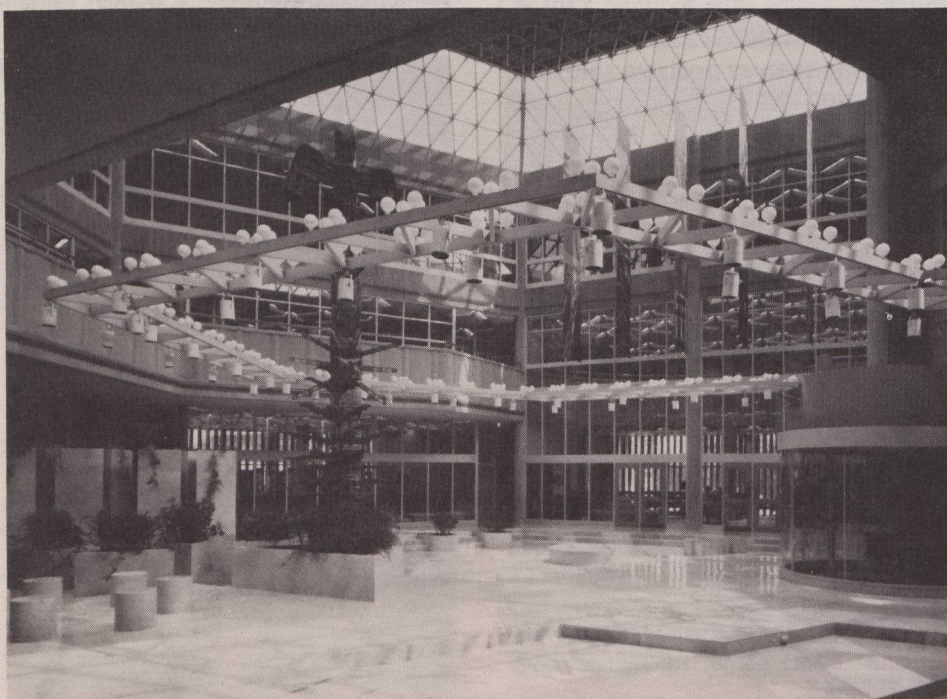


Outside plaza of the embassy.

into low relief and provide the pattern and texture Gaboury wanted.

### Interior Canadian

Inside a vast atrium space is paved in off-white marble triangles with the same dimensions as the steel triangles of the suspended lighting system above. "The prairies toward the mountains", is how Gaboury describes the courtyard. The seats and planters and Takao Tanabe's banners recall the colours and forms of the Canadian autumn, another prairie influence. Dominating the courtyard is a totem pole designed by Tony Hunt of



Inner courtyard and atrium of new Canadian embassy in Mexico.

Victoria, British Columbia; Gaboury introduced it because he said "the aborigines of Canada and Mexico are brothers".

Linking the outside and inside is an enormous pivoting door-gate fashioned by Mexican ironworkers. There are two little doors on ground level built to the scale of man and decorated in low-relief; they form part of the larger door built to the scale of the embassy and the street. Held in place by the ironwork is a stained glass dial made to Gaboury's specifications in Winnipeg. The most obvious reference is to the Aztec calendar, but the window mixes and matches Mexican and Canadian motifs in a blaze of red, yellow, blue and green light.

The embassy houses a two-storey library with a suspended ceiling and removable fixtures — the two systems are independent — and two floors of offices.

## Computers find hospital staff

Canadian hospitals are linking up to a new computer system called the national job exchange, which is designed to help hospitals hire qualified people for jobs from coast to coast.

The computer service works on the same principle as a computer dating system. A hospital feeds its requirements into computers, which then search memory banks for employees who are suited to the position.

For employees, the service is free. Their job histories and desired salaries are anonymously fed into the job exchange. A number disguises the employee's name, and the employee may request that certain hospitals be denied access to the information.

With those exceptions, any hospital in Canada can gain access to the list of employees for a fee of \$500.

The project was developed by a Montreal firm called Trans Canada Job Exchange. It operates the system in conjunction with the Canadian Hospital Association.

The service was started in October and during December it helped fill 25 vacancies. There are 350 hospital employees now registered on the list.

Currently only administrators are listed on the exchange but it is expected that the service will soon be expanded to include nurses, doctors and other personnel.

The new service should be less costly than the current practice of advertising in newspapers and it enables hospitals to look more broadly for personnel.