

hearing in Regina in a series of lectures on the writer's craft). Although Peter Hochbaum grew up at Delta among waterfowl biologists, the vocabulary of the trade is dropped when he creates for us the ambience of the prairie marsh with lines like these: "On calm spring evenings when a south wind blows, one may stand on the lake ridge and watch small parties of ducks

pass continuously overhead against the prairie twilight, heading in a north-westerly direction for their home somewhere beyond the horizon."

In its engagingly simple presentation, this bulletin represents an interesting departure from the usual type of bulletin distributed by a government agency to publicize its programmes.—*Margaret Belcher, Regina.*

## THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE

by **C. F. Bentley**, Professor of Soil Science, Edmonton

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is the result of an idea of the Rt. Hon. L. B. Pearson who, as Prime Minister of Canada, suggested that the Expo site of the 1967 World's Fair in Montreal would continue to serve mankind if it were used as headquarters for work devoted to development problems. Although not located in Montreal, the IDRC is now in existence and operational.

The Act establishing the Centre was passed by the Canadian Parliament in the spring of 1970 and the first meeting of the Board of Governors was held in late October, 1970. The act clearly sets out the objects of the Centre as follows:

"The objects of the Centre are to initiate, encourage, support and conduct research into the problems of the developing regions of the world and into the means for applying and adapting scientific, technical and other knowledge to the economic and soil advancement of those regions, and, in carrying out those objects

(4) to foster cooperation in research on development problems between the developed and developing regions for their mutual benefit."

Although established by, and funded primarily by the Government of Canada, the IDRC is not a Canadian Government Agency. Chairman of the Board of Governors is the Rt. Hon. L. B. Pearson; there are ten other Canadian members of the Board and there are ten non-Canadians of whom four are from industrialized countries and six from developing countries. The Centre has independence fully equal to and rather analagous to that of Crown Corporations.

A sum of about 30 million dollars has been provided for the initial five years of the Centre. It is expected that subsequent funding will be on a proportional basis related to Canada's total contribution to international development. Fortunately, the Centre is authorized to accept contributions from individuals, groups, businesses, national or international agencies and from governments. Contributors may specify how their monies are to be used—but the Centre is not obligated to accept all offers as some might be inconsistent with the Centre's programs or beyond its capabilities.

The Centre has designated four areas to constitute the primary program activities during the initial phase of its operation. These areas are:

- (1) to enlist the talents of natural and social scientists and technologists of Canada and other countries;
- (2) to assist the developing regions to build up the research capabilities, the innovative skills and the institutions required to solve their problems;
- (3) to encourage generally the co-ordination of international development research; and

## **Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Sciences**

The primary objective of work in this area will be to contribute towards improvement of the economic, physical and social well-being of rural peoples. Agricultural (which for this purpose includes fisheries and forestry) food and nutrition research will be undertaken as an integrated and interdisciplinary activity.

## **Population and Health Sciences**

This program will support and encourage research into improved techniques of fertility regulation and will seek to improve the methods by which family planning services are organized. It will support demographic studies, and research into population policy. The Centre will support projects to more effectively provide integrated health care services to rural peoples in low-income countries. In the process of these activities, emphasis will be on the relationship of population growth and health to the development process.

## **Information Sciences**

It is obvious that recorded knowledge is a resource, like men, money and materials, to be applied to improve conditions anywhere. A major objective of IDRC is to work with other national and international bodies to establish a world-wide system for processing, indexing and making readily available to those who need it, information of value to development. The system would involve advanced technology such as computers and micro-photography to marshal the stock of international information about development into much more useful listings than are now available.

## **Social Sciences and Human Resources**

This program of the Centre will support projects that supplement and complement the three foregoing more specific activities. The Centre will support and encourage the exploration of ways which will help nations better provide education and training to rural peoples. It will try to encourage development of local and small industry as service needed for modernization of

agriculture and as a means of generating local non-agricultural employment. To this end it is necessary to study the nature and cause of migration from rural areas to choking cities, and find ways to foster the growth of small urban centres. The Centre will take part in the search for better ways and means of transferring technologies appropriate to developing countries to them.

Examples may give a better understanding of the practical types of activities which are being undertaken.

Members of the Board and the officers of the Centre share the realization that population increase is perhaps the greatest hindrance to economic and social improvement in many developing countries. It is therefore no coincidence that the first grant approved by the Centre was in the area of population work. The Barbados has achieved a substantial reduction in birth rate but it is not known how much of that accomplishment is attributable to the activities of the Family Planning Association there. A grant has been made to support an investigation by Bajans, in co-operation with Canadian specialists, aimed at finding an answer to that question. If the Family Planning Association played a significant role in achieving birth reduction in the Barbados, that approach should be a useful one for neighboring countries with similar peoples, cultures and problems to follow. (The Centre desires to support or conduct research the results of which will be broadly applicable—it is an *international-centre!*)

An evolving project, which is likely to be launched very soon, is a comprehensive rural one. In the area concerned, cultivators with very small land holdings, usually less than six acres, are still practicing a traditional type of subsistence agriculture. The project hopes to demonstrate that crop yields can be substantially improved by use of improved varieties, practical pest control practices and soil fertility management. Integrated collection and transport of the produce (to an already assured market) will benefit the cultivators. So too will co-ordinated

services for the supply of the necessary inputs. Some local services will be needed to provide some local non-agricultural employment, thereby helping to stem the flight from the area to large urban centres. An educational program including services to family life is also intended. The major requirement of technical personnel will be provided by the host country which is showing enthusiasm by selecting only truly elite professionals to execute the test program. Two very well qualified Canadians will be attached to the project. If the research being undertaken in this project can achieve its objectives, many millions may be ultimately benefited.

The International Development Research Centre is intended to do research that will contribute to improvement of living conditions, especially in developing countries. Most people in such countries are in rural parts and consequently the major focus of IDRC programs is there.

However, urban problems need research too and the Centre is supporting, in part, investigations in eight major cities of less developed countries where acute problems exist as a result of migration from rural areas. Because human resources, in the form of qualified professionals with realistic practical experience, are fundamental to improvement and to ultimate self-sufficiency in the new nations, it is Centre policy to seek and encourage research projects where there is a substantial (and preferably dominant) role on the part of local scientists and professionals.

The establishment of the International Development Research Centre, the first institution of its kind, has attracted a good deal of international interest. It is to be hoped, and indeed it is expected, that this pioneering Canadian creation will make significant contributions to improvement of the human condition in the next decade.

## JOHN LANE HONOURED

by **Elizabeth Cruickshank**, 2329 Athol Street, Regina

John Lane received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws at the 1971 spring Convocation of Brandon University.

Members of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society will remember meeting John Lane at his first summer meeting at Moose Mountain Provincial Park in 1959, and at subsequent gatherings. As one of the persons present at the Moose Mountain meet, I have happy personal recollections of an expedition led by Jack Lane along a roadway being cleared. As we stepped over felled tree trunks, Jack's conversation with a skulking wee warbler, with Jack imitating its resigned "toodle - oodle - oo" turtling sounds, brought the curious black-hooded, crepe-breasted Mourning Warbler into sight—a first for his companions. Along the way a Warbling Vireo sang from a nest atop the tallest poplar. "He sings while he's baby-sitting." Such comments and actions made any

jaunt with Jack Lane a jolly and informative one.

Fortunate, too, to be a passenger in the Lanes' big yellow station wagon. Skirting the high narrow rocky road along Scissor's Creek at the Rocanville meet, at each rise along the way, our exuberant driver burst into poetry or song. "Up the airy mountain — down the rushy glen" — Or when the road was less interesting and conversation at a standstill, tuneful humming of the classical familiars or some of his own poetic compositions delighted his fellow travellers.

And the historical information that Jack offered his companions! Not just the items from the Historic Sites literature but things like "Nora's grandmother made all the bread for Fort Ellice fortress in the troubled times of its early days". Nora is his understanding helpmate and her grandparents had farmed near the famous fort.

As a guide in Seton's country, Jack