

### Co-ordinator for UN special session on disarmament

Kenneth Williamson, a senior official of the Department of External Affairs, has been appointed co-ordinator for the United Nations special session on disarmament to be held in New York, May 23 to June 8, 1978.

The Government considers it important that Canadian public opinion about disarmament and the views of those with expert knowledge and particular concern about international developments in this field should be fully taken into account in the formulation of Canadian policy on issues before the special session. Mr. Williamson will ensure that close contact is maintained with interested groups and individuals by personal contact, participation in meetings and discussions with consultative panels composed of individuals with expertise in this field.

### Quebec's French-speaking majority on the increase

The *francophone* majority in Quebec, which rose by more than 200,000 from 1971 to 1976, is now over 5 million, according to National Health and Welfare Minister Monique Bégin.

In the same five years, the *anglophone* and "other language" groups in Quebec have increased by barely 3,000 persons each, with the result that Quebecers, whose mother tongue is French, account for more than 30 per cent of the population increase in the province over the past five years.

Consequently, the French-speaking majority in Quebec has grown from 80.7 per cent of the total population of Quebec in 1971 to 81.3 per cent in 1976.

### French fact solid

"The actual state of affairs, then, contradicts the separatist thesis," Miss Bégin said, "but it does confirm that of the *francophone* federalists. The French fact is a solid and massive one, an irreversible one in Quebec, but it is more fragile and its position has not yet been consolidated in the other regions of the country. In fact the analysis [commissioned by the Federal Government from Réjean Lachapelle of the Institut de recherches politiques de Montréal] indicates that the positions of the *francophone* minorities in

Ontario and New Brunswick have weakened in the past five years. In New Brunswick the population with French as its mother tongue has dropped from 34 to 33.6 per cent of the total from 1971 to 1976. In Ontario it has dropped from 6.3 to 5.7 per cent.

"These trends can hardly move one to be complacent. There is most certainly a French-Canadian demographic problem, but it is in the *anglophone* provinces, not in Quebec. The separation of Quebec, in addition to meaning the setting in of demographic stagnation, would not resolve this problem in the least, but on the contrary, be absolutely catastrophic for

the million *francophones* living in other provinces.

"We, the French-speaking federalists, therefore, are of the belief that we work as hard as anyone for the maintenance and assertion of the French culture in North America. The difference is that we work where the threat is a real one, where the position is the weakest....

"In a word, we are fighting to make Canada a land where a majority French Quebec will feel more at home, more at ease. This is the object, linguistically and culturally, of the Canadian challenge. We believe more than ever that this challenge warrants being issued."

### Canadian birthplace honours Netherlands princess



Princess Margriet of the Netherlands, who was born in Ottawa in 1943, was guest of honour at the Canada Day reception (whose theme was Ottawa, the nation's capital) at the NATO AFCENT base in Brunssum, Holland last month.

Representing the city's early days as Bytown was the official historic figure of Lieutenant-Colonel John By, Royal Engineer, who had been sent in 1826 to build the Rideau Canal as an alternative route to the St. Lawrence River from Bytown to Kingston, Ontario.

"Colonel By" presented the princess with an engraved miniature lock-stone, carved from the original limestone used to build the walls of the canal, and with a book outlining the history of Canada's canals.

Nine hundred guests from 17 nations, including General Alexander Haig, Jr., Supreme Allied Commander of the NATO bases in Europe and Lucien Lamoureux, former Speaker of the House of Commons and now Canada's Ambassador to Belgium, attended a Canadian reception at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. "Colonel By" received them. He also addressed school children at both NATO bases and presented books to the various libraries on behalf of Parks Canada.

(Left) Lieutenant-Colonel John By, played by Walford Reeves of the Department of Indian Northern Affairs, presents a souvenir of the historic canal to Princess Margriet of the Netherlands.