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Canada calls for review of implementation of Helsinki Final Act

A careful and objective review of the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act emphasizing respect for its principles is necessary, Secretary of State for External Affairs Mark MacGuigan told delegates to the follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) held in Madrid, Spain, November 12.

Participating states can meet the intent of the act only by judging and improving the quality of their performance and by devising new proposals aimed at broadening their commitments, said Dr. MacGuigan in his speech, excerpts from which follow:

...The Final Act is an institutional expression of a policy designed to reduce tensions and to increase co-operation in Europe. It, therefore, provides us with guidance for assessing the state of East-West relations....

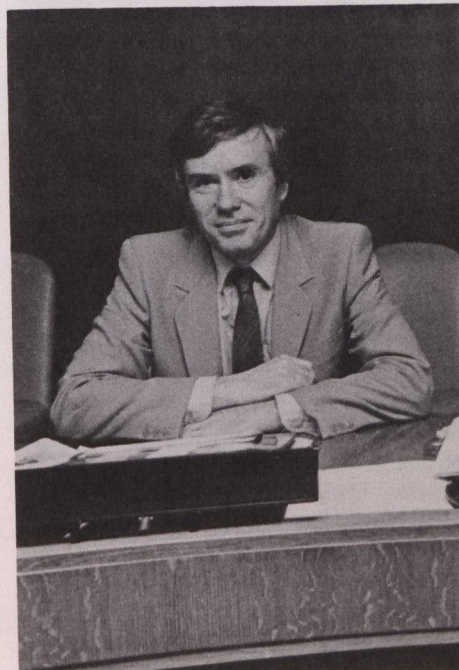
I must note that the Madrid meeting has taken on a much greater importance than could have been foreseen when it was scheduled several years ago. The deterioration in East-West relations, culminating last December in the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, cannot be ignored in this forum. No matter how the intervention is perceived, the international environment has been

severely damaged as has the confidence which so crucially underpins the policy of *détente*. We cannot view the Afghan crisis as a purely local or regional issue, or one that falls outside the East-West purview....

History has taught us painfully that confidence and stability in one region of the world cannot remain unaffected by distrust and instability in another quarter of the globe. To ensure that confidence prevails in Europe, the participating states must accept that the same rules of conduct must apply elsewhere. In the absence of such an understanding, and of any clearly-defined boundary between the pursuit of national interests and the practice of restraint, the policy that we have called *détente* will inevitably be undermined.

The alternative to *détente*, the most basic concept of which is the avoidance of resort to armed conflict, is something none of us can contemplate with equanimity. But this irreversibility does not necessarily apply to the apparatus of East-West co-operation, which has grown up around, and as valued part, of *détente*. Measures which my government, and other governments represented here, were obliged to take in response to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, demonstrate this fact clearly enough.

The shadow of Afghanistan will inevitably chill *détente* as long as Soviet troops remain there. My government believes nevertheless that East and West must share an interest in maintaining a balance of military potential and, accordingly, will continue to follow policies aimed at reducing tensions and expanding co-operation in a process which must be



Secretary of State for External Affairs
Mark MacGuigan.

United Nations photo by Milton Grant

Late news

As this issue went to press, it was learned that former Governor-General Jules Léger had died as a result of a stroke suffered November 18. Mr. Léger was governor general from 1974-1979. The next issue of Canada Weekly will carry an article about the former diplomat and senior civil servant who served Canada for 38 years.