

The SSEA on UNSSOD II and Canadian ACD priorities

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, in his keynote address to the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Meeting of the Pugwash Movement at Pugwash, Nova Scotia on July 16, 1982, spoke of the second UN Special Session on Disarmament. Highlighting the active Canadian role at UNSSOD II, he underlined the importance Canada attaches to giving an impetus to the negotiating process through the policy of stabilization which Prime Minister Trudeau had proposed. Dr. MacGuigan also drew attention to Canada's traditional role as Chairman of the Barton Group, the consultative body of like-minded Western countries and to Canada's key contribution in promoting agreement on a world disarmament campaign.

"Canadian statements in the working groups and the Committee of the Whole underlined Canada's flexibility and desire to search for consensus language on such agenda items as a comprehensive program of disarmament, enhancement of the effectiveness of disarmament machinery, and a world disarmament campaign. It was a Canadian informal paper which formed the basis of deliberations on a world disarmament campaign, and sustained Canadian efforts played no small part in the consensus achieved on the conduct of the campaign. Canada was also active in its traditional role of chairman of the Barton Group, the informal consultative body of twenty like-minded Western countries...."

"Although the second Special Session on Disarmament did not achieve all that many people and governments hoped for, it did serve to focus attention on the crucial and often complex arms control and disarmament issues of our time. It also served, I believe, to underline the extent to which an exceedingly heavy responsibility rests with those countries which have embarked on serious arms control negotiations..."

Dr. MacGuigan outlined Canadian views on current negotiations to reduce nuclear weapons and described the new draft treaty tabled at the Vienna talks on reducing conventional forces in Europe. He stressed the high priority Canada attaches to an agreement on chemical weapons. In addition to referring to the new initiatives on arms control and disarmament which he announced on July 7, Dr. MacGuigan spoke of Canada's non-proliferation policy and of the expanding role in verification, "one of

the most significant factors in disarmament negotiations in the 1980's".

"...individuals with expertise and non-governmental organizations also have a vital role to play not only in achieving greater public understanding but also in ensuring that all available expertise is applied to this increasingly complex subject. Since World War II Canada has attached special importance to the development of international verification mechanisms. In recent years the Government has drawn on technical expertise in a number of departments. Further steps are being taken at the present time..."

"Within our research and public information program, established after UNSSOD I and substantially increased in size this year, we intend to put special emphasis in the coming year on research projects related to verification by Canadian universities, institutes and individuals."

"We will also institutionalize an expanding Canadian role in verification issues in order to utilize effectively expertise in several government departments and in the private sector in the negotiation of agreements on nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons systems. I am referring in particular to expertise in seismology, nuclear safeguards, remote sensing, toxicology and protective measures against chemical weapons, and communication satellites..."

Dr. MacGuigan concluded his speech with a call to Pugwash members to promote better understanding of arms control and disarmament issues:

"Part of the educational task of the Movement is, I believe, to increase public understanding that to attain peace and human survival one must seek to limit and reduce all weapons systems. It would be a tragedy if a result of the understandable and justifiable public concern about nuclear weapons were to make non-nuclear war more likely. Your business and the business of governments must continue to be the promotion of steps which reduce the likelihood of the use of force — the use of any weapons system..."

"I have no quarrel with those who wish to alert our peoples to the potential horrors of a nuclear war. The objective they seek, a world safe from the threat of a nuclear conflict, is the same goal which the Canadian Government pursues by every means at its disposal. We are not always in agreement,

however, on how this end can best be achieved. To explain complex negotiating positions to the general public can be exceedingly difficult. Simple declaratory statements are fairly easy to grasp but the potential negative implications for our overall objective — peace and security — are seldom self-evident. Moreover, in my experience, efforts to describe them can often be misunderstood. I very much hope that the Pugwash Movement will play its part, for which it is so eminently suited, in explaining that facile declaratory measures are no substitute for the negotiation of equitable and verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements."

"The easy response to the current tensions of the international situation is to argue that only disarmament or only defence fundamentally matters. However, to insist that only one or the other can enhance security and preserve peace is to misunderstand the basic components of security policy. The realistic position is to recognize that disarmament and defence complement and support each other. Our challenge as responsible internationalists is to search for and discover new approaches to a balanced security policy which will both maintain our dedication to our ideals and enable us to move towards a realizable possibility of world peace."

(The complete text is available in the "Statements and Speeches" Series issued by Domestic Information Programs Division of the Department of External Affairs)

World Disarmament Campaign Launched

"World Campaign Reborn" was the way the *Disarmament Times* put it on July 19. Delegates called it "nothing short of a miracle", and singled out Canada as playing a leading role in the successful outcome of a text on the World Disarmament Campaign (WDC) launched at UNSSOD II. Perhaps it was a miracle; more likely it was dogged determination and a spirit of compromise on all sides that enabled a consensus to be achieved.

It was a comprehensive Canadian paper on WDC that focussed discussion in Working Group III of UNSSOD II, and pointed the way to a set of guidelines for a campaign under U.N. auspices that can be effective in all parts of the world. The WDC text is one of the only substantive agreed documents to emerge from the three working groups of the