

MESSAGE TO C.I.I.A. SEMINAR ON
UNITED NATIONS POLICY
FROM THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL SHARP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

First of all I should like to say how sorry I am not to be with you for this seminar on Canada and the United Nations. I derived great benefit from taking part in the earlier seminars we have held, on Canada and Europe and on Canadian relations with Latin America. I know that this seminar will be equally important and that it will bring new knowledge and new ideas to both government and non-government participants. As you know, the Cabinet is devoting this weekend to final consideration of some aspects of our policy toward Europe. This is the culmination of a six-month process involving a seminar such as this, the preparation of a report by an inter-departmental task force and the presentation to the Government of a special report from the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs and National Defence. The task force report is confidential and takes into account the results of the C.I.I.A.-sponsored seminar on Canada and Europe; the Parliamentary Committee report is public, based on some weeks of public hearings and a recent trip to NATO and neutral countries of Europe.

The importance of these two reports can hardly be exaggerated but at the same time it is useful to remember that the review of foreign policy in general and of our relations with Europe in particular is the responsibility of the Government, of the Cabinet if you like. The Parliamentarians on the Committee and the officials on the task force have collected and sifted a great deal of material and had their say in their respective reports. Only the Government has decision-making power in these matters. The decision must serve Canada's national interest as the Government sees it.

So, while I regret that my part in the decision-making process on the review of our relations with Europe prevents me from being with you it can, perhaps, serve as a reminder that your seminar is a very important step in the review of our United Nations policy, that things said here may well have their effect on Cabinet decisions when the time comes.

I am very glad to know that my Parliamentary Assistant, Monsieur Jean-Pierre Goyer, will be with you. Having spent a good part of his time last fall at the 23rd General Assembly of the United Nations he will be able to make a valuable contribution to your discussions.