

tive Group, which will take place in early January and focus on the upcoming NPT Review Conference. So that will be an important opportunity to meet with the primary advisory body to me, if you will, of the interested public. I'm also expecting to do a fair amount of meeting with and speaking to the public in the January through March period when I won't be tied up with the First Committee or other fixed-date meetings. At this stage I haven't planned a cross-country tour per se. I'd prefer to be more flexible, to look at activities such as conferences and seminars that are going on across Canada and see what I can attend. I'm also very interested in speaking to high school and university students.

Ed: Some NGOs and individuals are disappointed when they do not see their representations to the government, through the Ambassador for Disarmament, translated directly into policy. How would you respond to these concerns?

PM: I think that when there are such a range of views on such a range of issues, organizations and individuals have to accept that they are not going to see their particular agendas translated immediately into government policy. They have to bear in mind the traditional approach of the Canadian government on arms control and disarmament issues, which is a focus on practical, concrete steps such as verification research. They have to put their objectives in that context. Even if at a particular moment it appears that a policy that's being advocated by a particular organization has a majority behind it, that doesn't necessarily mean that the government will respond positively to it. As I said, there are long-standing principles the government brings to the area and, as well, because it's an aspect of security policy, the government is going to tread very carefully before it makes any changes. And of course polling often reveals conflicting values and priorities among the public on these issues, and the government has to reconcile these.

The government must be aware of the range of public opinion, of course. It's also of great benefit to the government to have a kind of public sounding board where policies that are being developed or options that are being looked at can

be tested and refined at an early stage. That's where the Consultative Group is very important.

I think that anyone who's involved in this process should not be discouraged if their goals are not immediately reflected in government policy. Their views are a vital part of the development of policy. Certainly, if a government is really getting out of touch with its public, this will catch up with it sooner or later.

Ed: It's interesting that you should mention polling because one thing polls tend to reveal is a gender gap on peace and security issues. Do you think that you will approach your position differently than your predecessor did by virtue of being a woman?

PM: That's a very interesting question and a difficult one to answer. I've seen the polling too. Over time, or at least over the last five years, there does seem to be a gender gap where, in a ranking of priorities, Canadian women rank peace and security issues higher on average than Canadian men do. That has led some women's organizations to call for more women to be involved in peace and security issues and to call on government to ensure that more women are involved. And there's no question that, at the present time, this is an area overwhelmingly dominated by men. In the First Committee, only three or four of the 150-odd countries represented there are represented by a woman, and at NATO I don't think there's ever been a permanent representative that's been a woman.

I start from the fundamental position that it will only be of benefit to international organizations to be as representative as possible of the peoples of the countries involved there. And certainly, fairly representing the gender of over half of the world's population is, for me, absolutely essential. I have a little more difficulty with the concept that our policy would necessarily be different if more women were involved. The argument I've often heard is that women are more cooperative and less competitive in their approach to issues, therefore our policy would be a less combative and a more cooperative one. That analysis might work with respect to some countries' arms control and disarmament policies,

but I think that Canada's whole approach — constructive internationalism — is essentially a policy of cooperation, of seeking consensus. In that sense, dare I suggest that we already have a feminist or a "feminized" policy? It's a terrible waste of talent and resources not to have women involved in the full range of issues, but whether or not that would mean that we would have a more peaceful policy, I'm not sure.

I have a son who's almost five years old. Obviously I'm very concerned about the world he's going to grow up in, but I would have to say that the men that I work with in arms control and disarmament in the Canadian government who also have children are equally concerned that their sons and daughters not face nuclear annihilation. □

NPT Review Conference Preparatory Committee Meets

The second Preparatory Committee for the Fourth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (the NPT) met in Geneva September 11-18, 1989. The Canadian delegation was led by the Ambassador for Disarmament, Ms. Peggy Mason.

The Preparatory Committee dealt briefly with administrative matters relating to the upcoming Review Conference, then reviewed 15 background documents dealing with disarmament and nuclear matters prepared for the Review Conference by the Secretariat of the United Nations (10 documents), the International Atomic Energy Agency (3 documents), the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (1) and the South Pacific Forum (1).

The first Preparatory Committee met May 1-5, 1989 in New York. The third, and final, Preparatory Committee will meet in Geneva April 23 to May 4, 1990, with the Fourth NPT Review Conference itself scheduled to take place August 20 to September 14, 1990 in Geneva. □