

negotiations that eventually produced a decision calling on the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to be the custodian of questions arising from *Habitat*. The Assembly of the Secretary-General to ensure proper co-ordination of follow-up efforts within the Secretariat. One enduring element of the agreements reached at *Habitat* will be a permanent photo-visual centre in Vancouver to make use of the vast quantities of informational material gathered on the subject of human development. This repository of valuable material will be available not only to Canadians but, more important, to developing countries as they come to grips with the problems considered at *Habitat*.

In general, the political importance of harmonious North-South relations was derlined at the Assembly, though disagreement remained on costs and time-scales. Institutionally, there was interest in reinforcing, or at least defining better, the central role of the General Assembly in giving broad policy guidance to negotiations elsewhere. Not everyone accepts its "compass" function. But there is hope that the direction is now set, whatever the arguments along the way.

#### Human rights

The debate on social and humanitarian questions, which was the source of much controversy at the thirtieth session, particularly as concerns the "Zionism-is-racism" resolution, was remarkably calm at the thirty-first. Some 21 of 32 resolu-

tions were adopted without a vote, while only two agenda items were postponed to the thirty-second session.

In 1973, the UN declared the period 1973-83 a Decade for Action against Racism. The Program for the Decade called for a world conference on racism and racial discrimination, to be held in 1978. Canada, with the overwhelming majority of member states, welcomed this initiative and extended its full support to the Program.

In 1975, Western support for the Decade was undermined by the adoption of a resolution condemning Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination. Resolution 3379 distorted the original character of the Decade, in the opinion of Western delegations, most of which then voted against the resolution concerning the Program for the Decade, including the World Conference, as well as Resolution 3379.

Since it was generally felt that Western participation was essential to the success of the Program, efforts were made at the thirty-first session to restore the original character of the Decade. Although these were not entirely successful, sufficient progress was made to allow Western delegations to take a more positive attitude and Canada was able to abstain on the resolution concerning the implementation of the Program.

In 1974, ECOSOC declared that states giving any assistance to regimes in



A tense moment for the leaders of the Canadian delegation to the thirty-first United Nations General Assembly. Left to right, front row: Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Basil Robinson, Ambassador to the United Nations William Barton, and Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson.