

Q. Mr. Sharp, where in your view have been the major developments in international affairs during the past year?

A. I think the most important has been the movement, the further movement, towards détente in Europe. This has been a remarkable year. When I spoke to the United Nations in September of this year, I had said that there had been more progress towards world peace in this last year than since the formation of the United Nations itself. You've seen the movement towards détente in Europe, represented by the negotiations between the Germans and the Russians and the Poles and now the culmination in the agreement shortly to be signed between the two German states. We've seen the beginnings of the conference on European Security, the meetings in Helsinki where the preparations are being made for what everyone hopes will be a successful conference. We've seen on the other side of the world the development of relations between the United States and China, which is very significant because it has shown how the world situation is no longer polarized between the United States and the Soviet Union, it is now more of a triangular relationship and this has affected the whole outlook for peace and for development in the world. But I look upon those as probably the major developments during the year.

Q. Have you been satisfied with the progress made in the Helsinki conference?

A. Well, we don't expect rapid progress in this conference. Canada, as you know, is one of the participants because we have been invited along with the Americans. We have been invited because of our vital interest in Europe and also because we have, of course been engaged in two world wars in Europe. And we are now a member of the NATO Alliance and are contributing troops in Germany in the defence of the West. Our view is that a European Security Conference can be very useful, but only if it is well prepared and only if it deals with issues of substance. We're not interested simply in a declaration that no country is going to commit aggression or is going to invade another country, those are motherhood questions. We're interested in questions dealing with issues. We would like to see greater freedom of movement of people and of ideas and of information. We believe that this is a way of improving the security of Europe. We're interested in reducing the military confrontation that now takes place in the centre of Europe. So we are not disappointed in what is going on in Helsinki. We expect that the route towards a European Security Conference that accomplishes something valuable will be a long one and we are quite prepared to participate in it on that basis.

Q. At the same time, parallel approaches have been made toward Eastern Europe for talks on mutual and balanced force reductions...has there been an equal amount of progress there?

A. I don't think so, not yet. We have made advances, however, in laying down an agenda for talks on this subject. This was resisted for a long time. The NATO countries, however, have been promoting these talks and the Soviet Union has now agreed to have them. We have not