

Peggy Mason Appointed Ambassador for Disarmament

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced on August 28, 1989 the appointment of Ms. Margaret (Peggy) J. Mason as Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament.

Ms. Mason replaces Mr. Douglas Roche, whose completion of term was announced in June. Mr. Roche, who had held the post since October 1984, is presently a visiting professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta.

The Ambassador for Disarmament represents Canada at international meetings concerned with arms control and disarmament, in particular at the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and at the United Nations Disarmament Commission, both in New York. The Ambassador is also the Government's principal point of contact for Canadian non-governmental

organizations and persons interested in arms control and disarmament. As such, she will undertake speaking engagements across the country to discuss Canada's arms control and disarmament policies and the work done in the international forums where she represents Canada. The Ambassador acts as a Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on matters related to arms control and disarmament. In that capacity, she seeks to ensure coherence in Canadian policy as it relates to UN disarmament questions, disarmament and economic development, non-proliferation, the export of military equipment, confidence-building measures, conventional force reductions and limitations on strategic arms.

Born in Windsor, Nova Scotia, Ms. Mason holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Ottawa. She was admitted to the Ontario Bar in

1977 and practiced law in Ottawa until 1980, at which time she became Legal Advisor and Policy Analyst for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. From 1981 to 1984, Ms. Mason served as Policy Advisor to the Right Honourable Joe Clark and to the Honourable Erik Nielsen with responsibilities in the areas of status of women, arms control policy and constitutional and legal issues.

From September 1984 until her appointment as Ambassador for Disarmament, Ms. Mason acted as Policy Advisor to the Right Honourable Joe Clark in his capacity as Secretary of State for External Affairs. She provided policy analysis and advice on issues in the following areas: arms control, defence and international security, East-West relations and East-West human rights. She also dealt with international equality, nuclear energy and selected legal issues.

Ms. Mason is married and has one son. ■

An Interview with Peggy Mason

The Editor had a chance to speak with Canada's new Ambassador for Disarmament, Peggy Mason, prior to Ms. Mason's departure for New York to head the Canadian delegation to the First Committee of the United Nations, which opened October 16, 1989. What follows are excerpts from that interview.

Ed = Editor; PM = Peggy Mason

Ed: Is this a unique position? Is Canada the only country that has an Ambassador for Disarmament?

PM: Canada isn't the only country, but it is one of a small number of countries that has an Ambassador for Disarmament that specifically represents the country at the First Committee in New York. For most countries, the same ambassador who represents the country in the fall at the First Committee also represents the country at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which sits in February-March and also in the summer months, which means they're out of their country



Ms. Peggy Mason, Ambassador for Disarmament.

for most of the year. In the Canadian case, it was deliberately decided that the Ambassador for Disarmament should be based in Canada and be available to meet

with the Canadian public and interested NGOs [non-governmental organizations]. The Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament position also has a third role, which is that of advisor to the Minister on a range of arms control and disarmament issues, and that function as well requires the Ambassador being in Ottawa for some period of time.

[Editor's note: Mr. de Montigny Marchand is Canada's Ambassador to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva and to the Conference on Disarmament.]

Ed: Of these three components to your position — representing Canada in disarmament discussions at the UN, liaison with the public on arms control and disarmament issues, and advising the Minister — which interests you the most?

PM: I think that the combination of all three is very important. Liaison with the public — finding out what their concerns are and discussing with them the government's policies and priorities — would not be nearly as effective if I were not also plugged into some forum, such as the UN, so that I can speak in light of