

the period from April 1986 to August 1987, and contained the names of some 5,000 Canadian individuals, firms, organizations and municipal governments who had written to Mr. Clark indicating actions they had taken to demonstrate their opposition to apartheid. In presenting the register, the Minister reaffirmed Canada's continuing opposition to apartheid and commitment to effecting fundamental change in South Africa (Permanent Mission to the United Nations communiqué, September 23).

The same day, Johannes de Klerk, South African Ambassador to Canada, told the editorial board of the *Edmonton Journal*, "I admit that apartheid doesn't work, that it's wrong, also that it's morally reprehensible to discriminate between people on the basis of race, [however], if you go too fast, you might have a revolution by the white right-wing extremists." Stiffer economic sanctions imposed by Commonwealth members would be "dangerous, because you are playing into the hands of the radicals — radicals on the right and radicals on the left." International pressure to change his country's system only encouraged the Afrikaners' resistance to reform. "The Commonwealth can make its greatest contribution [by] assisting southern African countries with economic development and secondly, lifting sanctions" (*Ottawa Citizen*, September 25).

Finally, South Africa's Deputy Foreign Minister Koebus Meiring said during a visit to Ottawa that his country was trying to help the frontline states, and aid from other countries would ease the burden on South Africa of carrying their moribund economies. "What we really want to have in those countries is good, orderly government, whether it is Marxist or whatever," he said (*Toronto Star*, September 29).

The Vatican

Papal Visit

A long-awaited visit by Pope John Paul II to Fort Simp-

son in the Northwest Territories took place on September 20. Bad weather had prevented the Pope from keeping his commitment to Fort Simpson during his 1984 tour of Canada.

The Pope was greeted at the airport by Governor General Jeanne Sauv . He then told a gathering of about 3,000 mostly native people that he believed the Canadian government should grant northern natives self-government to ensure their survival as a people, and he prayed the government would reopen talks with native leaders on entrenching native rights in the Canadian constitution.

A sacred fire of cedar logs burned during the papal mass as the pontiff spoke of the native peoples' "love and caring" for their land and the spirituality of nature. Many elderly natives spoke of the special bond between the Pope and their people. "They called us savages and said we were superstitious because the white man did not understand us. All he brought us was alcohol to poison our minds and our spirits," said Francesca Antoine, but "we knew God long before the white man came here . . . We talk to the trees and the mountains and the rivers because we know the spirit is in the land. The Holy Father knows that. He has touched us all by coming here."

The Pope departed for the Vatican from Edmonton a few hours later.

George Erasmus, leader of the Assembly of First Nations, said after the Pope's address, "Generally we were fairly pleased" with the Pope's statements on self-government and constitutional rights. However, he said, "there are still a lot of bad feelings" between the Roman Catholic Church and native peoples. "Reconciliation with the church is going to take a long time. The Pope's visit will help, but we can't just wipe that history away in one day" (*Ottawa Citizen* and *Globe and Mail*, September 21).

Multilateral Relations

Commonwealth

Women's Affairs Conference

In early August Canada's Minister Responsible for Women's Affairs, Barbara McDougall, attended the second meeting of Commonwealth ministers responsible for women's affairs in Harare, Zimbabwe. The conference was attended by twenty ministers and thirty-five delegations, out of forty-nine Commonwealth countries.

The conference delegates concentrated on women's role in economic development and on violence against women. They were not pleased with the original draft of the action plan presented to them by Commonwealth Secretary General Sir Shridath Ramphal, and sent it back to the Commonwealth secretariat to be rewritten, saying they had

found it presented a secretariat view that was inadequate and insensitive. They demanded secretariat guidelines and policies for appreciation of women's issues within the Commonwealth bureaucracy. "We have laid the foundation for government to change social attitudes through legislation and public awareness," said conference chairman Teurai Mujuru, Zimbabwe's minister of women's affairs.

Ms McDougall said after the conference that the group intended to have its action plan approved at the full Commonwealth conference in October. "I have a strong mandate from our prime minister and I'm sure that all heads of government will get a strong and clear message from their women's affairs ministers that we mean business, that we are contributors and that they ignore us at their peril . . . The Commonwealth is actually a good vehicle, springboard