

*Insistence
on settlements
hindering
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negotiations*

triggered by President Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem were scarcely reflected in the speeches, and not at all in the resolutions, in New York. Canada has consistently supported Security Council Resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973 as establishing a framework for negotiations that could lead to a peaceful settlement of disputes. Canadian delegates to successive Assembly meetings, as to the meetings of other UN bodies, have expressed the belief that repetitive debates, too often leading to one-sided resolutions, have only served to exacerbate the differences between the parties rather than to improve the atmosphere for negotiations. Canada attempted to judge each resolution on its merits, with the result that of the 18 put forward it supported nine, abstained on five and voted against four — almost half the negative votes the delegation cast at the Assembly. This followed the previous year's pattern of eight yes, four no and five abstentions on 17 resolutions.

One new Middle East item was placed on the agenda at the request of Egypt, criticizing Israel for establishing settlements in the occupied Arab territories. Canada voted for this resolution because of the belief that the Israeli insistence on the right to create settlements was hindering the prospects for negotiations. On the other hand, Canada was one of a tiny minority — with El Salvador, Israel and the United States — that voted against the resolution entitled "The Situation in the Middle East". This resolution called for the participation in a peace conference of the Palestine Liberation Organization "on an equal footing" with the other parties and for Israeli withdrawal "from all Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967". Canada judged that, by adopting such a resolution, which went beyond the terms of Security Council Resolution 242, at precisely the moment when there appeared to be prospects for reaching agreement on new negotiations, the Assembly was endangering, rather than furthering, the prospects for peace.

Canada had far more company in voting against two resolutions concerning the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which attempted to prejudge what the results of negotiations might be, and called for the establishment of a special unit on Palestinian rights within the Secretariat. Canada's fourth negative vote was cast on a resolution singling out Israel for condemnation for its alleged increasing collaboration with South Africa.

As one of the major supporters of the UN Relief and Works Agency, to which it has pledged over \$4 million this year, Can-

ada supported five resolutions relating to the Agency's work. It abstained on a sixth, concerning Palestinian refugees in Gaza, to take into account Israel's provision of housing for some hardship cases.

The Assembly's performance on the Middle East was in marked contrast to that of the Security Council during 1977. Council members showed a marked disinclination to interfere with the continuing negotiations in the area. The Council met to renew the mandates of the two UN forces — the UN Emergency Force between Israel and Egypt and the UN Disengagement Observation Force between Israel and Syria. Otherwise, it held only two short, relatively non-polemical, debates to enable members to express their views, and no new resolutions were proposed. As a member of the Council, Canada welcomed this responsible approach by the UN organ with primary responsibility for peace and security.

Southern Africa

For several sessions, the other area of major political concern for most member states has been southern Africa, with annual debates on Namibia, Zimbabwe or Rhodesia, and South African *apartheid*. This year's discussions in the General Assembly were overshadowed by the Security Council's adoption on November 4 of Resolution 418. The Council unanimously determined that the continued acquisition by South Africa of arms and related materials constituted a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. Acting under the terms of Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council decided that all states should cease to provide arms of any kind. This was the first time the Council had ever proclaimed a mandatory embargo against a member state.

The Council's action was influenced by the results of two conferences held in Africa earlier in the year. At a conference in Maputo, Mozambique, on Namibia and Zimbabwe, and another in Lagos, Nigeria, on *apartheid*, member states unanimously adopted statements supporting the right of the majority peoples to struggle for the attainment of their full rights, and recommending action to end *apartheid* and racial discrimination. The readiness of Africa and other states to agree to a common approach to southern African questions reflected their understanding that Western countries accepted a responsibility for taking the initiative in trying to resolve these problems. Britain and the United States produced joint proposals for bringing about majority rule in Zimbabwe. The Security Council authorized the Secretary-General to name a special representative, General