

does not welcome third party intervention, there is little room for outsiders to play any role.

Very modest achievement

What, then if anything, did the session achieve? First, it was a successful effort in consciousness-raising. The fact that the special session was being held made it the catalyst for and the focus of the mass activities of the public and NGOs. Second, was the launching of the World Disarmament Campaign and the reaching of a consensus agreement on its nature and scope. Many observers credit the agreement to the pressure of public opinion and to the reluctance of delegations to risk the inevitable criticism from the NGOs and the public if they had failed to agree.

While the adoption of the campaign is not in itself a major disarmament achievement, it does have the potential for mobilizing public opinion on behalf of arms control

and disarmament. Since no government or any major power appears to be really interested in disarmament, at least in the sense of putting forward significant or far-reaching proposals that have any chance of acceptance by the other side, massive public pressure is necessary to push governments into meaningful proposals and agreements. Without such public pressure the nuclear powers might never have stopped their testing in the atmosphere. Only the buildup of public pressure can generate the necessary political will of governments to halt and reverse the arms race. If the World Disarmament Campaign is carried out in a proper and adequate manner, it can not only help to inform and educate people and their governments, but it can provide a continuing stimulus for both cooperation and accountability between them, not only in the field of disarmament but also in the closely interrelated fields of international security and development. □

Book Reviews

Surviving Sir Sam

by Sydney F. Wise

A Peculiar Kind of Politics: Canada's Overseas Ministry in the First World War by Desmond Morton. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982, \$22.50.

"Peculiar" means "particular" or "special" or simply "odd." Both meanings are implied in the title of this excellent book. Desmond Morton's purpose is to trace the manner in which Canada, during the First World War, developed the political and administrative machinery to control her forces overseas. The instrument rough-carpen-tered for the purpose was the Ministry of Overseas Forces, headed by a cabinet minister and located at Argyll House in London. The Ministry was without precedent in Canadian experience; it had no counterpart among the other Dominions. The chief importance of Professor Morton's study is to demonstrate the considerable significance of this peculiar institution in the rapid wartime evolution of Canadian military autonomy, a process which heretofore has been seen as resulting from the exploits of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and from Sir Robert Borden's leadership in demanding a separate voice for the self-governing dominions.

The Overseas Ministry was created towards the end of

1916. It was a direct consequence of the peculiar politics of the Minister of Militia and Defence, Sir Sam Hughes. Morton treats Hughes's eccentricities with admirable restraint, unobtrusive wit and fine scholarship. The result is that contradiction in terms, administrative history that is gripping and full of interest. His account of how Hughes constructed his overseas satrapy in the early years of the war is the best yet written.

This lamentable and infuriating politician is the anti-hero of the book. It was Hughes's "manic wilfulness," his insistence upon personal control, his haphazard and impromptu creation of instant colonels from among political friends and chance acquaintances, the vague and conflicting mandates he gave them, all calculated to preserve his power and keep him in the heady limelight, that was responsible for the creation of an unexampled administrative mess in England in 1915-16. The situation puzzled the British, though they were able to exploit it, frustrated those commanding Canadian troops in France, who depended upon the England-based organization for support, and brought misery to thousands of Canadian officers and men at the mercy of incompetence and inefficiency while under training. Hughes has customarily been handled with amusement by historians. The consequences of egocentricity, self-delusion and cronyism, however, were so serious that, even at this remove in time, one shares Morton's suppressed anger.

Yet the achievement of military autonomy, in a pecu-