

October 22 informed the Soviet embassy in Canada of the government's strong opposition to the "intolerable negation of human rights."

A group of twenty-six Ontario legislators concerned over violations of human rights in the USSR had also been formed in October. On October 19, they had sent a telegram to then-President Brezhnev indicating that they had called on the Canadian government to take action to ensure Mr. Shcharansky's health, safety and immediate release (*The Citizen*, October 20).

Shcharansky, and that it urge that steps be taken to put an immediate end to this flagrant violation of human rights, which is in direct contravention of the Helsinki Accord." Several MPs representing all three political parties in the House to express concern for Mr. Shcharansky, others in the Soviet Union imprisoned "because of desire to leave the country." External Relations Minister Charles Lapointe told the House that the government several times in recent years made representations to the Soviet Union on behalf of Mr. Shcharansky, and had on

# Multilateral Relations

## UNITED NATIONS

### 37th Session — Canadian Parliamentarians

Several groups of five or six Canadian Members of Parliament were in New York in October and November as observers on the Canadian Delegation to the 37th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Each group spent a week participating in a range of plenary and committee meetings to become familiar with the operations of the UN and with Canada's participation in the organization (Canadian Delegation to the United Nations press releases).

### Canadian Support

On the occasion of United Nations Day, October 24, the thirty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen sent a message to UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in support of the organization on behalf of Canadians. Mr. MacEachen said that the visit to the UN by Governor-General Schreyer on that occasion was a significant honor for Canadians. It was the first visit of a Canadian Governor-General to the United Nations. During Mr. Schreyer's visit, he presented a cheque to the Secretary-General for one million dollars for UNICEF programs, to be provided through the International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) Program of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for health and relief supplies in Ethiopia and Lebanon (Canadian Delegation to the United Nations press releases, October 15, 22 and 25).

### Namibian Contact Group

The Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, the United Kingdom, the US and Germany met in New York October 1

to "take stock of the progress made in the Namibian negotiations since their previous meeting in Luxembourg on May 17." The five-nation "contact" group is trying to negotiate with South Africa, the South-West Africa People's Organization and other African states for the peaceful transition to independence from South Africa for Namibia. Constitutional principles which had been recently agreed to during the negotiations with all parties were "welcomed" and "appreciated" by the members of the contact group (External Affairs press release, October 1). One problem facing the contact group has been the US bid to link Namibian independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. None of the other four partners has openly supported the US condition that the Cuban troops withdraw at the same time as South Africa relinquishes control, but during an African tour in November, US Vice-President George Bush maintained that the contact group supported the attempt to tie Namibian independence to the withdrawal of the troops, it was reported November 22 (*Globe and Mail*).

### Response to Complaint to ILO

The Canadian government's response to a union's complaint to the International Labour Organization (ILO) was made public November 5. The Professional Institute of the Public Service had asked the ILO in September to support the union's charge that the *Public Sector Restraint Act* violates a 1978 Convention signed by Canada by limiting or eliminating workers' rights to bargain. The response was contained in a letter from Treasury Board President to Labour Minister Charles Caccia, and had been formally transmitted to the ILO in Geneva. Certain details of the federal government's restraint act were outlined in the letter. The letter argues that the Act meets ILO