

Canada Reports: What do you hope to do in the First Committee?

Roche: I wish to make it clear that although the First Committee does not negotiate arms control and disarmament agreements, its deliberations can be brought to bear, particularly when these deliberations carry the weight of strong public opinion, upon negotiating priorities in other forums. If the First Committee is to do this effectively, however, its deliberations and procedures must be streamlined. It cannot be effective when it passes several contradictory resolutions on the same subject. Last year, the First Committee made significant progress, reducing the number of Chemical Weapons resolutions from six to two. This year, I will focus my attention on continuing this process so that the First Committee may speak with a unanimous voice.

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Nuclear weapons issues tend to dominate the resolutions of the First Committee, yet global levels of conventional arms are high and rising, and that is a problem which many member states could help resolve by their own action. I hope to expand the scope of First Committee deliberations so that the attention given to relations between the superpowers, where progress is being made, does not distract us from other regional problems where the world community can have a good impact.



UN Photo 154631

Walking from Toronto to UN headquarters for peace.



UN Photo 154640

Canada Reports: My last question: what can Canada hope to do on the Security Council, assuming we are elected to a seat for 1989-90?

"To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

Roche: Canada is a strong proponent of multilateralism and would like to assist the United Nations in reasserting

its capacity to play the central role it was designed to play in dealing with the problems which face the international community, including Afghanistan, Cyprus, Kampuchea, Central America and the Middle East. More and more we are seeing an enlarged definition of the word "security," meaning that state which comes from economic and social development, the protection of human rights, an end to racial discrimination, and the protection of the environment, as well as from arms control measures.

I believe that on the Security Council, Canada, with its reputation as a fair-minded democratic nation, will want to promote this understanding of security. I have come to the conclusion, on the basis of 30 years as a journalist, parliamentarian and diplomat, that we are not going to have disarmament first and then the world gets better — but the other way round.