

headings. A fuller appreciation of Canada's involvement in the UN in 1976 will be provided in other chapters, particularly those concerning Canada's multilateral activities.

### **Political and security questions**

For a number of reasons, notably those mentioned above, the trend away from confrontation and towards dialogue begun at the thirtieth session was maintained at the thirty-first. In the view of some delegations, the thirty-first session was a holding operation. Whatever one's interpretation, the fact that substantive debate on a number of decisive issues was taking place in other bodies — the CIEC, UNCTAD IV, Geneva — augured well for the thirty-first session.

### **Korea**

The deadlock on the question of Korea created at the thirtieth session by the adoption of two mutually-contradictory resolutions was avoided at the thirty-first, when the supporters of the DPRK (North Korea) withdrew their resolution. The supporters of the ROK then did likewise, and the question was deleted from the agenda.

### **Southern Africa**

A major political highlight of the session was the debate on issues relating to Southern Africa, notably the questions of *apartheid* and Namibia. The third major Southern African question, Rhodesia, was the subject of equally intense debate, but in another forum, the conference at Geneva, and the delicate nature of those negotiations appeared to have discouraged any initiative that might have compromised the possibility of a successful outcome.

Canada's support for the efforts to achieve social justice in Southern Africa through peaceful means continued undiminished and its utter rejection of racial discrimination in Southern Africa was clearly expressed in Mr. Jamieson's September 29 speech to the General Assembly:

My Government agrees that the early inde-

pendence of both Namibia and Rhodesia on the basis of majority rule and racial harmony is essential to the peace of Africa. It believes as well that South Africa must meet the legitimate political, social and economic demands of the majority of South Africans, supported by the virtually unanimous opinion of this Assembly, if such peace is to endure.

Nevertheless, the deterioration of the situation in the region, particularly in the wake of the civil unrest in South Africa itself and the unsatisfactory constitutional conference in Namibia led to an increasingly strong stand on the part of African and other Third World delegations at the thirty-first session. For the first time, countries having extensive economic relations with South Africa were singled out for criticism by name in resolutions. Armed struggle in Namibia under the direction of SWAPO (South West African People's Organization) received General Assembly support, and the debate on *apartheid* explicitly treated the situation in South Africa as a colonial one. These developments led most Western countries, including Canada, to abstain on a number of major resolutions, more moderate versions of which Canada had been able to support at the thirtieth session.

### **Middle East**

The debate on the Middle East, though generally subdued, continued to occupy a great deal of the Assembly's time. The "racism-Zionism" link, first made in 1975, remained part of the rhetoric in play, but direct references to it disappeared from resolutions. Similarly, while some resolutions reflected a lack of balance by proposing impractical and one-sided solutions to the Middle East conflict, it was generally felt that political developments in the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war and in the wider Arab context were such as to justify hope for an early resumption of the Geneva conference. A moderate Egyptian resolution calling for a resumption of the talks received general support, including that of Canada and most Western countries. Canada's approach to the Middle East question is to