



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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## A TURNING-POINT IN WORLD HISTORY

An Address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs,  
the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, to the Twenty-sixth General  
Assembly of the United Nations, New York, September 29, 1971.

...It is a matter of deep regret in Canada that this should be the last session at which U Thant will occupy the Secretary-General's chair. U Thant has carried out his heavy responsibilities and fulfilled his arduous obligations with a serenity and steadfastness that have been an example to us all and that have won the respect and admiration of all men everywhere. I am sure that his quiet and authoritative voice will continue to be heard in the councils of the nations, and on behalf of the people of Canada I wish him well in his future endeavours.

This twenty-sixth General Assembly opens a new quarter century in the life of our organization, and I suggest that it may mark a turning-point in our history and the opportunity for a new beginning, if this Assembly moves promptly and effectively to seat the People's Republic of China in the China seat. China is a charter member of this organization and a permanent member of the Security Council. The only question before us is who should occupy the existing China seat. The Canadian position is clear -- the government that has responsibility for the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people must now take its proper place here, the Government of the People's Republic of China.

The seating of the Peking Government in this Assembly and at the Security Council will bring the effective government of a quarter of mankind into our councils.

Canada endorses the principle of universality of membership and looks forward to a time when the divided states too can be properly represented here. But principles must always be conditioned by facts, and before this ideal can be reached there are serious practical problems to be solved. There would be no particular advantage for the United Nations or for the divided states themselves were they to do no more than import their special problems and conflicts into the wider forum of this organization.

I have said that Canada endorses the principle of universality and, in the Canadian view, there is an important principle involved. The communications explosion has annihilated time and distance, two factors that used to isolate