

down in their statement on disarmament on March 17, 1961, and expressed their conviction that the eighteen nation disarmament committee at Geneva should continue its efforts towards a treaty for general and complete disarmament in accordance with these principles. They noted that discussions on the cessation of nuclear weapons tests had also been taking place in Geneva and expressed the hope that these efforts would be successful in bringing into being an effective treaty to eradicate this source of fear and danger to mankind."

The eighteen nation committee is responsible for detailed negotiations and only through its continued efforts in Geneva can progress toward disarmament be realized. That is why we must, as the distinguished representative of Norway stated here a few days ago, "... give encouragement and guidance to the negotiating nations in Geneva". I point out that all members of the United Nations have a fundamental obligation to assist in every way in ensuring that agreement on this vital subject is reached without delay. The world simply cannot afford the risk of failure.

Nuclear Weapons Tests

In the disarmament talks at Geneva and in this general assembly, it has been made very clear that the problem of nuclear weapons tests is of the gravest concern to all members of the United Nations. My government maintains its firm opposition to all nuclear weapons testing, for two reasons.

First, we are convinced that continued testing poses an ever increasing danger to human health. Of this I shall say more presently. Second, the ultimate security of mankind is weakened, not strengthened, by further testing. No matter what considerations may lead the major powers to undertake nuclear tests, their effect can only be to accelerate and to make even more perilous the race in nuclear armaments. The powers concerned must not ignore the fact that the arms race itself gives rise to fears which in turn become a factor in intensifying competition in armaments.

I believe that these fundamental points are not in dispute. But the tests have still not been stopped. The proposals submitted by the eight uncommitted countries at Geneva, and the new technical data advanced recently by the United States and the United Kingdom, have opened new opportunities for agreement.

The Canadian government strongly supports the proposal, originally made by the Mexican delegate to the eighteen nation disarmament committee, that a target date, January 1, 1963—and I wish it could have been earlier—should be set for the cessation of all tests.

This date has been accepted in principle by the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union.

As a minimum first step, agreement could be reached immediately on the final cessation of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, under water and in outer space. To have a comprehensive treaty, of course underground tests must be included. The question barring agreement on such a treaty is whether the parties shall be obligated to permit inspections on their territories when other means of determining whether there has been an underground nuclear explosion fail to give a definite answer. This is a difficult problem involving dangers to the security of the nations concerned, but the dangers which result from the lack of solution are immeasurably greater.

If the great powers cannot reach agreement on this issue, prospects for general and complete disarmament will be dim indeed. They can and must resolve their differences in this field if they are to fulfil their obligation to mankind. The general assembly should clearly express itself in this sense.

Radiation

I revert now to the hazards to human health created by nuclear testing. The second comprehensive report of the United Nations scientific committee on the effects of atomic radiation brings out the danger very clearly in the following statement—and I quote from this scientific report:

"As there are no effective measures to prevent the occurrence of harmful effects of global radioactive contamination from nuclear explosions, the achievement of a final cessation of nuclear tests would benefit present and future generations of mankind."

That is the objective language of a scientific report tabled just a few months ago. The dangers involved are immediate. They affect us now and what is even more important, they will affect future generations.

In order to assess these dangers properly, the assembly must continue to insist on a co-operative world wide study. Last year's resolution on the subject reaffirmed the desirability of continuing full international co-operation through the scientific committee. The latest report of the committee constitutes an authoritative and up to date assessment of the exposure of mankind to radiation and of its harmful effects.

In the resolution of last year, the general assembly called for a study of a world wide synoptic reporting scheme of atmospheric radiation levels. I have been greatly encouraged by the progress made by the world meteorological organization in preparing