

3. Nuclear Winter: Canada's role in the Nuclear Winter debate provides an object lesson in the difficulties of obtaining consensus at the U.N.

A year ago, more than 100 scientists endorsed a study headed by Professors Carl Sagan and Paul Ehrlich, projecting that a nuclear outbreak between East and West, in addition to the human casualties the total of which might approach half the population of the world, would so damage the environment as to produce a "nuclear winter." The scientists said that a damaged ozone layer would leave a global wasteland where survivors would starve and freeze on a planet without sunlight, the air filled with toxic chemicals and penetrated by dangerous ultraviolet radiation. Under this hypothesis, a small drop in overall temperature on the Canadian prairie would virtually end any viable farming. The Canadian government commissioned the Royal Society of Canada to examine the Nuclear Winter theory, a report is expected this month.

It should be remembered that the Sagan-Ehrlich study has not met the unanimous support of scientists. Some are not convinced of the gravity of Nuclear Winter. In an effort to have all pertinent studies on this important subject brought into the U.N. for further dissemination, the Canadian delegation attempted to develop a consensus vote, which would give added weight to the Nuclear Winter material.

A draft resolution, introduced by Mexico, Sweden, India, Yugoslavia, Pakistan and Uruguay, accepted Nuclear Winter as a foregone conclusion and called on the Secretariat to compile a document consisting of excerpts from national