LETTER TO KHRUSHCHOV

A letter from Prime Minister Diefenbaker,
in reply to a message dated June 27, 1960,
from Premier Khrushchov of the U.S.S.R.
concerning the breakdown of disarmament
talks at Geneva a few days earlier.

"OTTAWA, June 30, 1960.

Excellency Nikita S. Khrushchov,
irman of the Council of Ministers,
Kremlin,
COW, U.S.S.R.

r Mr. Chairman:

I have received your letter of June 27 announcing the decision
your Government to discontinue its participation in the work of the
n Nation Disarmament Committee. The action of the Soviet Delegation
d the delegations of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Roumania
leaving the Committee without warning gives cause for serious regret
d concern. I find these developments deeply disquieting.

At the outset, let me dispose of the charges you level at
e positions taken by the Western delegations, particularly by the
nadian representative. Your remarks seem to me not so much concerned
th the conduct of the negotiations as with the aim of creating
fferences among the Western delegations.

If your allegations against the Canadian Government are
riously meant, they constitute a transparent misrepresentation of
nada's position. The Canadian Government has throughout adopted in
e Ten Nation Committee a strong and independent stand in support of
lanced concessions leading towards agreement. Furthermore, despite
l setbacks we have not ceased to advocate in other fields the
ntinuance of a policy of negotiation with a view to the restoration
f mutual confidence between the Soviet and Western worlds.

The seriousness of the Canadian Government's interest and
urpose in embarking on the disarmament negotiations has been amply
emonstrated. On a number of occasions, most recently on June 24, the
anadian Delegation made detailed suggestions designed to bring the
en Nation Committee to grips with the task of real negotiation.
nfortunately, the Soviet Union and its allies did not respond to these
uggestions or to a number of other Western proposals to move towards
pecific measures of disarmament.

Indeed I find it difficult to understand the logic of your
overnment's action in discontinuing these important talks at this
uncture. At the time of the failure of the Summit meeting, the
anadian Government took the view that all the other East-West
egotiations then proceeding automatically assumed greater importance,
ince they constituted a useful means through which the deterioration
of international relations could be checked. In the view of the
anadian Government the situation demanded that the members of the
Committee put behind them the opening phases of the negotiations and
roceed immediately with their task.