



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF ATOMIC ENERGY

An address by General A.G.L. McNaughton, Canadian Permanent Delegate to the United Nations, to the United Nations Association of Ottawa, May 10, 1948.

I value very much the opportunity which you have given me to speak to you tonight on the subject of the international control of atomic energy. This is a subject which I think has become of transcendent importance in international affairs. In fact I would venture the opinion that the development of a satisfactory solution to this acute problem and the institution of appropriate safeguards are among the indispensable conditions for the establishment and maintenance of stable peace throughout the world.

You will no doubt have noted the statements made at the meeting of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission on Friday last and I am sure that you will all share the disappointment which the majority of the members of the Commission now experience in having to report that the affairs of the Commission have reached an "impasse" which they consider to be beyond the capacity of the Commission itself to resolve. The majority members of the Commission feel that the issues which have been raised now require debate in a wider forum and to this end they have recommended that the situation should be frankly and fully reported first to the Security Council and then to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forthcoming regular session which is the session called for September next in Paris.

I would like to make it quite clear that this proposal on the part of the majority of the Commission does not represent any acceptance of defeat or confession of failure in their efforts to achieve a proper system for the international control of atomic energy. Quite the contrary - the majority of the members of the Commission are certain that they have evolved and set forth in their reports the technical framework of a system of control which will be satisfactory and which in the end will be accepted and implemented by all nations. They have realized that having completed part of their task which primarily concerns scientific and technological matters the time has arrived when increased efforts should be given to political considerations and therefore they feel that the debate can be pressed with greater advantage in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

I would like you to think of this action by the majority members for what it is - a bold challenge to the forces of reaction, of ignorance, and of timidity to face up to the new conceptions of international organization which are an unescapable consequence of our entry into the atomic age.

This challenge will develop in the General Assembly from the firm basis of the knowledge which has been gathered in the Commission, from the arguments which have been marshalled there and will proceed from the firm conviction which has come to fourteen nations out of the seventeen which have taken part in the work of the Commission to date.