



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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PAST AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

A Year-End Message by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Howard Green, December 29, 1961.

The beginning of a new year is a time for reflection about the events of the preceding 12 months and about the prospects for the future.

1961 produced its share of setbacks - disappointments and periods of dangerous tension. In Berlin, in the Congo, in Southeast Asia there were developments which at times threatened the world with armed conflict. The Soviet Union's resumption of nuclear tests on a massive scale intensified the fear that nuclear war might occur in spite of the general realization of its awful consequences. The United Nations, to which people look more and more for a solution to international problems, was itself beset by an internal crisis which made many fear for its future - especially when tragedy removed its devoted servant Dag Hammarskjold.

Yet responsible leaders would be doing a disservice to mankind if they were to dwell exclusively on the difficulties which characterized 1961 - without acknowledging the advance and solid achievements of that year. Indeed we should not lose sight of the all-important fact that major conflict was avoided and that as the year closed, the processes of negotiation and conciliation were at work - or in prospect in most of the world's trouble spots.

Two Areas of Crisis

In Berlin for example, the deadline imposed by the Soviet Union was lifted, a development which brought with it a resumption of diplomatic contacts and improved prospect of a negotiated settlement where a few months earlier the worst crisis of the year had arisen.

In Southeast Asia and in particular in Laos a dangerous trend of events at the beginning of the year had been checked and the ground-work for a negotiated settlement laid. This was done through the convening in Geneva in May of a 14-nation