

It is essential, therefore, that we should not pass lightly over this item concerning the annual progress report of a scientific body established by the General Assembly to study the effects of atomic radiation. In dealing with it, we must take account of current developments which have such direct and important implications for the studies which that body is carrying out. If we failed to do so, we should be ignoring the views of the Scientific Committee itself. As its report states, the Committee recognizes that the resumption of nuclear test explosions increases the urgency for the intensification of relevant scientific studies.

#### Czech Proposal Opposed

It is difficult for my delegation to understand how the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia could suggest, as the resolution submitted by his delegation does, that despite the present disturbing circumstances we should treat this item concerning radiation hazards in a routine and, indeed, almost casual manner. Item 24 is, after all, the only item on the agenda of the sixteenth session which deals specifically with the consequences of atomic radiation. I am sure the Committee will agree with me that as representative of our peoples - the very men, women and children directly threatened by the radiation menace - we cannot do less in this Assembly than to take the kind of positive and substantive action which they expect of us. We must, therefore, seize the opportunity afforded by the consideration of this item to ensure that the focus of world opinion is held on this grave problem.

Before I pass on to the scientific proposals contained in our resolution, I should perhaps comment briefly on one possible misconception about the nature of its objectives. It is not our intention - and in this I am sure I speak for all co-sponsors - it is in no way our intention to involve ourselves here with the complex question of effective and practical arrangements for achieving a cessation of nuclear-weapons tests. The position of the Canadian Government on this issue is well known. Canada is unalterably opposed to the testing of nuclear weapons, both because of the radiation hazard posed by such tests and because of their contribution to the development of ever more terrible weapons of war. The Canadian attitude in this respect has been emphasized wherever and whenever the matter of tests has been discussed. It will continue to be stressed in the appropriate forum, the First Committee of this Assembly.

#### A Harsh Reality

But what we are concerned with here in the Special Political Committee is one specific aspect of the dangers associated with the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere. The basis for our urgent examination of this problem is the indisputable fact that sharp increases in radioactive fall-out have occurred as a result of nuclear-weapons testing. This is not a matter for argument and it is not a theoretical prospect; it is a harsh reality.