

No. 58/5

TEXT OF LETTER FROM MR. KHRUSHCHEV
TO MR. DIEFENBAKER DATED MAY 30, 1958
AND DELIVERED TO THE PRIME MINISTER BY
THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR ON MAY 31, 1958.
THIS WAS IN RESPONSE TO MR. DIEFENBAKER'S
LETTER OF MAY 9, 1958 SENT IN REPLY TO MR.
KHRUSHCHEV'S MESSAGE DATED APRIL 4, 1958.

Moscow
May 30, 1958.

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

After careful study of your letter I cannot help coming to the conclusion that the questions raised in it evidently need further elucidation, and, what is most important, that a desire is expressed in your letter to contribute toward the finding of ways to an agreement between the states concerned on the urgent problems, upon the solution of which depend the destinies of the world. Even this alone is a good sign, since this distinguishes your approach to the analysis of problems, which have long caused profound concern to peoples, from the usually prejudiced approach which is expressed in the constant refusal to embark on the path of honest negotiations with the Soviet Union and in the constant, negative attitude towards its proposals which we aimed at consolidating peace between peoples.

Taking all this into account I express my readiness to continue an exchange of views and willingly to answer the questions which interest you. If this exchange of views helps in any degree to recognize the need to find ways for saving mankind from the oppressive threat of a new war, and helps to draw together the positions of the powers on outstanding international problems, then I think there will be a reason to believe that this exchange of opinions was useful.

The Soviet Government has met with full understanding the thought expressed in your letter that governments, whether or not they dispose of the nuclear weapon now, have the right, indeed the duty, to work unceasingly for peace. These words of yours, in which a legitimate anxiety for the destinies of the world is evident, as well as your statement to the effect that the question of nuclear weapons tests is of grave concern to the Canadian Government, show that, provided there is the desire, a common language could be found on such a problem of great concern to peoples as the general cessation of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

It seems to us that, in spite of a number of reservations which cannot be shared by us, the attitude of the Government of which you are the head toward this problem coincides in many respects with that of the Soviet Union, the aim of which is the unilateral renunciation of further tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

If the reservations and doubts expressed in your letter are to be touched upon, it is difficult to avoid an impression that they are engendered in the last analysis by that distrust towards the Soviet Union which is being constantly cultivated in the organization of the North Atlantic