

The 18-Nation Committee is responsible for detailed negotiations and only through its continued efforts in Geneva can progress toward disarmament be realized. That is why we must, as the distinguished representative of Norway stated here a few days ago, "...give encouragement and guidance to the negotiating nations in Geneva". I point out that all members of the United Nations have a fundamental obligation to assist in every way in ensuring that agreement on this vital subject is reached without delay. The world simply cannot afford the risk of failure.

Nuclear Tests

In the disarmament talks at Geneva and in this General Assembly, it has been made very clear that the problem of nuclear-weapon tests is of the gravest concern to all members of the United Nations. My Government maintains its firm opposition to all nuclear-weapon testing, for two reasons.

First, we are convinced that continued testing poses an ever-increasing danger to human health. Of this I shall say more presently. Second, the ultimate security of mankind is weakened, not strengthened, by further testing. No matter what considerations may lead the major powers to undertake nuclear tests, their effect can only be to accelerate and to make even more perilous the race in nuclear armaments. The powers concerned must not ignore the fact that the arms race itself gives rise to fears which in turn become a factor in intensifying competition in armaments.

I believe that these fundamental points are not in dispute. But the tests have still not been stopped. The proposals submitted by the eight uncommitted countries at Geneva, and the new technical data advanced recently by the United States and the United Kingdom, have opened new opportunities for agreement.

The Canadian Government strongly supports the proposal, originally made by the Mexican delegate to the 18-Nation Disarmament Committee, that a target date, January 1, 1963 (and I wish it could have been earlier), should be set for the cessation of all tests. This date has been accepted in principle by the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union.

As a minimum first step, agreement could be reached immediately on the final cessation of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, under water and in outer space. To have a comprehensive treaty, of course, underground tests must be included. The question barring agreement on such a treaty is whether the parties shall be obligated to permit inspections on their territories when other means of determining whether there has been an underground nuclear explosion fail to give a definite answer. This is a difficult problem, involving dangers to the security of the nations concerned, but the dangers which result from the lack of solution are immeasurably greater.