

Impatience, Frustration and Deep Disappointment

"Impatience, frustration and deep disappointment". These were the words used today in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in New York by Mr. R. Harry Jay to describe Canada's reaction to "the continuing failure of the international community to face up more concretely and rapidly to the awesome problems that confront us in the field of disarmament".

Mr. Jay is Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva and to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD).

Mr. Jay wondered whether UN members would have to admit in five years that the declaration of the 1970s as the Disarmament Decade was a "half-hearted gesture". He feared that "international security will be in even greater peril if, in those next five years, we do not come to grips with the tasks set out for the Decade". Although "all states of military significance must share in this important task", he said, "the primary responsibility to ensure that the Disarmament Decade is not a failure rests with the nuclear weapon states".

Priorities

"Of all the problems we face in the arms control and disarmament field", said Mr. Jay, "none is greater or deserves higher priority than the need for limitations and reductions in nuclear arms, for an effective ban on all nuclear weapons testing and for further strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation system."

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)

The SALT talks between the United States and the Soviet Union have been valuable, said Mr. Jay, but "have not yet slowed the nuclear arms race, much less led to any reduction in nuclear arms".

The United States and the Soviet Union, he said "must make a more determined effort" to surmount the difficult problems confronting them in undertaking nuclear disarmament measures. He appealed to the two principal nuclear powers "to move with greater speed towards the conclusion of SALT II and to move on to SALT III -- that is, from limitations to effective reductions -- at the earliest possible date".

Nuclear Weapons Testing

Recent progress toward a ban on all nuclear weapons testing had been "almost imperceptible", said Mr. Jay. He