



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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TOWARD THE CESSATION OF NUCLEAR TESTS

Address by General E.L.M. Burns, Representative of Canada in the First Committee of the United Nations, on October 30, 1961.

I am sure there is not one of us in this room who is not dismayed by the fact that this morning the Soviet Union set off another and a most awesome explosion in a long series of explosions of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere. We are filled with anxiety at the frightening increase to the cloud of radioactive debris that hangs over all peoples. In a resolution that was unanimously adopted by the Assembly last Friday, the very deep concern which the danger of radioactive fall-out evokes throughout the world was clearly recorded. Out of its fear for the safety of this and future generations, the Assembly, on the same day, also made a specific and solemn appeal to the Soviet Union to refrain from exploding the especially fearsome 50-megaton bomb which Mr. Khrushchev had threatened would be detonated before the end of this month.

That threat has now been fulfilled with a cynical and dangerous disregard for the universal wish that mankind might be spared the consequences of such a reckless experiment. The exercise of wise judgment in the Soviet Union could have prevented this enormous wrong. As it is, nothing can be done to dispel the radioactive dust that now is finding its way over all our countries. In the circumstances I must, on behalf of the Canadian people, express abhorrence at this event and deplore the manner in which the Soviet Union has flouted the desires of all peoples and the appeal of this United Nations General Assembly.

On September 7, addressing the Canadian House of Commons, the Secretary of State for External Affairs said:

"We must never forget that the United Nations is the best place we have in which to focus world opinion. The big question in my mind is this: have the Soviet Union gone so far that they are now preparing to ignore world opinion?"