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*Le conseiller du Gouvernement canadien en matière du désarmement
au sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Advisor to Government of Canada on Disarmament
to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs*

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Geneva, September 10, 1962

CONFIDENTIAL

Reference: Our Telegram No. 1430 of August 23, 1962.

DISARMAMENT: POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS AT UNGA

The following are our views on the course which the discussion of general and complete disarmament might take at the General Assembly, and the position which the Canadian delegation might adopt. Unless an agreement has already been reached on the cessation of nuclear tests, this subject, on which we have commented separately (our telegram No. 1539 of September 7†), will be given absolute priority by most of the non-nuclear and uncommitted members of the Assembly and is likely to consume most of its time in the early stages of the session.

2. For some time both the USSR and the USA, in the light of the tightening deadlock in the ENDC, have appeared to want to bring their case before the General Assembly. The USSR seems confident that its plan, by placing the accent on nuclear disarmament and on the elimination of the threat of a nuclear war, will have a greater appeal to world public opinion than the USA plan. The USA, on the other hand, seems to believe that it will be able to expose the essentially unrealistic and propagandistic character of the Soviet plan, and to hope that the General Assembly will come to recognize that its own plan is more honest, more realistic and more workable.

3. It may be assumed that the USSR and USA statements in the UNGA will not dwell primarily on the points of similarity between their plans but on the very fundamental differences of principle and approach separating them which have emerged. This would not necessarily be bad. The Assembly could exercise a constructive influence by squarely facing up to the basic differences between the plans and by suggesting compromises which might help gradually in removing the road blocks which now stand in the path of an eventual agreement.

4. The Soviet delegation is likely to emphasize the following main themes which, in one form or another, have been repeatedly developed since the opening of the Disarmament Conference in all of the major statements made by Gromyko, Zorin and Kouznetsov in Geneva in contrasting the Soviet and USA positions (see in particular ENDC/PV56 pp. 32 and 33):

(a) General and complete disarmament cannot be achieved without a treaty containing firm obligations, a definite time limit, and a guarantee of uninterrupted transition from stage to stage. The United States is unwilling to conclude a single treaty on general and complete disarmament containing firm and binding obligations. Its plan does not provide for a definite time limit for the whole process of disarmament. The United States wishes to reserve to itself the right to arrest the process of disarmament at the end of each stage.

(b) There can be no general and complete disarmament without the complete elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons. The Soviet plan has the paramount virtue of making a nuclear war impossible in two years by eliminating all the means of delivery of nuclear weapons in the first stage of disarmament. The USSR is even willing to eliminate nuclear weapons in the very first stage also. By contrast, the USA plan will not eliminate the threat of a nuclear war until