

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Excerpts from the prepared text of an Address by
Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker, to the Canadian
Bar Association, Winnipeg, September 1, 1961

World attention is now focused on the situation in West Berlin and on the sudden decision of the Soviet Union to resume nuclear tests.

The serious and disturbing nature of that announcement cannot be exaggerated. It was made completely without warning while nuclear test talks were still in progress at Geneva. It came as a cynical response to new Western proposals offering further concessions in the interests of concluding a test-ban treaty. It came as discussion of the whole issue was shortly to take place at the Assembly of the United Nations. It showed clearly the contempt in which the Soviet Union holds international opinion.

This action by the Soviet Union has grave implications for the question of general disarmament. If we cannot achieve agreement in the limited field of nuclear weapons testing, how much more difficult it will be to make progress in the even more complicated area of disarmament. Whatever the difficulties, however, it is essential not to be diverted by the U.S.S.R. from our efforts to achieve constructive settlements.

Without serious international negotiations, humanity will be faced with an ever-widening breach between East and West and even more dangerous and powerful weapons. Mr. Khrushchov's references to nuclear bombs of a force of 100 million tons of TNT leave no margin for doubt about the devastation which could be wreaked on mankind either by intent or by miscalculation.

It is of paramount importance in these circumstances to avoid hysteria and hasty, ill-considered action. It is necessary to take a calm and hard look at the situation created by Soviet moves both in Berlin and now with respect to nuclear weapons testing. We must endeavour to fathom the relationship existing between these two problems.