



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

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TABLING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OF NOTES RE THE RE-ENTRY OVER CANADA  
OF THE SOVIET SATELLITE COSMOS 954

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, tabled today in the House of Commons two Diplomatic Notes, one addressed to the Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the other to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, concerning the re-entry of the Soviet satellite Cosmos 954 into the earth's atmosphere in Canada on January 24, 1978.

As a party to the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, Canada is fulfilling its obligation to notify the launching state and the Secretary General of the United Nations if it discovers parts of a space object on its territory.

The two Notes (copies attached) are similar in content except for a reference in the Note to the Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that Canada reserves its position under international law on the question of liability and compensation.

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Department of External Affairs



Ministère des Affaires extérieures

Canada

The Department of External Affairs presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and has the honour to refer to the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

In accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1 of that Agreement, to which both Canada and the USSR are parties, the Government of Canada hereby wishes to notify the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that component parts of a space object have been discovered on Canadian territory. These are believed to be component parts of the USSR Satellite Cosmos 954 which re-entered the earth's atmosphere in Canada on January 24, 1978. Some of these component parts were found to be radioactive. In light of the risk of hazards to persons and property in Canada, the Canadian authorities have carried out a comprehensive air and ground search for these parts and the search for additional parts is continuing. To date, the parts, as described in the attached annex, have been located in areas of Canada's Northwest Territories and are being removed to a safe location as local conditions permit. The

Canadian authorities have taken every feasible precaution to limit to the greatest extent possible any harmful effects of these component parts on persons or property.

The Canadian Government reserves all its rights in international law on the matter of liability and compensation in relation to this incident. The Canadian Government will be raising this matter separately with the Government of the USSR in due course.

In accordance with Article 5(1) of the 1968 Agreement, Canada is also notifying the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Department of External Affairs avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the assurances of its highest consideration.

O T T A W A, February 8, 1978

1. Search Area One: at the eastern end of Great Slave Lake, near Fort Reliance, N.W.T.

Part no. 1:

Description: metal piece, 23cm x 9 cm x 1.3cm, charred, emitting man-made radiation indicated by fission product spectrum.  
Location: 62° 50.5'N; 109° 29.5'W

Part no. 2:

Description: grey metal, 2cm x 2cm x 8cm, crushed ring, black liner, emitting man-made radiation indicated by fission product spectrum.  
Location: 62° 52.1'N; 109° 32'W

Part no. 3:

Description: metal pipe, 25cm in diameter, 30cm long; lightweight, containing Mn, Mg, Pb, Fe, Cu; associated fibre and metal parts.  
Location: 62° 52'N; 109° 40'W

Part no. 4:

Description: semi-circular metal plate, grey-black, 2cm x 2cm x 8cm, emitting man-made radiation.  
Location: 62° 57.3'N; 109° 08.5'W

Part no. 5:

Description: thin metal, leaf-ribbed, lightweight, 7cm in diameter, emitting man-made radiation.  
Location: 62° 54.3'N; 109° 01'W

2. Search Area Four: near Warden's Grove, on the Thelon River, N.W.T.

Part no. 1

Description: metal struts, approximately 3cm long, attached to soft metal plate, emitting man-made radiation with technical characteristics indicating no fission products; activation products only.

Location: 63° 47.8'N; 104° 13.5'W.

Copy of the Note from the Permanent Representative  
of Canada to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

The Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

In accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1 of that Agreement, the Permanent Representative of Canada hereby wishes to notify the Secretary-General that component parts of a space object have been discovered on Canadian territory. These are believed to be component parts of the USSR Satellite Cosmos 954 which re-entered the earth's atmosphere in Canada on January 24, 1978. Some of these component parts were found to be radioactive. In light of the risk of hazards to persons and property in Canada, the Canadian authorities have carried out a comprehensive air and ground search for these parts and the search for additional parts is continuing. To date, the parts, as ... described in the attached annex, have been located in areas of Canada's Northwest Territories and are being removed to a safe location as local conditions permit. The Canadian

authorities have taken every feasible precaution to limit to the greatest extent possible any harmful effects of these component parts on persons or property.

In accordance with Article 5(1) of the 1968 Agreement cited above, the Government of Canada is also notifying the Government of the USSR.

It is requested that this communication be circulated to member states as an official document of the United Nations.

The Permanent Representative of Canada avails himself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of his highest consideration.

Annex

1. Search Area One: at the eastern end of Great Slave Lake, near Fort Reliance, N.W.T.

Part no. 1:

Description metal piece, 23cm x 9cm x 1.3cm, charred, emitting man-made radiation indicated by fission product spectrum.  
Location: 62° 50.5'N; 109° 29.5'W

Part no. 2:

Description: grey metal, 2cm x 2cm x 8cm, crushed ring, black liner, emitting man-made radiation indicated by fission product spectrum.  
Location 62° 52.1'N; 109° 32'W

Part no. 3:

Description: metal pipe, 25cm in diameter, 30cm long; lightweight, containing Mn, Mg, Pb, Fe, Cu; associated fibre and metal parts.  
Location: 62° 52'N 109° 40'W

Part no. 4:

Description: semi-circular metal plate, grey-black, 2cm x 2cm x 8 cm, emitting man-made radiation.  
Location: 62° 57.3'N; 109° 08.5'W

Part no. 5

Description: thin metal, leaf-ribbed, lightweight, 7cm in diameter, emitting man-made radiation.  
Location: 62° 54.3'N; 109° 01'W

2. Search Area Four: near Warden's Grove, on the Thelon River, N.W.T.

Part no. 1

Description: metal struts, approximately



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3m long, attached to soft metal plate,  
emitting man-made radiation with technical  
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Location: 63° 47.8'N; 104° 13.5'W