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SOUTH AFRICAN PEACE COUNCIL

P.O.Box 10528
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JOHANNESBURG

12th April, 1954

STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR BLEKSLEY ON THE HYDROGEN BOMB

"A single hydrogen bomb is capable of devastating the biggest city in the world. The effects would be allmost indescribable,

"A very considerable proportion of the population would be killed outright. The fate of the immediate survivors would be little, if atall, better. Terribly burned, crippled or buried beneath fallen rubble, there would be little hope of their being rescued. Medical and other services are bound, as in Hiroshima, to be hopelessly disrupted. All normal activity would be brought to a standstill, and great numbers of homeless, destitute people might die of hunger and exposure.

"If a great city were devtated the whole surrounding country-side would be also thrown into unimaginable ruin and distress.

"There is no effective defence against such weapons.

"Even if it were possible, which it is not, to carry out an effective policy of the dispersion of populations, where could they be dispersed? The lesson of the Japanese fishermen is clear. You cannot tell where the deadly radio-active debris would land. If lonely fisherman in the vast expanse of the Pacific were affected, how much more terrible would the effects be in populated areas?

"A mass of radio-active dust could be carried and do damage up to three hundred miles away from the explosion. If a bomb were dropped on Johannesburg, deadly dust could settle on lonely Free State farms and the people there fatally affected without even knowing what was happening to them untill it was too late for medical science, if available, to assist them.

"The tests that have been carried out will have served a useful purpose if they bring home to thousands of millions of people the terrible menace of war, to every single man woman and child.

"Previously, when war came, we comforted ourselves with the thought that "the other bloke will get it." The last war brought the danger back from the front line to the big industrial cities.

"Today, the front line is where the wind blows.

"It is no service to science or to humanity to conceal the extend of the danger. Every scientist knows that the hydrogen bomb can destroy man.

"I would like the common man to be aroused, to be determined to preserve peace. So determined that he will not tolerate leaders who talk war.

Johannesburg 13th April, 1954.

For Secretary S.A. Peace Council,

[Signature]

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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