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ROMANIAN TAPESTRY TO BE PRESENTED TO UNITED NATIONS

A mural tapestry entitled "Ode to Man" will be presented to the United Nations by the Government of Romania in a ceremony in the North Lounge at 10:15 a.m. tomorrow.

The presentation will be made by Corneliu Manescu, Foreign Minister of Romania and President of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General, U Thant, will be present to receive the tapestry.

The tapestry, designed by Ion Nicodim, a Romanian painter and tapestry designer, was inspired by a poem of the same name, by the Romanian poet Tudor Arghezi (1880-1967). The major theme of this poem is the glorification of man's struggle and victory over the forces of nature. Woven into the tapestry itself, on the pages of an open book, are the following lines from the poem:

"The scion of Prometheus, man himself
Uncovered also the great mystery of all mysteries: the atom.
He can in a few seconds
Make young again mankind
Or crush it.
Now is the time,
Serf of ages and slave of wickedness,
Thou, man and brother, be thine own master." (Unofficial translation.)

The tapestry, 31 feet long and nearly 17 feet high, has been hung on the west wall of the North Lounge. It was woven of coloured wool and cotton by a team of experts in Bucharest, under the supervision of Mr. Nicodim. The predominant colours are yellow, white and blue.

(more)

The central figure, Prometheus-like, holds a flame aloft in his right hand. In his left, he holds a black bomb. White birds circle around the flame and the sun in the upper centre portion, near sheaves of golden wheat; red flames of war erupt behind the man and fish skeletons float on the surface of a river at his feet.

Raised hands surround the man, symbolizing mankind struggling between the alternatives of abundant life and nuclear destruction.

In the lower centre area, a child picks flowers shaped as atomic structures, and at upper left, a man and a woman strive towards the cosmos. On the sides are two trees, symbols of the continuity of life.

While the tapestry uses modern symbols and bears a universal message, it remains typical of Romanian folklore, using many traditional elements of popular Romanian tapestry, such as in the design of the trees and leaves.

Mr. Nicodim was born in Constanta, Romania, in 1932. Originally a painter, he now devotes most of his time to designing tapestries. This one, created in 1963, has already been on display in Bucharest (1963), Sofia (1964), Budapest (1965), the United States (1965-66), Athens (1967) and the Federal Republic of Germany (1967).

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