

UNITED NATIONS

Press Services
Office of Public Information
United Nations, N.Y.

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Press Release HQ/240
4 June 1968

ROMANIA PRESENTS TAPESTRY TO UNITED NATIONS

A mural tapestry entitled "Ode to Man" was presented to the United Nations today by the people and Government of Romania.

The presentation was made by Corneliu Manescu, Foreign Minister of Romania and President of the General Assembly, at a ceremony in the North Lounge, where the tapestry is hung. The Secretary-General, U Thant, accepted the gift on behalf of the United Nations.

(For text of statement by the President, see Press Release HQ/238; for text of Secretary-General's statement, see Press Release SG/SM/957-HQ/239.)

The tapestry, designed by Ion Nicodim, Romanian painter and tapestry designer, was inspired by a poem of the same name, by the Romanian poet Tudor Arghezi. The major theme of the poem is the glorification of man's struggle and victory over the forces of nature. (For further details on the tapestry, see Press Release HQ/237, issued yesterday.)

Presenting the tapestry -- in which the central figure, Prometheus-like, holds a flame aloft in one hand and a bomb in the other -- Mr. Manescu said that "for our generation, the Promethean drama has, after all, changed only in its language". The boldness of man's discoveries is threatened, he said, "not by the vulture of Jupiter but rather by the dichotomy raised by every one of man's creations, which are capable either of promoting his progress or of doing him incalculable harm".

The Secretary-General, receiving the gift, said that it greatly enhanced the Delegate's Lounge, both because of its size and scale and because it was "a most happy combination of appropriate symbolism and visual beauty". The tapestry "shows the balance of these possibilities -- on the one side destruction, on the other peace and fertility -- with a strong emphasis on the latter", he stated.

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