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On November 28 last, the General Assembly approved by a vote of 54 in favour (including Canada), none against, with five abstentions (the Soviet bloc) a resolution asking the Disarmament Commission to continue its work with a view to ending the deadlock between the Western Powers and the U.S.S.R. and requesting the Commission to report to the General Assembly and to the Security Council not later than September 1, 1954. This resolution, which had given rise to a prolonged debate in the Political Committee, had been sponsored by 14 countries which are, or will be, members of the Disarmament Commission. The Commission normally consists of the eleven members of the Security Council and Canada when not a member thereof. The Soviet Union was the only member of the Commission which did not sponsor the resolution.

The resolution approved by the Assembly suggests that the Disarmament Commission study the desirability of establishing a special committee consisting of representatives of the powers principally involved, which should seek, in private an acceptable solution -- and report on such a solution to the General Assembly and to the Security Council not later than September 1, 1954. This suggestion for private talks did not appear in the original text of the Fourteen Power Resolution and was added at the request of the Indian Delegation.

During the debate on disarmament in the spring of 1953, the Soviet Union had given indications that it might adopt in the future a more co-operative attitude on this problem. However, both in his opening speech during the Assembly general debate in the early part of the eighth session and during the discussion of the disarmament item later, the representative of the U.S.S.R. repeated his country's requests for the immediate unconditional outlawing of atomic weapons and for a one-third reduction in the armed forces of the permanent members of the Security Council. The majority of the countries members of the United Nations have up to now refused to accept the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons before the establishment of effective international control of atomic energy and unless there are clear indications that the Soviet Union is ready to accept the implications of this control, including inspection of national territories. A one-third reduction of armed forces is equally unacceptable by the Western Powers in view of the present numerical superiority of the Soviet forces. By putting forward requests which have been repeatedly rejected in the past, Mr. Vyshinsky made it clear that the position of the Soviet Union on the question of disarmament remained unchanged, even though the Soviet Delegate did not vote against the Fourteen Power Resolution but merely abstained.

In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly on December 8, 1953, President Eisenhower put forward the proposal that to the extent permitted by elementary prudence, the governments principally involved should begin and should continue to make joint contributions from their stock piles of fissionable material to an International Atomic Energy Agency set up under the aegis of the United Nations. The Agency would use this fissionable material for peaceful purposes only, experts being mobilized to advise methods whereby atomic energy would be applied for agriculture, medicine, electric power, etc. The President suggested that this proposal be examined during private conversations which might take place pursuant to the