

almost half the membership, the demand for change had become so strong and so insistent that it could not be ignored by any member state. With very few exceptions, the members were in favour of an early end to colonial rule, and the differences had to do with timing and modalities. The focus of this attention was found in the newly-constituted Special Committee of Seventeen, formed by the General Assembly at the sixteenth session to watch over the implementation of the 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

During 1962, the Special Committee was heavily engaged in the discussion of situations in most of the remaining dependent territories, with a natural emphasis on those in Africa. The Committee paid a visit to that continent and ultimately produced a report for the seventeenth session of the General Assembly. At that session, the Assembly decided, among other things, to continue the Special Committee with its membership enlarged to 24. This subsidiary body of the Assembly has become the principal forum for the discussion of colonial questions and has tended to supplant other bodies, such as the Trusteeship Council and the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The consideration of colonialism to date has largely centred on traditional forms, although during the discussion the question of neo-colonialism has frequently been raised. There has been no general disposition to deal with the particular brand of imperialism practised by the Soviet Union but a number of states, including Canada, have argued that the high principles embodied in the Charter and in the Declaration of 1960 should be universal in their application. The hollowness of Soviet-bloc criticism of the Western powers has been clearly exposed and the United Nations membership has been urged to give attention at the appropriate time to the deplorable circumstances of subject people in areas under Soviet domination.

The Soviet Union's position on colonial issues was a continuation of its efforts to exploit them to the general disadvantage of the Western powers and to improve Soviet standing among the non-aligned states as well. This unrestrained use of propaganda opportunities has been a prominent feature of Soviet policy at the United Nations, which has varied only in intensity, depending on the prevailing state of East-West relations. For most of 1962, these were somewhat calmer than they had been in the two preceding years, although the sudden Cuban crisis in October raised the international temperature to one of its highest post-war peaks.

On disarmament, multilateral negotiations were resumed in March 1962 for the first time since the breakdown of the Ten-Nation Committee in 1960. After lengthy discussions in the autumn of 1961, agreement was reached at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly to establish an expanded negotiating body comprising Western and Communist states and eight non-aligned countries representing the main geographic areas. The Eighteen-Nation Com-