

4—The controlled and graduated reduction of armed forces and armaments; that is, conventional armaments, a field in which agreement had almost been reached.

5—The progressive establishment of a ground and aerial system to guard against surprise attack.

6—The study of an inspection system to ensure that objects would be sent into outer space only for peaceful and scientific purposes.

These six points presented a more complex resolution than any of those put forward by the U.S.S.R., for they represented a series of concrete proposals on which the Western powers and their allies in NATO had negotiated for months to ensure agreement. As a member of the Sub-Committee, Canada participated in the drafting of this resolution and co-sponsored it.

In contrast, the Soviet resolutions were simple, propagandistic in their appeal and in their essence completely uncontrollable. Briefly, the Soviet Union presented two proposals. The first was for a five-year ban on the use of nuclear weapons. This clearly meant nothing more than an uncontrollable promise which would be valid until the day it was broken. This resolution, I might say, received only 11 votes in favour.

The second Soviet proposal called for the immediate cessation of testing, without regard to any other measures on disarmament. It became quite evident that many nations were attracted by a proposal of this kind. India had submitted a very similar resolution and Japan presented a compromise resolution which linked the objective of a temporary suspension of nuclear testing to negotiations for an adequate supervision and inspection system to verify this. The Indian proposal received a vote of 22 for, 38 against and 20 abstentions. The Japanese proposal was opposed by the Soviet bloc as well as by the West and was defeated by a vote of 18 for, 32 against and 31 abstentions. Canada voted against all these proposals because it felt, as did many other countries, that the question of nuclear test suspension can only be settled as a part of a more comprehensive disarmament agreement which also does something to solve the more fundamental matter of the arms race in nuclear weapons.

Perhaps because of the reservations which many countries had on matters such as nuclear test suspension, the disarmament debate showed little enthusiasm at the beginning. For some time there was a shortage of countries willing to speak; and while it was apparent that the 24-power resolution would receive an adequate majority many of the uncommitted nations questioned the value of requesting support by the Assembly for what was essentially the position of one side to the cold war alone.

Many of our allies were slow to make public their support, as if they were waiting for some further clarification of the Western position. For these reasons the Secretary of State for External Affairs, when he delivered the Canadian statement in the Committee on October 23 last, emphasized repeatedly that Canada, while it had sponsored the 24-power draft resolution and urged its adoption, remained open-minded. I should like to make a brief quotation from the remarks of the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Political Committee of the United Nations which was at that time discussing disarmament:

Canada is sensitive to every possibility of improving it. Let us not be inflexible in this regard. We of Canada certainly do not say that the particular proposals with which we are now associated are the only means by which at least some progress can be made toward disarmament. Canada has co-sponsored plans for partial disarmament, but I repeat that we do not necessarily regard them as the last word.

Canada's position of flexibility was enthusiastically welcomed by the representatives of many countries, including Norway, Mexico, Pakistan, Israel and Nepal. It was particularly noteworthy that in the closing remarks of the representative of the United States, Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, he said that the United States associated itself at some length with the remarks made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Ambassador Lodge added that the United States also desired openmindedness and flexibility and they too were not suggesting that our proposals, the 24-power resolution, were the last word. It is perhaps not too much to say that this position of flexibility contributed to the large vote by which the 24-power resolution was passed. The resolution, incidentally, received 57 votes in favour, 9 votes against, being merely the Soviet bloc, 15 abstentions. This vote was later sustained when the resolution came from the political committee to the General Assembly.

It would have been a very satisfactory result for the West and for Canada except for the dramatic Soviet announcement just before the vote was taken that they would not return to participate in the work of either the Disarmament Committee or its Sub-Committee. Shortly before, Russia had introduced a resolution calling for the establishment of a permanent disarmament commission consisting of all 82 members of the United Nations which would discuss disarmament continuously and without any secrecy whatsoever. It is hard to believe that the U.S.S.R. really wants such a commission or that this move was anything but a propaganda move . . .