



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 53/19

### DISARMAMENT

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Canada to the seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. David M. Johnson, made in the First Committee, March 20, 1953.

For those of us - and I am sure they include the great majority - who still hold to the conviction that the primary role of our organization is to conciliate differences between nations, it is distressing to see how often and how easily the undertow of the cold war pulls our debates down to the propagandist level.

Under this item we are not attempting to "prove" anything. We are not attempting to score points off those delegations which disagree with us. We are simply considering the very objective and factual report of the Commission which has not been able to do what it was asked to do at the last Session of the Assembly. We naturally have drawn our own conclusions, as I shall explain later, as to why the Disarmament Commission was not able to do more. But as we wish the Disarmament Commission to continue the process of negotiation, no matter how frustrating the task and how unpropitious the climate, I see no point at this stage in asking those delegations which have not taken part in this difficult process in the Commission to approve or disapprove by means of a formal resolution the proposals which one side or the other has so far presented. That explains why the resolution my delegation is co-sponsoring is couched in rather general terms.

The very nature of the problem of disarmament gives each of the great powers a more effective veto than they possess in the Security Council. Although there is no rule specifying that the great powers possess a veto in the Disarmament Commission, it is obvious that, unless all the powers are agreed, no disarmament can take place. We have already - and to our cost - made two experiments in unilateral disarmament, and it would be flying in the face of history and experience to try it again. If there is not general disarmament including all the great powers, there will be no disarmament. There must be general agreement as to how disarmament can take place so that it will be effective without imposing greater risks on one side than on the other at any given time during the process of disarmament. That is to say, there must be no disequilibrium which might be dangerous to world peace during the process of disarmament. Disarmament must be not only general; it must be balanced.

Even to begin that process, however, seems to require a far greater degree of confidence than exists at the present time between the powers. While the Korean fighting continued, it is difficult to see how any system of disarmament,