



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 53/49 MEASURES TO REDUCE INTERNATIONAL TENSION

Text of a statement made on November 23, 1953, by the Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, Mr. Alcide Côté, in the First Committee of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, on agenda item 73 - Measures to Reduce the Threat of a New World War and to Reduce Tension in International Relations.

NOTE: This item was submitted to the eighth session of the General Assembly by the Soviet Delegation and was based on a draft resolution drawn up by the U.S.S.R. The text of this draft resolution is given at the end of the Canadian statement.

My intervention will be brief. In ranging over a wide field last Thursday, Mr. Vyshinsky sought to establish the claim that the Soviet Union was doing all it could to reduce international tension. If international tension has not in fact been reduced, the fault, according to the Soviet representative, lay with the Western powers. This is, of course, familiar Soviet propaganda which we have learned to expect and which I doubt is taken seriously even in the countries of the Soviet bloc. What, in fact, has been our experience in this committee in the course of this double debate which we have had on disarmament and the reduction of international tensions?

Despite an obvious readiness and eagerness on the part of almost every representative in this committee to obtain a unanimously agreed formulation of the Disarmament Commission's very difficult task, the delegations of the Soviet bloc felt unable to join the 54 other delegations who supported the resolution we adopted last week. This in itself, although a depressing fact, would not have been so discouraging if the debate which had preceded the adoption of our resolution had shown even a slightly less inflexible attitude on the part of the Soviet Union. I am forced to admit, though I have searched carefully for any crumbs of comfort, that I have found none either in Soviet statements on the disarmament item or under the present item. While statements of other representatives showed at least an open mind towards the possibility of considering compromise proposals which would provide a genuine balance of risks and safeguards to both sides throughout the whole process of disarmament - including the prohibiting of the atomic and hydrogen weapons - the statements which we have had from Soviet representatives sounded as if they had been pieced together from what they have been saying to us for many years past.