

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Sixth Session of the General Assembly

The Disarmament Debate*

A sub-committee of the Political Committee, composed of representatives of France, the United Kingdom, the U.S.S.R., and the United States, under the chairmanship of the President of the General Assembly, met in private, from December 1 to 10 in an attempt to reach agreement on proposals for the control and reduction of armed forces and armaments and for the abolition of atomic weapons. The President presented his report on the sub-committee's discussions to the Political Committee on December 11. The report indicated the areas of agreement and disagreement on the disarmament question, and stated that the private meetings had served to increase the area of agreement and to clarify the main points of difference. Both sides agreed that a single commission should be set up under the Security Council, to consist of the eleven members of the Security Council, and Canada. However, several fundamental points of disagreement between the U.S.S.R. and the West remained, especially over the timing both of the exchange of information on, and the reduction of, armaments and over the programme for the prohibition of atomic weapons.

France, the United Kingdom and the United States then submitted an amended version of their original resolution, taking into account the measure of agreement reached in the sub-committee. The tripartite resolution came to the vote in the Political Committee on December 19, and was approved by a vote of 44 (including Canada) to 5 (the Soviet bloc), with ten abstentions (predominantly Asian states).

German Elections Commission

The Delegations of France, the United Kingdom and the United States presented a draft resolution which called for the establishment of a United Nations commission to supervise free elections throughout Germany and which was later amended by a number of delegations, including Canada. Invitations were sent to representatives from both East and West Germany to participate in the meetings of the Assembly. The West German representative spoke in favour of a United Nations electoral commission, while the East German representative rejected it. The Soviet bloc opposed a United Nations Commission on the grounds that it would be a violation of Articles 1 and 2 (7) of the Charter (regarding "the self-determination of peoples" and the domestic jurisdiction of states). Despite this opposition of the Soviet bloc, the Assembly adopted the amended tripartite resolution on December 20. The vote was 45 in favour (including Canada), 6 against (the Soviet bloc and Israel), and 8 abstentions (principally Asian Delegations). By this resolution the Assembly appointed a Commission, composed of representatives of Brazil, Iceland, the Netherlands, Pakistan and Poland, to investigate the conditions for holding free elections throughout Germany and to report back to the Secretary-General not later than September 1952. Poland has declined to serve on the Commission.

Elections to United Nations Organs

During December, the General Assembly held elections for the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council and the International Court of Justice. For the Security Council, Pakistan and Chile were elected on the first ballot on December 6. A bitter contest developed between Greece and Byelo-russia

* For a summary of the earlier stages of the debate, see *External Affairs*, December 1951, page 420.