

It is to be noted that none of these agreements constitutes an actual reduction or elimination of weapons and armed forces. None the less the negotiations in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee in Geneva have been productive. The Committee has played an important role in helping the major powers to reach agreement on all three measures. Even in the field of general disarmament the Committee has made a valuable contribution toward narrowing the areas of difference between the Communist and Western positions.

Disarmament Problems Remain

Important gaps still persist, however, and I would not wish to leave the impression that progress on actual disarmament is likely to be quick and easy. The Soviet position on control, inspection and verification is not giving any evidence of moving in the direction which the West regards as essential.

The outlook, therefore, for disarmament is fraught with problems, and the Eighteen-Nation Committee faces an enormous task. In the view of the Canadian Government, among those measures designed to increase mutual confidence the Committee might give priority to the examination of measures to reduce the risk of surprise attack by land forces, such as the establishment of ground observation posts. If these posts have sufficient liberty to observe within an adequate radius of action, they could give assurance against the possibility of sudden war. I appreciate, however, that discussion is likely to be difficult, as the Soviet Union tends to try to couple intrinsically worthwhile measures of this kind with unacceptable conditions, at least unacceptable to the Western countries. The Soviet approach to disarmament has always been heavily influenced by its policies toward Central Europe, and toward Germany in particular. Their latest objective seems to be to induce the United States and Canada to withdraw their forces across the Atlantic and thereby remove the North American presence, which is, to the great majority of Europeans, the tangible evidence of our commitment to their effective defence. The Western response to all these overtures must of necessity be such as will take into account the exigencies of NATO defence as well as the need to reduce the risk of war by accident or miscalculation.

It is difficult to maintain the momentum toward disarmament engendered by the limited agreements which have been reached, especially in the face of political setbacks such as the renewal of Soviet harassment in the Berlin corridor. Yet it would be wrong to slacken our efforts for, as in the case of the limited test ban and the Austrian State Treaty of 1955, a seemingly endless and inconclusive discussion can lead suddenly to progress and achievement. We owe it to ourselves and to humanity to persist in our efforts to achieve disarmament within conditions of security that will create the kind of international climate which in turn may encourage the settlement of some of the major political problems dividing East and West.

Developments at UN..

Our membership in the United Nations, along with NATO, our membership in the Commonwealth and our proximity to the United States represent the cornerstones of foreign policy which have been recognized by all Governments in Canada. Developments at the United Nations, therefore, continue to occupy a very important place in Canadian foreign policy.