

Then last summer the foreign ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Russia spent many long weeks negotiating at Geneva. One result of their deliberations was that at the conclusion of their conference they announced their intention of inviting Canada, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Poland and Roumania to join them on a new 10-member Disarmament Committee. They announced at the time that this Committee was expected to be and I am now quoting from their announcement:

a useful means of exploring, through mutual consultations, every avenue of possible progress toward such agreements and recommendations of the limitation and reduction of all types of armaments and armed forces under effective international control as may, in the first instance, be of particular relevance to the countries participating in these deliberations.

It should be pointed out that five of those countries are Western countries and five are Eastern. All of the five Western countries belong to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and all of the five Eastern to the Warsaw Pact. Canada, of course, was perfectly willing to fall in with this idea and to serve on such a Committee.

Role of Four Great Powers

The four big nations which had decided to set up the Committee so reported to the United Nations in September because, after all, here was the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations supposedly dealing with this question of disarmament, and it was essential that there should be some arrangement worked out between the 10-member Committee and the large United Nations Disarmament Commission. The four big powers asked that the United Nations Disarmament Commission be convened to hear formally of the creation of the new Committee of Ten. These four powers, moreover, made it clear that the United Nations would be kept informed of progress in the deliberations of the Committee, because it was essential to keep the United Nations in the picture. After all, the only way in which a world-wide disarmament plan will be worked out will be under the aegis of the United Nations.

Canada was particularly concerned that the United Nations should be kept fully informed, and when I spoke in New York on September 24 I pointed out that the middle-sized and smaller powers must have an opportunity of being heard, since disarmament is of the deepest concern to all mankind. I said, further, that in Canada's work on the 10-nation Committee we would at all times keep these considerations very much in mind.

At the United Nations last fall it was very clear that the delegates from every nation were far more interested in the question of disarmament than in any other question. They had witnessed a lessening of tension across the world. There had been a visit by Prime Minister Macmillan and Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd to the Soviet Union, and while we were in New York, Premier Khrushchov came to the United States. The two leading speeches in the opening debate at the United Nations were made by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd and by Premier Khrushchov, and both dealt with disarmament; each speaker put forward a plan for disarmament. Thus, I repeat that at the United Nations there was tremendous interest in this question