

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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THE 1971 CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT: THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

1. INTRODUCTION

An extensive study of the possibility of concluding a comprehensive and general disarmament agreement was undertaken by the American Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1961. The research has been carried out by the American Disarmament Directorate of the Department of Defense Research Directorate at Fort Detrick, Maryland. The main document and many other papers prepared by the Committee have been compiled in one publication entitled *Comprehensive Disarmament* (CD) (1967) released by the United States Department of Defense.

The 1961 study primarily concerned with the development of principles, procedures and mechanisms of limited use of nuclear weapons. This included the mechanism of the participation of all states and the avoidance of proliferation. Examples include, among the findings contained in the CD, Art. 117 of 11 August 1964 on Control of Nuclear Weapons.

The recommendations of the study were summarized in a report to the US Congress and called for modification of existing types of weapons to make them less destructive and less dangerous, without reducing their capacity to be used effectively in combat. The recommendations will be a major factor in the future development of nuclear weapons and weapons systems. They will also be particularly relevant to recent and proposed changes in the international strategic forces. The changes may be due either to the negotiations of 1967 and the subsequent negotiations for the limitation of nuclear weapons or to the 1971 Conference on Disarmament.

The 1971 Conference on Disarmament will be a continuation of the work done in the previous years. The Conference will be concerned with the further development of the principles and mechanisms of disarmament. It will also be concerned with the control of nuclear weapons and the reduction of the number of nuclear weapons. The Conference will be concerned with the development of a new type of nuclear weapon, the so-called "thermonuclear weapon".