

(b) The Question of Disarmament

16. Perhaps the most widely discussed resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its session in the autumn of 1946 related to the regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces. Few delegations to that session of the Assembly were possibly more active in the drafting of this resolution than was the Canadian delegation. As a result of this resolution, the Security Council, on February 13, 1947, passed a resolution setting up a Commission for Conventional Armaments which was to be a parallel body to the Atomic Energy Commission and to the Military Staff Committee.

17. However, the terms of reference of this Commission did not concern weapons of mass destruction, as in the case of the Atomic Energy Commission, but "conventional" armaments and also the reduction of national armed forces. As in the case of the Atomic Energy Commission, the Commission for Conventional Armaments has so far reached no agreement on the subjects which lie within its mandate. The disagreements which developed between the Soviet Union and the western world in the Atomic Energy Commission are reflected in similar disagreements in the Commission for Conventional Armaments. On the questions of drawing up essential safeguards necessary to ensure that the regulation of armaments is universally observed, and of establishing preliminary conditions of international confidence necessary to disarmament, the same disagreements between the Soviet Union and the West have constantly repeated themselves in the C.C.A. The position of the Canadian Government on these matters, as expressed in the C.C.A. on March 8, 1948, is that no agreement on the reduction of armaments and armed forces is likely to develop until conditions can be established which will make it unnecessary for nations to depend on national armaments solely for their security. Thus the Canadian view is that the implementation of Article 43 of the Charter - in regard to the establishment of international armed forces - is an essential step which must first be taken if an effective system for the regulation and reduction of national armaments and armed forces is to be reached.

(c) The Implementation of Article 43 of the Charter

18. By Article 43 of the Charter, all members of the United Nations are obligated to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with special agreements, armed forces "necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security". Article 47 of the Charter calls for the establishment of a Military Staff Committee to advise and assist the Security Council on this matter. The Military Staff Committee, under the terms of Article 47 (2) is to consist of the Chiefs of Staff of the five permanent members of the Security Council, or of their representatives.

19. The Military Staff Committee has been meeting now for over two years and as yet has made no progress in the formulation of general agreements for the implementation of Article 43 of the Charter. The position of the Canadian Government on this failure of the Military Staff Committee to make progress was stated nearly two years ago by the Chairman of the Canadian delegation, Mr. St. Laurent, in his opening speech in the General Assembly, on October 29, 1946: "We are particularly concerned that the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee have so far failed to make substantial progress towards a conclusion of the special agreements with individual members required to implement Articles 43 and those following of the Charter, and thus make armed forces and other facilities available to the Security Council.