

Warsaw Pact were invited to balance the composition of "the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee", so-called.

Apparent Improvement

The Canadian Government accepted the invitation to serve on this Committee, with a determination to take every possible advantage of this new opportunity for progress in disarmament. At that time, in the autumn of 1959, the international atmosphere seemed to have improved considerably and the new negotiating body, since it was composed on the basis of parity between East and West, was thought to be more acceptable to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the nuclear-test talks were making slow but steady progress. At the same time, the rapid advance of arms development had increased the pressure for the renewal of serious negotiations on disarmament. The whole weight of public opinion had been thrown on the side of early agreement as a means of increasing international security, reducing tension, and incidentally easing the heavy burdens that preparations for defense had placed on all nations.

The Canadian Government was not entirely satisfied with the detailed arrangements that had been made to relate the work of the Ten-Nation Committee to the United Nations. The Committee had been set up outside the organizational framework of the United Nations, which under its Charter has a primary interest in and responsibility for disarmament. Nevertheless, it seemed that the Committee could pave the way for a sound approach to the problems of disarmament and that, at the same time, ways could be found for preserving the principle of United Nations responsibility. The approach through the Committee was as though two members of the United Nations, following the provisions of the Charter, had decided to negotiate their differences bilaterally in the hope of furthering the purposes and principles of the Charter. (This was consistent with Article 33 of the Charter.) Progress in the negotiations could be reported to the United Nations and any agreement arrived at could ultimately be incorporated into the United Nations framework.

Canada Stresses Urgency

Having agreed to participate in the Ten-Nation Committee, the Canadian Government laid strong emphasis on the importance of its getting to work at once, so as not to lose any advantage from the apparently favourable international atmosphere that existed during the second half of 1959. Canadian spokesmen also emphasized the need for early attention to nuclear disarmament. While recognizing the need for a balance between conventional and nuclear disarmament, and the need for a reduction of armaments by stages throughout which the security of all the nations involved had to be preserved, the Government took the view that these important considerations should not prevent the Ten-Nation Committee from coming to grips with the formidable problems of nuclear disarmament, especially with a view to forestalling an armaments race in outer space. This policy involved the recognition that it was the devastating weapons