

The Reply to Mr. Bulganin

ON June 6, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics addressed a letter to the Prime Minister on the question of disarmament. After referring to the absence of "positive results" from the discussions in the United Nations, Mr. Bulganin expressed the view that measures taken by states for reducing their armaments and armed forces before an international agreement was reached would strengthen international confidence. It was such considerations, he said, which had led the Soviet Union to decide to reduce its armed forces by 1,200,000 men and its armaments and military expenditures correspondingly. The letter also drew attention to the statement of the Soviet Government of May 14, announcing the intended reductions, which was enclosed. Similar letters were addressed to the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Germany, Italy, and Turkey.

The Prime Minister's reply, which was transmitted on July 16, reads as follows:

Thank you for your letter of June 6 on the question of disarmament with which you forwarded the statement of May 14 of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Government of Canada has given earnest consideration to the contents of your letter and the accompanying document.

We have noted with interest the announcement of reductions in the armed forces of the Soviet Union to which you refer in your letter. However, our satisfaction over the announcement is somewhat tempered by the reflection that these reductions would have been more timely 10 years ago, when the Western Powers demobilized the great armies they had brought together in the common interest of the United Nations, and that the Soviet Union will continue, even after the reductions, to dispose of a far greater number of divisions in Europe than the Western Powers have stationed there. We have also, of course, considered your letter and the related documents in the light of a number of recent statements on the part of Soviet authorities concerning the modernization and expanding might of the Soviet armed forces.

It is because of such considerations that Canadian representatives have consistently expressed our firmly held view that, if they are to contribute to international confidence, reductions in forces should be part of an agreement providing for machinery to reassure all signatories that the reduction measures are in fact carried out. We believe that the need for such controls together with an adequate system for warning of preparations for surprise attack has become more pressing during the last few years when, as you observe in your letter, new and increasingly destructive weapons have been developed.

As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, Canada has been directly associated with the search for an agreement ever since the United Nations General Assembly in its first resolution created the Atomic Energy Com-