

the discontinuance of the Commission. The Assembly, however, by a vote of 46 in favour (including Canada) 5 against and 6 abstentions, requested the Commission to continue its work, and urgently appealed for full co-operation from all governments and authorities. The Canadian statement stressed the humanitarian aspect of the problem.

Though refusing to co-operate with the Commission, both the Soviet Union and the Peking authorities have recently moved to repatriate prisoners. Thus negotiations between the Chinese and Japanese Red Cross Societies, initiated by the Peking authorities, have so far resulted in the repatriation of 23,000 Japanese nationals. After announcing in August 1953 that measures would be taken to release German prisoners, the Soviet Union has released over 10,000 German prisoners and 700 Spanish. Small numbers of Italian prisoners will also be released.

Charges of Bacterial Warfare

The Communist propaganda campaign charging that the United Nations forces in Korea had used bacteriological weapons continued throughout 1952 but subsided during 1953.¹ The five-member commission appointed by the Assembly at its seventh session to investigate the charges was unable to act owing to lack of co-operation from the North Korean and Communist Chinese authorities.

The United States placed the question on the agenda of the eighth session of the General Assembly and at the outset of the debate presented texts of sworn statements by members of the United States forces repudiating their confessions of participation in bacteriological warfare and stating that these confessions had been extorted under duress. The United States Representative did not, however, table a resolution, on the grounds that the resolution adopted at the seventh session still stood. The Soviet Representative in replying claimed that the sworn statements had themselves been extorted under duress and tabled the familiar Soviet proposal appealing to all states which had not done so to accede to or ratify the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the prohibition of the use of bacterial weapons.

Speaking in committee, the Canadian Representative said that, with the return home of those whose so-called confessions had been presented to the Assembly by the Soviet Delegation the previous spring, a new side of the picture had emerged. It showed the techniques of "brain-washing" followed by those whose purpose was to put the political objectives of an all-powerful state first and foremost. He added that, if there had been any substance to the charges, one would have expected the communists to welcome an impartial investigation. They had, however, resisted all such suggestions.

Canada co-sponsored a resolution, adopted by a vote of 47 in favour, none against and 12 abstentions, by which the Soviet proposal, together with the records of discussions at the eighth session, was referred to the Disarmament Commission.

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1952-53*, pp. 20-21.