

The Canadian Government is guided by the desire to find means for preventing war, since any war could provide the spark which would lead to nuclear conflagration. We consider that the proposals offer a realistic and practical basis for a first stage from which we could work with confidence toward more far-reaching measures. In preparing these proposals we have with our allies sought constantly to meet the legitimate interests and policies of the Soviet Union. We have made serious efforts to find terms on which immediate action can be taken because of our conviction that the passage of time makes the disarmament problem ever more intractable but that, if the Soviet Union displays a corresponding willingness to cooperate in the negotiations, significant and rewarding results are within our grasp.

Although the Soviet representative had indicated an apparent willingness to accept some of the Western proposals which had previously been presented separately, his first response to the plan as a whole was extremely negative. Immediately after it had been tabled, Mr. Zorin launched into a condemnation of several parts of it, concluding that "no real value can be attached to the document from the point of view of actual progress towards disarmament". When pressed by the Western representatives in subsequent meetings for a further elaboration of the Soviet position, he offered no detailed comment on the Four-Power plan, but merely reiterated previous demands and continued to accuse the Western powers of placing obstacles in the way of disarmament.

As a result of Mr. Zorin's unwillingness to consider the Four-Power proposals at that time, the Western delegations agreed that no further progress could be achieved by prolonging the Sub-Committee session. Accordingly, they proposed on September 4 that the Sub-Committee adjourn until the end of the General Debate in the General Assembly, and that it then reconvene in New York. When the Soviet representative attacked this procedure as a subterfuge to avoid debate in the General Assembly, it was agreed on September 6 to adjourn *sine die*.

IV. Twelfth Session of the General Assembly

The representatives of many member nations stated in the general debate that disarmament was perhaps the most important issue before the Twelfth Session of the General Assembly. As Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, Mr. Diefenbaker concluded his statement by underlining the importance of the disarmament question. "Past assemblies" he said, "have earned names descriptive of their major activities. There was the 'Palestine Assembly', the 'Korean Assembly'. Mankind would breathe easier if this Assembly might be known in future years as the 'Disarmament Assembly'." In setting forth the Canadian position on disarmament he again emphasized the urgency of the problem, particularly in view of the continued development of modern weapons, and called upon the Soviet Union to consider the Western proposals carefully:

... The fear of surprise attack is the cause of the major tension of these days. For that reason there is a sombre urgency about the work of this General Assembly. Experience has taught us that no country ever possesses a monopoly of any device. What one country has today, the other nations will have tomorrow, and the day is not far distant, if this continues, when there will be armouries of these rockets. While a few years ago a new era was introduced by the development of nuclear weapons, today an even more frightening and awful time faces mankind. That is why I say that it is a matter of sombre urgency that this Assembly should act, and act effectively, if we are to bring about the control of the use of this dread menace, the ultimate engine of destruction. ...