

of the Western side, which were designed to make a start in areas of disarmament where progress seemed possible, met with an entirely negative response from the Soviet representative. The Soviet position, as it developed during the Committee discussions, appeared to be that the Soviet plan must be accepted in principle if any further progress was to be made.

In an attempt to check the developing deadlock, the Canadian Government instructed its representative to propose a new approach to disarmament whereby segments of this question whose solution would be equally advantageous to both sides might be taken as a series of "balanced concessions" and agreed upon for early implementation. In describing the significance of this approach in the House of Commons on June 15, the Secretary of State for External Affairs spoke as follows:

It is my view that the time has come, perhaps through an examination of equivalent features of new Soviet proposals and the Western proposals, to begin a process of negotiation of balanced concessions. This was the sort of "package" approach to which I referred earlier in the House. . . I should like to emphasize, however, that by "package" I do not mean that the one side or the other should hold out for its present proposals on an all or nothing basis; the packages I have in mind, as I have tried to explain, are smaller and would contain immediately negotiable provisions of equivalent significance to both sides. The goal would remain general and complete disarmament under effective international control, but it would be accomplished by a stage by stage process, throughout which concessions would be balanced in such a way that neither side would obtain a temporary military superiority.

The initial Soviet reaction to this proposal was unfavourable. Their considered views were never made known, owing to the sudden withdrawal from the Committee of the East European delegations.

On June 27 the Eastern delegations, following the lead of the Soviet Union, announced their decision not to participate further in the work of the Ten-Nation Committee. This action was taken despite the fact that the United States representative had only just returned from Washington with new proposals that he had informed the Soviet representative would be submitted to the Committee within a very few days. In several respects the new United States proposals represented a significant advance toward the position of the Soviet Union. They also incorporated a number of suggestions put forward by members of the Western side and included proposals the Canadian Government saw as necessary to improve and develop the Western position. At the time of the Soviet withdrawal from the Committee, the Western delegations were engaged in consultations about the new United States plan with a view to tabling it in the name of the five Western powers. As a result of the Soviet walkout, they were submitted only by the United States but with the support of the other Western delegations.

With the sudden decision of the Soviet Union to discontinue its participation in the Ten-Nation Committee, the Western powers were faced with the likelihood of a lengthy interruption in disarmament negotiations and a sterile propaganda debate in the General Assembly. Under the circumstances, the Canadian Government considered it imperative to make immediate arrangements for the continued examination of the disarmament question and to provide the impetus needed for a return to detailed negotiations.