

"The only remaining obstacle to resumed negotiations is the lack of agreement on the composition of the forum in which disarmament will actually be negotiated. To speak very frankly, I cannot for the life of me see why the problem of composition should constitute a barrier to the resumption of negotiations.

"The question, after all, is a simple one. All of us surely want to devise a negotiating group which will meet two objectives: first, to give the major military powers an opportunity for detailed discussions; second, to ensure that the interest of all states in disarmament is adequately reflected.

#### A PRACTICAL PROPOSAL

"At the fifteenth session of the General Assembly last year, I expressed the conviction that a group in which the two sides would face one another is a practical and effective arrangement. Our re-examination of the problem of composition in recent weeks has confirmed us in this belief. However, we are also convinced that the participation of additional countries with a fresh perspective would be of great value. It is not for me to suggest which states should fulfil this role. However, it seems clear that it would be desirable for them to be chosen from areas of the world which have not been represented on the negotiating group.

"At the last session of the General Assembly, Canada advanced proposals designed to broaden the representative character of the negotiating group and to increase its effectiveness. At that time, my delegation suggested the addition to the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee of a chairman, vice-chairman and a rapporteur -- all to come from countries other than the ten. However, strong arguments have been advanced in this debate to the effect that any additional members over and above the ten should be not officers but full participants in the work of the negotiating committee, and I agree that that would be a better plan.

"To meet the requirement for a more representative composition, provision should be made for participation by the main geographical regions not already represented, namely Africa, Asia and Latin America. We might agree, for example, on an expanded committee of 13 -- although in Canada 13 is an unlucky number, perhaps in this case it would be a very lucky one -- or 16, by adding one or two representatives from each of these areas to the ten powers which were engaged in the negotiations in Geneva.

#### ELECTING A CHAIRMAN

"This would still leave open the important matter of selecting a presiding officer. We have two suggestions and, of course, there may well be others. One possibility would be to appoint the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission as chairman of this negotiating group. This could be a helpful choice, not only because the present incumbent of that office is well qualified, but because an *ex officio* appointment of this kind would provide continuity. Alternatively, a chairman might appropriately be chosen from one of the delegations newly represented on the Committee, that is, from the three or six additional countries, if there should be six, added to

the ten. It would be understood, of course, that his services in this capacity of chairman would not interfere with his country's full participation in the negotiations. So much for composition.

"My delegation holds the view that, no matter what negotiating body is decided upon, it should have a close and effective relationship with the United Nations as a whole. The question of disarmament is obviously of vital interest to all members of the organization, large and small, no matter from what continent they happen to come. Whatever smaller group may be nominated to carry on detailed negotiations, there would be great value in making provision for regular reports from that body to the United Nations Disarmament Commission; and, as we know, the negotiating Committee of Ten was not set up by the United Nations but by the Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Geneva.

"It might also prove desirable, as negotiations proceed, to consider establishing United Nations committees to study specific aspects of disarmament which may require examination from a regional or a specialized point of view. The establishment of such committees would not only serve to speed up the study of certain problems but would offer an opportunity for the participation of further members of the United Nations in a detailed consideration of disarmament. We believe there are various fields which could be studied by special committees of the United Nations.

#### COMPOSITION OF PROPOSED BODY

"I offer these various suggestions in the hope that they may assist in the search for common ground. I repeat that the problem of composition is not so difficult that it need delay the resumption of negotiations. Whatever agreement may be reached, the fundamental point is not a question of numbers but of determination to get on with the job of actual negotiations. By unanimously adopting resolution A/C.1/L.299, to which I have already referred, and which was sponsored by India, Ghana and the United Arab Republic, we have urged the United States and the Soviet Union to agree on the question of composition. The attention of all members of this Committee is focused on the talks between those two countries. We are united in the hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will soon be able to report agreement on this question of composition. I think it is perfectly clear that the responsibility for the next move rests with these two great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and I most honestly plead with them that they reach agreement quickly on a forum in which these negotiations could be carried on.

"The resumption of negotiations in a suitable forum would constitute only the first step, of course, on the road to disarmament. A full range of measures that will require negotiation is dealt with in the detailed proposals which have been put forward by the two sides; and we are in the position that both sides have already put in their disarmament proposals.

"I believe that one major development since disarmament was discussed in the last session of