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DISARMAMENT - THE SENSE OF URGENCY

Statement on Disarmament by Mr. Howard Green,
Secretary of State for External Affairs in the
First Committee on November 14, 1960

... The Committee will recall that, on 1 November, I explained that the Canadian Delegation had decided, in co-sponsorship with the Delegations of Norway and Sweden, to submit the draft resolution which is now before the Committee as document A/C.1/L.255. I have asked to speak at this time in the belief that it might be helpful to the Committee if I were to review briefly the main purposes of the draft resolution. I am particularly happy to speak now, after hearing the speech of the representative of Iceland. It was to allow time for this effort by Norway, Sweden and Canada at a compromise to succeed that the three co-sponsors have not pressed for an early vote on their draft resolution.

You will remember that, in my remarks on previous occasions, I pointed out that we would be delighted to get suggestions; that we were putting forward our proposals for the consideration of the Committee, but that they were not hard and fast, as we were very anxious that suggestions should be made. For that reason, I am particularly happy that the representative of Iceland has followed that suggestion, and has commented today on this resolution. In so far as his proposed amendment deals with a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a rapporteur, we agreed, and we think that the chairman of the Disarmament Commission, Mr. Padilla Nervo, would be an excellent chairman.

The essential difference between the proposal made by Iceland and that proposal made by Norway, Sweden and Canada is that Iceland has left out the provision for an ad hoc committee. Now, this change is a matter of argument, a matter for consideration, and in the course of my short remarks this morning I propose to give a few reasons why we think there is great value in having such an ad hoc committee appointed by the Disarmament Commission. But before I go on to do that, I would emphasize again that it was not the intention of the three co-sponsors to introduce controversial proposals.