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EAST-WEST RELATIONS

During 1960 the most important external problems affecting Canada were those arising from the state of relations between East and West. Canada's involvement in these problems was a result of membership in NATO, direct participation in disarmament negotiations, and activity in the United Nations. Even events in which Canada was not directly involved, such as the abortive summit meeting, affected the country in an immediate way because of its international commitments and activities.

Failure of the Summit Conference

The failure of the summit conference in May set the pattern of relations between the Communist and Western worlds during 1960. Behind this failure, and behind all the history of East-West relations during the year, were major developments within the Soviet bloc, of which the most important was the Soviet-Chinese dispute. Most of the major international events of the past year have been affected to a greater or lesser extent by this dispute.

At the beginning of the year the Soviet Union was publicly committed to a policy of *détente*—a search for improved relations with the West and solutions to the most serious and dangerous international problems. This policy, although energetically taken up only in the summer of 1959, represented an intensification of the line that had characterized Soviet foreign policy since Mr. Khrushchov's approach to power in 1955. Underlying it may have been a realization of the sterility of Stalin's foreign policy, a growing confidence in the economic strength of the Soviet Union and bloc, and a conviction that a nuclear war would not serve the interests of Communism.

By the beginning of 1960 it was accepted by the great powers that a summit conference would be held during the spring of the year. In preparation for this, it was arranged that Mr. Khrushchov should visit France in April and have conversations with President de Gaulle. He had already met Prime Minister Macmillan in February 1959 and President Eisenhower in September. The visit to France took place in April 1960, by which time the date for the summit conference had been set for May 16.

During the weeks that preceded the conference, two important developments occurred. First, it became clear from public statements made by Soviet and United States leaders that, on the important issues, there was not much hope of agreement. Mr. Khrushchov left little doubt that he did not intend to give much ground, and the Western powers were equally determined not to yield their rights in Berlin or to agree to an inadequately-controlled disarmament programme. More serious, during April a very important Soviet-Chinese disagreement, which had existed privately for a year or more, broke into the open with strongly-worded