

With a view to taking a fresh look at some of the problems of disarmament, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, and the U.S.S.R. recently announced the establishment of a 10-power negotiating committee, the creation of which has been noted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Consistent with our policy of using any forum appropriate for disarmament negotiations, Canada accepted an invitation to participate in this committee. This body may not be linked with the United Nations to the extent that many nations would prefer, but I wish to emphasize that the Canadian Government has assumed this responsibility in the belief that it will facilitate direct negotiations among the great powers. The activities of the 10-power committee are intended not to replace but to supplement the responsibilities of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

With respect to the link between this committee and the United Nations, it is our view that it would be in the interest of all concerned not only that the committee report from time to time to the United Nations but also that the United Nations, probably through the Disarmament Commission, discuss the progress of the Committee's work; encourage its activities; and evolve further ideas in this general field. In this way those members of the United Nations not participating in the 10-power committee would have an effective means of expressing their interest in its objectives. Clearly, the middle and smaller powers must have an opportunity of being heard; for disarmament is of the deepest concern to all mankind. In Canada's work on the committee, we will at all times keep these points in mind.

It is my understanding that this committee will begin work early in 1960 and I hope that its negotiations will be extended in an orderly manner to a broad range of measures relating to nuclear and other modern weapons and to conventional weapons and armed forces. We welcome the fact that the great powers already are preparing proposals for the committee and I may say that Canadian studies are also in progress.

One aspect of disarmament from which we can all draw some encouragement is the fact that there now exist 17 agreed articles of a draft treaty on discontinuance of nuclear tests, being negotiated by the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the U.S.S.R. The Canadian people are unanimous in their wish to see an end to nuclear testing. It is true that the principal difficulties have yet to be resolved; again they centre on the question of control.

Whatever the solution, it is of the utmost importance for the three nuclear powers to reach agreement on this central question of the control system. Unless this problem can be solved in respect of the relatively narrow and specific question of nuclear tests, we can hardly expect early progress in other aspects of disarmament where verification and inspection of even greater complexity are likely to be required.