

We kept on probing to see if there was not some limited foundation on which at least the beginnings of progress might be made.

I expect that you may have noted that in the past few weeks there has been a slight, nonetheless a potentially significant, loosening of the disarmament log jam. It came about in an unexpected way. Just before I left Canada for Copenhagen, the Soviet Union entered in the Security Council a provocative complaint relating to the state of defensive readiness of the United States Strategic Air Command. In itself this complaint had little or no effect as it was soon withdrawn by its Soviet sponsors. Yet it deserves to be recalled because it prompted the United States Government to make in the Security Council a constructive and imaginative proposal for the establishment of a zone of inspection in the Arctic designed as a means of preventing surprise attack across the polar regions. To the genuine disappointment of the NATO countries, including I can assure you the Government of Canada, the Soviet Union cast this proposal aside and vetoed it in the Security Council.

This was the background against which the talks on disarmament took place in Copenhagen. It is not surprising that a strong echo of Western disappointment at the Soviet attitude should have found its way into the final communiqué. But the conference did not limit itself to helpless expressions of regret. Despite the Soviet attitude, the foreign ministers considered that it might be possible to inaugurate expert technical discussions between representatives of the Soviet Union and the Western powers principally concerned on detailed measures of control over disarmament, even though the precise disarmament measures may not yet have been agreed upon. We had particularly in mind measures to prevent surprise attack and to detect nuclear explosions.

Speaking for the Canadian Government, I laid particular stress on the need for further study of measures for inspection and control. I have always thought that such measures are fundamental to the success of any disarmament negotiations. For the West, control means confidence, and confidence is what is presently lacking. I proposed, and other ministers agreed, that the North Atlantic Council should itself consider the possibility of carrying out within its own membership studies and experiments on the technical problems of inspection and control. I had in mind that a pilot control scheme in the Arctic, or possibly in other regions, might not only permit us to improve our own understanding of the technical problems involved, but would also provide crystal-clear evidence of the sort of measures which we would be prepared to put into operation on our own territories in collaboration with the Soviet Government. I thought it not too much to imagine that the Soviet Government might in time be invited to establish similar pilot schemes on Soviet territory so that, in some future negotiation perhaps in the United Nations - it might prove possible to arrange for Soviet participation in our schemes and our participation in theirs.