

Disarmament Talks at Geneva

STATEMENT BY CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE, NOVEMBER 1962

The Conference of the 18-Nation Committee on Disarmament resumed in Geneva on November 26, 1962, following the adoption of resolutions concerning disarmament and nuclear-weapons tests by the United Nations General Assembly. During the first two weeks, the Disarmament Committee's attention was largely devoted to the question of nuclear-weapons tests and more particularly to the problems of verifying the discontinuance of underground tests. Various suggestions were made by Canada and other non-nuclear powers for an interim arrangement suspending underground tests (which would include adequate assurances for effective detection and identification of seismic events by an international scientific commission), pending agreement on a treaty for the cessation of all forms of testing. The United States and Britain continued to stress the need for some obligatory "on-site" inspection, in order to ensure against the carrying out of clandestine tests underground; but the U.S.S.R. held to the view that international on-site inspections were unnecessary, and refused to accept any form of interim arrangement for suspending underground tests.

The Committee reported to the UN General Assembly on December 10 (in accordance with the Assembly's resolution 1762A (XVII)) that it had not "proved possible to reach an agreement on the cessation of nuclear-weapons tests in the brief period of two weeks since the resumption of negotiations". The Committee undertook to keep the General Assembly informed of its future efforts in this field.

On November 30, during the general debate on the programme of work for the resumed session, the Canadian representative, Lieutenant-General E. L. M. Burns, outlined Canada's views on the major questions before the Disarmament Committee. After expressing the opinion that the Conference should concentrate all its efforts on assisting the nuclear powers to reach agreement on a treaty for the cessation of nuclear tests by January 1, 1963, he went on to say:

I WISH to make it clear that the Canadian delegation fully recognizes the importance of our work on general and complete disarmament and on the collateral measures which could be put into effect before agreement on general and complete disarmament. But it is a question of how we can best make progress; how we can achieve something concrete; how we can take the first step towards the goal of general and complete disarmament. Sitting in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, every time I heard a delegate of a nation not represented here say that the 18-Nation Committee had sat for six months and had

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