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External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

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No. 65/2 Statement by the Representative of Canada,
Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns, to the
United Nations Disarmament Commission,
New York, May 7, 1965.

Many delegations that have previously spoken have said that they were disappointed that the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee had achieved no positive results during its 1964 sessions. The Canadian delegation is as disappointed as any other. Nevertheless, as many speakers have already emphasized, it would be wrong to allow our disappointment to slacken our efforts to make progress. We fully share the view expressed by the representatives of both India and the United Arab Republic that the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee has done useful and important work thus far. As the representative of the United Arab Republic said last Tuesday:

"...We believe that (the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee) has served a useful purpose, not only because it has kept the dialogue on disarmament going, but also because of its representative character". (75th meeting, Pages 42 and 43)

We agree that the Disarmament Commission, which is now meeting, can give the negotiations in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee a new impetus and new guidance, and we urge that as soon as we have completed our work negotiations in Geneva should be resumed.

We have heard the Soviet Union delegation's view of why no results were obtained in 1964. That delegation complained that certain measures which it had put forward in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee had not been accepted by Western delegations. That complaint was repeated this morning by the representative of Czechoslovakia.

There is a reason why those measures have not been accepted. It is that they were so framed as to be to the advantage of the Soviet Union and its allies and to the disadvantage of the Western alliance. They thus contravened one of the important principles which were agreed upon in 1961 for the conduct of disarmament negotiations. That principle is the one generally referred to as the principle of balance. I shall remind the Commission of what it says:

"All measures of general and complete disarmament should be balanced so that at no stage of the implementation of the treaty could any state or group of states gain military advantage and that security is ensured equally for all"
(A/4879, Paragraph 5).

It is true that that principle was formulated in the context of general and complete disarmament. However, I think that all delegations will agree that any measure preliminary to disarmament or any measure intended for the relaxation of tension and for preparing the way to disarmament should be in accordance with the same principle. That is to say, if any proposal produces a military advantage for any state or group of states, and a corresponding disadvantage for any other state or group of states, it will not be negotiable. Examples of one-sided Soviet Union proposals are those for removing allied troops from the territory of another ally; for creating denuclearized zones in European areas, so drawn as to leave the Soviet Union still capable of striking into those zones with intermediate-range ballistic missiles from its own territory; and so forth. I shall not take the time of the Commission to point out in detail the defects in those ideas. The objections have been stated many times, and the Canadian delegation will be glad to give references to the records of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee to any delegation that is interested.

I shall now proceed to what I hope will be a more constructive discussion of proposals which could be to the advantage of every nation, and not only to the advantage of those which belong to one or the other of the present alliances.

The representative of the Soviet Union referred, in his statement of 26 April, to the proceedings of the non-aligned conference in Cairo in October last, particularly as related to disarmament. He did not cite the following passage:

"(The conference) underlines the great danger in the dissemination of nuclear weapons and urges all states, particularly those possessing nuclear weapons, to conclude non-dissemination agreements and to agree on measures providing for the gradual liquidation of the existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons". (A/5763, Page 22)

The representative of the Soviet Union seemed to be concerned only to prove that the sole danger to peace through the dissemination of nuclear weapons was that proposals for a NATO nuclear force might conceivably allow the Federal Republic of Germany to achieve independent control of strategic nuclear weapons. Of course, we all know that there are many other dangers in the dissemination of nuclear weapons.

The question of non-dissemination of nuclear weapons has, in many length at successive sessions of the General Assembly. In the Irish resolution (1665 (XVI)), the nations were called upon to achieve an agreement to prohibit the further spread of nuclear weapons: that is, to prevent further nations from becoming independent nuclear powers. Unfortunately, no progress in this has yet been registered. The addition of the People's Republic of China to the group of nuclear powers, which was signalled by the explosion of a nuclear device last October, has made the solution of this problem more urgent. It has been said many times that it is clearly in the interests of the existing nuclear powers themselves, and, of course, of all

other nations, that there should be no further additions to the so-called nuclear club. The nations which belong to the NATO alliance are ready to enter into negotiations for drawing up an effective international treaty or convention to stop the further spread of nuclear weapons. As the representative of the United States said in his statement on 26 April:

"The initiation of a broad programme to halt the spread of nuclear weapons is, we think, imperative...."

"What is needed now, and as soon as possible is, I repeat, a non-proliferation agreement that will record our determination to avoid nuclear anarchy".

(73rd meeting, Page 26)

The Canadian delegation believes that there are certain considerations which should be borne in mind when the time comes to draft a treaty or convention on non-dissemination. The first would be that nations which are at present not nuclear powers but have the capability of manufacturing nuclear weapons should not be expected to agree to abstain forever from becoming nuclear powers unless the existing nuclear powers, within a reasonable period of time, take some concrete steps towards divesting themselves of this most dangerous weapon. Therefore, there should be in any such treaty a reaffirmation of the intention of the nuclear powers to reduce and eventually eliminate the stocks of these weapons and the means for their delivery, a process to which they may be said to have committed themselves by accepting the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on general and complete disarmament.

In his statement on 4 May, the representative of India very rightly pointed out the relation between tangible progress towards nuclear disarmament on the part of the super-powers and our efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to states which do not now possess them. He said:

"Unless the nuclear powers and would-be nuclear powers undertake from now on not to produce any nuclear weapons or weapons-delivery vehicles and, in addition, agree to reduce their existing stockpile of nuclear weapons, there is no way of doing away with the proliferation that has already taken place or of preventing further proliferation".

(75th meeting, Page 17)

One method of taking into account this relation between nuclear disarmament and the problem of non-dissemination might be to adopt the suggestion that has been made that one of the terms of the treaty or convention should be a time-limit for the abstention of the non-nuclear powers. Alternatively, there could be procedures under which their undertakings could be reviewed in the light of the progress towards disarmament made by the nuclear powers.

It seems to the Canadian delegation also that nations which are not nuclear powers but which have the capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons, if they renounce that development, should also receive some guarantee of protection against the threat or the actuality of nuclear attack. That idea was advanced by the Foreign Minister of Ireland, Mr. Aiken, in his statement in the General Assembly on 8 December 1964. The same idea was referred to by the representative of the United States in his statement of 26 April. We have listened also with great interest to the comments of the representative of India and the representative of the United Arab Republic on this problem.

In this connection, I quote what Mr. Martin, the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, said in Geneva in an address to the World Veterans Federation on 3 May:

"In the next ten years there may be as many as a score of states which could, if they were to make the necessary political decision to do it, acquire an independent military nuclear capability by manufacturing their own nuclear weapons. It seems axiomatic to me that, if these nations are to be expected to continue their voluntary abstention, if they are to be expected to go even further and make a formal international commitment to refrain from producing them in future, then the military nuclear powers must accept responsibilities of their own. They must not only demonstrate increasing restraint in the nuclear field. They must also make renewed efforts to achieve early progress in the direction of general disarmament, including the reduction and, eventually, the elimination of all national stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

"It may be necessary to guarantee the security of non-nuclear states, at least against nuclear attack ... if they are to be expected to forgo the option of becoming nuclear powers at some future date. Collective security arrangements have in large measure already provided a guarantee of this nature for the allies of the great nuclear powers. The non-aligned and neutral nations do not enjoy similar guarantees".

Mr. Martin said later:

"It should surely not be beyond the collective genius of the nuclear powers to provide these non-nuclear states, which are either non-aligned or neutral and which evidently regard the option of being able to become a nuclear power at some future time as a factor contributing to their national security, with a credible guarantee against nuclear attack. This would not, of course, alter in any way their non-aligned or neutral status."

I should like to make it quite clear that nothing I have said should be taken as meaning that Canada has any intention of departing from our established policy of not producing nuclear weapons or attempting to acquire control of them -- in other words, our policy of refraining from any attempt to become an independent nuclear power.

As Mr. Aiken has suggested, the idea of a guarantee of nuclear protection for non-nuclear states could be especially valuable and relevant in the context of efforts to control the arms race on a regional basis.

The Canadian delegation hopes that the Commission will hear opinions from other countries on the points we have raised in connection with the problem of prevention of further dissemination of nuclear weapons. We agree with the statement of the representative of India that the Disarmament Commission should ask the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee in Geneva to proceed with purposeful negotiations on the all-important issue of non-dissemination in the light of the broad principles that may emerge from this Commission.

My delegation wishes to pay a special tribute to the endeavours which the countries of Latin America and Africa have recently undertaken to establish nuclear-free zones in their respective geographical areas. We believe that such zones, which quite obviously, in the right circumstances, could make a significant contribution to preventing the wider spread of nuclear weapons, could be appropriately discussed further in this Commission. When we approach this subject, it is important, my delegation thinks, to remember that, if the establishment of nuclear-free zones is to contribute to a more secure world, certain basic principles must be observed. These are: first, that all the countries in the specific geographical area covered by the zone must adhere to the agreement; secondly, there must be procedures which will give states parties to the agreement the assurance that the obligations they have assumed are in fact being scrupulously respected by all; and, thirdly, the zones from which nuclear weapons are excluded should be drawn in such a way that no military advantage will accrue to any of the existing nuclear powers. This last criterion is one which is not met by some of the suggestions we have heard from Eastern European states for denuclearization in Central Europe.

We have referred to the necessity of the existing nuclear powers beginning actual reduction of their stocks of nuclear weapons and the means for their delivery. As you have heard, much time has been spent during the three years in which the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee has been in session in discussing the question of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons vehicles and the nuclear weapons themselves in the context of general and complete disarmament. It is, unfortunately, a fact that the viewpoints of the principal nuclear powers have been so opposed as to prevent any progress towards an agreed solution.

However, both the United States and the Soviet Union have proposed, though in different forms, the destruction of certain important means of the delivery of nuclear weapons. Among the measures which the United States proposed to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee early in 1964 was that

certain types of medium-range bombers, specialized for the delivery of nuclear weapons, should be destroyed in equal numbers by the United States and by the Soviet Union. This proposal would have the advantage that the control over its execution would not have presented any threat to the security of either side. It also would have shown the world that the great powers were serious in their intention to eliminate some of the most dangerous weapons.

The Soviet Union countered this proposal of the United States by proposing that not only certain selected types of bombers should be destroyed but also all bombers. This was found to be too drastic a measure by the United States and other delegations. Western representatives nevertheless intimated that they were ready to continue discussion about the possibility of the balanced destruction of certain types of nuclear-weapons vehicles. It seems to the Canadian delegation that negotiations on this proposal, which has been advanced by both sides, but with differing content, should continue and that, given the will by both sides to agree, there could be a beginning of real disarmament. In the jargon of disarmament, this proposal has been nicknamed the "bomber bonfire".

It was pointed out in the discussions in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee on this subject that the destruction of some bombers or other means of delivering nuclear weapons would not be significant if these were to be replaced with other and perhaps more modern and powerful means of delivery. This would indicate that the "freeze" or prohibition of construction of certain of the more significant means of delivery of nuclear weapons would be a logical extension and complement of the "bomber bonfire". The proposals of President Johnson included such a freeze. The after hearing the explanation by the United States delegation in Geneva, such a character as would not involve widespread intrusive inspection, the fear of which gave rise to objections by the Soviet Union. These objections up to now have prevented serious discussion of this project.

This morning, the proposal for a "freeze" was criticized by the representative of the Soviet Union on the grounds that it would have involved some control, some verification measures and would not have been a measure of disarmament. However, it would have been surely a measure for the limitation of the arms race, and that is one of the objects which all of the list of measures which was presented by the Soviet delegation is supposed to attain. I read out the title:

"Memorandum by the Soviet Government on Measures for the Further Reduction of International Tension and Limitation of the Arms Race". (DC/213/Add.2).

Stopping the construction of the most expensive and powerful means of delivering nuclear weapons would surely be a limitation of the arms race.

This group of three proposals --- non-dissemination, destruction of some of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons and a freeze on the production of replacements --- if agreed upon and implemented, could make a really significant start in the process of disarmament.

We have heard from several delegations --- including the Soviet Union and the United States -- that the ban on the testing of nuclear weapons should be completed by including prohibition of underground testing. As most delegations probably know, the difficulty here is in connection with verification that all parties are complying with this prohibition. The United States position is that, while it would be possible in the majority of cases to distinguish an underground test from an earthquake, there is still a significant number of events in which this distinction cannot be made by scientific means such as seismological recording instruments. Therefore, a very limited number of inspections on the territory of a country where such an ambiguous event took place would be necessary to provide adequate verification.

The Soviet Union's position, however, is that all such underground nuclear tests, even of a very low power, can be clearly identified by scientific means operated from the national territory of the principal nuclear powers subscribing to the treaty. The Soviet Union delegation at Geneva has been invited very many times, both by Western countries participating and by non-aligned countries, to demonstrate in a scientific sub-committee of the conference exactly how their system of identification works. But it has steadfastly refused to make any demonstration or participate in scientific talks. This leaves the other nuclear powers unable to accept the Soviet contention. The recent advances in the technique of seismic recording and analysis, such as reported on at the meeting of the Royal Society in London last January, encourage us to believe that the technical capability to distinguish at long distances between earthquake signals and those of an underground explosion will shortly have been demonstrated to have been significantly improved. We are hopeful that, on that basis, and provided the need for at least some "on-site" inspection can once again be accepted in principle by all concerned, it should be possible to make early progress towards a comprehensive test-ban agreement which would command general support. If the Soviet Union would agree to a discussion between scientific representatives of both sides and of qualified non-aligned nations, the question could be settled one way or another. The Canadian delegation hopes that the Soviet Union will agree to such a solution of the problem.

The representative of the Soviet Union and other representatives states that they considered that this Commission should support the idea of convening a world disarmament conference as proposed by the Cairo conference of non-aligned countries held last October. The Canadian delegation would like to make the following points in this connection. We have all the members of the United Nations represented in the present Commission in which we are sitting, 114 nations, I believe. There are several militarily important countries not represented here. It has been tacitly recognized throughout the disarmament negotiations which have been held in the last five years and more that any

major agreements reached at the Conference at Geneva would have to be submitted to a wider conference of all militarily significant nations. This would be necessary if disarmament was to be "general" -- that is to say, if it was to apply to all nations in the world.

It is well known to all those who have any experience of disarmament discussions in the United Nations that, unless the viewpoints of the two super-powers -- that is, the United States and the Soviet Union -- are fairly close together in respect to any proposed measure, no positive results are to be expected from negotiations in any kind of forum. The Canadian delegation, therefore, feels that we shall be able to assess the usefulness of calling a world conference in the light of what degree of consensus of views we manage to obtain here in this Commission on the various measures we shall be discussing. For example, if no agreement has been reached on the approach to general and complete disarmament between the great powers at Geneva, with 17 nations participating, is there any likelihood that a forum with 120 nations well-known Soviet Union position that important agreement must be brought about by unanimity, and the refusal of the Soviet Union on numerous occasions to agree to proposals supported by large majorities in the United Nations which the Soviet Union thought were not right. In the matter of disarmament, agreement has to be reached by negotiation between the nations that possess the great armaments. World opinion, as expressed in this forum, undoubtedly has a great influence on the attitude of the heavily-armed countries, but experience up to now has shown that even resolutions supported by a large majority are not decisive in producing agreement on any particular measure.

I assume that considerations such as those which I have just outlined led the representative of India last Tuesday to say that he did not believe that the present was an appropriate time for a world conference. We fully agree with him that what we need first of all today with respect to disarmament is detailed discussions on the terms of a treaty based on the broad principles which have already been laid down.

The Canadian delegation is very reluctant to engage in controversy on matters which lie outside the subject for which we understood this Conference was called. We regret that the representative of the Soviet Union found it necessary to deliver such an intemperate and unfounded attack on the Federal Republic of Germany as he did at the seventy-second meeting. We have, unfortunately become accustomed in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee to this kind of tactic when the subject of non-dissemination is discussed, or rather when we tried to discuss it. Instead of a businesslike negotiation of a problem which is by no means insoluble, we get hysterical denunciations of a so-called German revanchism. This is in spite of the fact, many times stated in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee and elsewhere, that the highest authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany have repeatedly disclaimed any intention of becoming an independent nuclear power.

There are many statements which I could quote in this connection, but I shall cite only one, which in our view amply refutes the groundless charges we have heard. On 19 June 1964, Chancellor Erhard stated the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany as follows:

"When we have time and again renounced the production of atomic, bacteriological and chemical weapons, when we have integrated every last soldier in NATO, and when we in no way desire to have nuclear weapons under our national control, then surely it is abundantly clear that we harbour no aggressive intentions whatsoever."

The Canadian delegation also regrets that the Soviet Union and its allies have interjected into our proceedings, charges against the actions of the United States in Southeast Asia. It is our view, of course, that our discussions here should be confined to questions of disarmament and, as I have said, we do not wish to engage in controversy on other matters. Nevertheless, I consider that I must make some comment on the position of the Canadian Government as to the present situation in Vietnam. In a statement on 26 March of this year, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Martin, pointed out that Canada has closely observed the situation in Vietnam as it has evolved over the past 11 years and that, as a member of the International Control Commission, along with India and Poland, Canada has been charged with observing arrangements that were concluded in Geneva in 1954. During the past 11 years, Canada has had a total of more than 700 observers in Vietnam, who have seen the situation develop since the conclusion of the Cease-Fire Agreement in 1954. The Canadian Secretary of State said:

"I think it is fair to say that we have tried to take a balanced view of that situation. We have tried to draw the attention of all concerned to the dangers inherent in that situation. We have reported and will continue to report breaches of the Geneva Agreement on both sides. And we never, of course, in any way whatsoever condoned the use of force -- and again we must remember that force is being used in Vietnam on both sides. Events and the sequence of events in that country should be set in their proper perspective. Almost from the beginning of that period, the authorities in North Vietnam have engaged in inciting, encouraging and supporting hostile activities in South Vietnam. That support has taken the form of armed and unarmed personnel, of arms and munitions, of direction and guidance. And it has been aimed at nothing less than the ultimate overthrow of the South Vietnamese administration. This is a judgment fully supported by evidence, including evidence presented by the Commission. And it must certainly form part of any balanced assessment of the situation in Vietnam. I am concerned that there should be no misunderstanding of the nature of the conflict that is being conducted in that country today. Above all, let us not be deluded into thinking that what is happening in Vietnam is a basically domestic matter, a matter of spontaneous insurgence which the Vietnamese should be left to settle in their own way... What we are facing in Vietnam is a process of subversion by the authorities of North Vietnam against South Vietnam and it is aimed in the final analysis at establishing in South Vietnam a form and pattern of government which the South Vietnamese rejected decisively ten years ago...."

The representative of the Soviet Union also sought to denounce actions of the United Kingdom in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. I shall not take the time of the Commission to discuss these charges. But I merely wish to say that the Canadian delegation regards the allegations of the Soviet Union delegation as baseless, and as an attempt to represent any defence of an established government against Communist-inspired subversion and armed interference as "imperialist aggression".

The Canadian delegation hopes that the Soviet Union and its allies will respect the terms of reference of this Commission and the feelings of its members -- which by now should be obvious to everyone -- and will refrain in future from introducing extraneous subjects, for whose discussion there are other and appropriate forums. We hope that, instead, the Soviet Union and its allies will present new ideas for restoring the momentum of disarmament negotiations, which was so unhappily lost in 1964. We have offered some suggestions along these lines. We are anxious to hear the views of as many as possible of the nations which are not represented in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee. We believe it should be the aim of these meetings of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to restore vigour, purpose and direction to the negotiations on disarmament.

My delegation listened with sympathy to the reference which the representative of Italy made in his statement on 26 April to the appeal issued by His Holiness the Pope in Bombay last December. The Canadian response to this appeal quoted a recent statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that humanitarian considerations were foremost in the minds of those who supported and assisted the principle of Canadian aid to developing countries. This indicated the identification of the Government and people of Canada with the spirit of His Holiness' appeal.

Every day that nothing is done about disarmament, nearly \$400 million is spent by the nations of the world on armaments and armed forces. Is there any time to spare in stopping this waste and limiting the arms race and turning it back? Is it not urgent to begin to move in a direction that will allow the money to flow into productive use, and, more important, for us to move towards a safer world, which will be free from the threat of nuclear immolation?

The Canadian delegation respectfully urges that the Commission should move ahead with this task with all possible energy and no avoidable delay.

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