



CANADA

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
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### FAILURE AT GENEVA

A statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Howard Green, to the House of Commons on June 27, 1960.

I am afraid the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee has been scuttled by the action of the Eastern members this morning. I spoke to General Burns earlier in the morning, and apparently there were at least two Western speakers on the list to participate in the discussions this morning. Mr. Zorin, the chairman of the Soviet delegation, had been told by Mr. Eaton, the chairman of the United States delegation, that there would be a Western proposal submitted later this week. This was before the Committee actually met.

When the Committee did meet under the chairmanship today of Mr. Naszkowski of Poland, Mr. Zorin made a statement in which he accused the Western members of the Committee of refusing to negotiate, and made other charges, and said that the Eastern members would be carrying their proposals to the United Nations. Then, in spite of the fact that Western members were trying to get the floor, the Polish chairman refused to allow any of them to do so. Instead he called on each of the other four Eastern members, and then he and the whole Eastern delegation stalked out. Therefore no representative of the Western nations was permitted to speak at all. When this happened Mr. Ormsby-Gore, the head of the British delegation, took the chair and Mr. Eaton tabled the United States plan. Of course that was all that could be done at this meeting.

I should like to explain to the House that the Soviet plan was issued with a great flourish of trumpets just a day or two before the ten-member Committee resumed its sitting, which I think was on June 2. All the foreign ambassadors in Moscow were called in and given copies of the Soviet plan. In reporting to the House I said then that there were heavy propaganda overtones to the introduction of this Russian proposal.

Once the meetings of the Committee had commenced, the Western delegates endeavoured to get clarification of the various points in the Eastern proposal, and made various suggestions. For example, the head of the Canadian delegation, General Burns, made a very useful speech on Friday last. I have not yet received the verbatim report of his remarks, but when I do I will probably ask for leave to table it. In addition, of course, there have been discussions going on among the four Western nations concerning what reply should be made to the Soviet proposals. The Canadian reaction to the Soviet proposals was duly given to General Burns some days ago. It has been important that in the work of this Committee the Western nations should work together as closely as possible. Of course the Eastern nations do not have that problem, because the four, apart from the Soviet, simply appear to do exactly what they are told by the Soviet.

The United States completed their reactions to the Soviet proposals late last week, and we received a copy on Thursday evening. There have been consultations in Geneva over the week-end concerning the United States proposals and proposals which had been put forward by the other four Western nations, including Canada, with the intent that there would be a Western plan announced within the next day or two. In addition, the Western plan was to have been taken before the Permanent Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization probably today or tomorrow, but certainly early this week, and then it would have been presented in the Committee of Ten.

I am not yet in a position to table the Canadian proposals in response to the Russian suggestions or to the United States proposals -- to which, incidentally, they were very close -- but in my opinion the new Western proposals and the Soviet proposals of June 2, which the Soviet bloc has now refused to discuss further, could have provided a basis for detailed, businesslike and uninterrupted negotiations. It now becomes obvious that the Soviet side were not seriously interested in negotiating on the last plan they put forward. I believe that their action in stalling out of the Committee as they did this morning was irresponsible, and was taken for propaganda purposes. We will now hear great talk in the United Nations General Assembly about the wonderful plan the Soviets proposed, and there will be charges made that the Western nations refused even to discuss it. I believe further, ... that the Eastern side have overplayed their hand again, just as they overplayed their hand in the breaking up of the summit conference a few weeks ago.

Canada, from the start, has been very much in earnest about the work of this Disarmament Committee. I believe that the Canadian Government, in following that policy, has had the support of every Member of the House regardless of the party to which he or she belongs, and also the overwhelming support of the Canadian

people. We shall continue to be very much in earnest and will do everything we possibly can to work out some solution to the problem. Unfortunately the problem still exists, and Canada will be willing to negotiate and, as I said, do everything she possibly can to help bring about a relaxation of tension.

Naturally these developments are a bit disturbing; but we are dealing here, I believe, with the survival of mankind. This problem we are facing is just that serious. I regret more than I can say that the Soviet and the other four members of the Eastern side should have deliberately walked out of these negotiations knowing that there was a proposal to be discussed within the next day or two. Apparently they were afraid of what would be in those proposals, in so far as world public opinion is concerned. This looks like a deliberate attempt to prevent the Western proposals from getting out to the nations of the world which have not been involved in the work of this Committee.

I take it, of course, that there will be no opportunity now for the Committee to do any further work. I understand that a message has been sent by Premier Khrushchov to the heads of government of the five Western nations, but we have not actually received that. This is obviously a deliberate step taken to try to upset the West and also to gain a propaganda advantage.

I regret having to give such a report to the House ... but I am afraid that is the situation. I suggest that Canadians should not be downhearted. This is a long road that we are on now and, as I said a minute ago, it is a road which may prevent the ending of civilization. I know all Canadians will do their part in an endeavour to see that some solution is eventually found.

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