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CANADA AND THE DISARMAMENT PROBLEM

The information set out below consists of extracts from official publications and is intended to provide a chronological account, although somewhat disjointedly, of the work of the United Nations in dealing with the problem of disarmament and of Canada's concern with this problem. Most of the extracts are taken from successive volumes in the CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS series which is published annually by the Department of External Affairs. These volumes since 1946 have carried chapters on the problem of disarmament including the international control of atomic energy which, when read together, provide a picture of developments from the time of the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission in 1946 until the General Assembly resolution of April 8, 1953, which requested the United Nations Disarmament Commission to continue its work. An additional chapter has been added to bring the survey up to April 1954.

Since a number of the CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS volumes are now out of print and in view of the heightened interest in the problem of disarmament resulting from recent developments in the field of atomic and hydrogen weapons, this material has been brought together in this form for the convenience of those interested.

The detailed examination of the disarmament problem has taken place in three United Nations commissions, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Commission for Conventional Armaments and the Disarmament Commission. The first two commissions met separately and concurrently during the years 1946-52. Their work was taken over by the present Disarmament Commission which was established on January 11, 1952. The following material has, accordingly, been divided into three parts each of which describes the work of one commission.

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1. On November 15, 1945, the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Prime Minister of Canada issued in Washington a joint declaration proposing the establishment of a commission of the United Nations to study the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy. In December, 1945, at the Moscow Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union, and in subsequent diplomatic negotiations with China and France, agreement was reached on the terms of a joint resolution dealing with this subject, to be presented to the General Assembly.

This resolution was presented by the delegation of the United Kingdom on behalf of the five permanent members of the Security Council and Canada. It was referred to the Political and Security Committee where it was adopted without change by 46 votes to none, with one abstention. On January 24, 1946, the resolution was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

In his address to the General Assembly on January 18, Mr. St. Laurent, the Canadian delegate said:

"The possibility of harnessing atomic energy to the purposes of mankind has been demonstrated, and it is now proposed, and proposed by the very nations who appear to have made the greatest advances in that field -- and my country is one of them -- that the vast problems and possibilities which this discovery has opened before us shall be dealt with within the framework of the United Nations.

"This appears to be a most striking instance of a world problem which is of direct concern to every human being and also of the manner in which it should be handled."

The resolution provides that with the exception of Canada, which will have the same permanency of membership in the commission as the permanent members of the Security Council, the composition of the commission will be identical with that of the Security Council.

The resolution directs the commission to make specific proposals for extending between all nations the exchange of scientific information for peaceful ends; for the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes; for the elimination from national armaments not only of atomic weapons, but of all other weapons adaptable to mass destruction; and for effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means to protect complying states against the hazards of violations and evasions.

The commission will submit its reports and recommendations to the Security Council.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1948, pp. 37-40:

In December, 1946, the General Assembly recognized that the prohibition of atomic weapons, and the control of atomic energy to ensure its use for peaceful purposes only, was an essential part of any plan to regulate and reduce armaments, and urged the "expeditious fulfilment" by the Atomic Energy Commission of its tasks. The Security Council was also to

consider a draft treaty for the creation of an international system of control over atomic energy which would include the prohibition of atomic weapons.

When the Commission first met in June, 1946, it was presented with two different plans for the international control of atomic energy; one put forward by the United States Government, and the other by the Government of the U.S.S.R. The two plans differed fundamentally, and so far the Commission has been unable to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it mainly because no basis for agreement has been found between the views of the U.S.S.R. and of the majority of the members of the Commission on the main principles which are to govern a plan for the international control of atomic energy.

In its efforts to find a basis for such agreement the Atomic Energy Commission decided at the outset to defer consideration of the political aspects of the problem, until it had first determined whether control of atomic energy was practicable from a technical and scientific point of view. First of all a Scientific and Technical Committee composed of scientific and technical advisers examined the problem, and in September, 1946, reported unanimously that "we do not find any basis in the available scientific facts for supposing that effective control is not technologically feasible".

In its first report to the Security Council submitted on December 28, 1946, the Commission set forth a plan for the international control of atomic energy based upon proposals submitted by Mr. Baruch, (at that time the United States representative on the Atomic Energy Commission) which followed in its main concepts the Acheson-Lilienthal report. Because of the great knowledge of atomic energy gained by the United States in its wartime activities, this first plan put forward in the Atomic Energy Commission by Mr. Baruch was solely the product of thinking by those most experienced in the field of atomic energy in the United States. The Canadian Government, like other governments, was not consulted in the preparation of the United States Government's proposals for the international control of atomic energy. However, the Canadian government accepted the United States' proposals as a basis upon which to begin the discussion.

These proposals were then examined in detail by the Atomic Energy Commission to determine how they might work in practice, particularly in providing safeguards to countries complying with a system of international control against the dangers of non-compliance by any state through the diversion of materials or plants from peaceful to warlike uses. The result of this work was the subject of a second report of the Atomic Energy Commission, submitted to the Security Council on September 11, 1947, which elaborated specific proposals showing how on many points control could be carried out. The report also considered the points of disagreement expressed by the U.S.S.R. The representative of the U.S.S.R. on the Atomic Energy Commission abstained from voting on the first report and voted against the second report.

The plan supported by the majority of the members of the Atomic Energy Commission would establish an international atomic energy authority, which would own all uranium and thorium in trust for the nations of the world from the time these substances are taken from the ground, and which would control the mining of all such ores. Production would be strictly related to consumption, and there would be no accumulation of stocks. The authority would own, operate, and manage

all facilities handling dangerous amounts of these fissionable materials, and thus would control directly all the atomic energy activities in all nations which might become a potential menace to world security.

A licensing and inspection system is contemplated under the majority plan for activities of a less dangerous character, and it is provided that the authority would foster beneficial uses and research in nationally-owned establishments, limited to non-dangerous quantities. It is proposed that this system of control should be set up by stages, and after it is fully in operation, the manufacture of atomic weapons would cease, existing stocks would be disposed of, and the nuclear fuel would be converted to peaceful uses.

The Soviet Government's plans for the international control of atomic energy, which were presented originally in June, 1946, and elaborated upon in June, 1947, call for the immediate outlawing of the atomic bomb, and the destruction of all existing stocks of weapons "within a three-month period". The Government of the U.S.S.R. has admitted that international inspection and investigation is a necessary condition of any plan for international control, but it has been unwilling to accept any proposals providing for continuous inspection, and has also insisted that inspection be confined to such facilities and materials as it chooses to declare. In addition, the Soviet Government maintains that any international atomic energy authority must be subject to the jurisdiction of the Security Council, which would mean that the Permanent Members of the Security Council could use their veto to prevent any effective action, if it should be found that they were illegally producing nuclear fuel or otherwise seriously violating international atomic controls.

The discussions in the Atomic Energy Commission in 1948 were confined to a detailed examination of the Soviet Government's proposals of June, 1947, and to the study of the organizational structure of an international control agency.

An exhaustive examination of the Soviet Union's proposals led a majority of the members of the Commission to the view that they were inadequate to provide a basis for an international control of atomic energy which would give the nations of the world a sense of security. The views of the majority of the Commission are stated in the third report in the following terms:

"in the field of atomic energy, the majority of the Commission has been unable to secure the agreement of the Soviet Union to even these elements of effective control considered essential from the technical point of view, let alone their acceptance of the nature and the extent of participation in the world community required of all nations in this field by the first and second reports of the Atomic Energy Commission."

The majority of the governments represented on the Atomic Energy Commission were of the opinion, therefore, that the Soviet Union's proposals offered no real safeguard against the diversion of atomic materials to illegal uses or the concealment of atomic installations engaged in the production of nuclear fuel.

The third report of the Atomic Energy Commission, prepared in May, 1948, outlined the work of the Commission during 1948 and stated that the differences between the

majority of the members of the Atomic Energy Commission and the U.S.S.R. had made it impossible for the Atomic Energy Commission to continue the preparation of a draft treaty for the international control of atomic energy. This report was adopted by the Atomic Energy Commission in May, 1948 by a majority of nine affirmative votes, the representatives of the U.S.S.R. and Ukrainian S.S.R. voting against it. In submitting its third report to the Security Council, the Atomic Energy Commission recommended that this report and the two previous reports be transmitted to the General Assembly "as a matter of special concern".

In June, 1948, the Security Council approved a resolution submitted by the representative of Canada, that the three reports of the Atomic Energy Commission, together with the deliberations of the Security Council on this subject, be transmitted to the third session of the General Assembly "as a matter of special concern".

The three reports were considered in the First Committee of the General Assembly at its third session and a number of countries, including Canada, put forward resolutions containing proposals on atomic energy.

The First Committee adopted a resolution with some amendments by a vote of 41 to 6 with 10 abstentions. This resolution upon the proposal of the Canadian delegate approved the general findings of the first report and the specific proposals of the second report and noted with concern the impasse which has been reached in the work of the Atomic Energy Commission as shown in its third report. It requested the permanent members of the Atomic Energy Commission to consult together "in order to determine if there exists a basis for agreement on international control" and called upon the Atomic Energy Commission to resume its sessions. The resolution as adopted represented an important modification of the original proposal put forth by Canada and supported by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France that negotiations in the Atomic Energy Commission be suspended indefinitely. In putting forward the original resolution the Canadian representative made it clear that it was designed only as a basis for discussion and that it would probably require amendment. It became clear in the course of debate that representatives of a number of countries were in favour of instructing the Atomic Energy Commission to renew its efforts. The Canadian representative accordingly agreed to amend the Canadian resolution to take account of the wishes of these members.

The amended resolution was approved by the General Assembly as its first major political decision on November 4, 1948, by a vote of 40 to 6 with four abstentions.

Canada has a special interest in the establishment of a practicable system for the control of atomic energy, which will protect the nations of the world from the dangers of atomic war, and which will give freedom to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes. Canada had an early start in the development of atomic energy as a producer of uranium ore and as an associate with the United States and the United Kingdom in the development of atomic energy during the war. In this way, Canadian scientists and engineers have acquired special skills and knowledge in the field. These conditions have enabled Canada to develop scientific research in the field of atomic energy on a national scale. At the same time, it has been realized that the full benefits of atomic energy will only be developed through the association of all nations in a system of international control, rather than through the development of atomic energy on a national basis.

The position of the Canadian representative on the Atomic Energy Commission, moreover, has been that atomic warfare cannot be prohibited or international development of atomic energy assured, except on a basis which provides adequate security for all nations. Since the principles whereby these two objectives may be realized have been incorporated in the majority reports of the Atomic Energy Commission, Canada has supported these reports. It was for this reason that the Canadian delegation introduced a draft resolution, in the Security Council in June, 1948, directing the Secretary-General to transmit the reports of the Atomic Energy Commission to the General Assembly. The Canadian delegate also introduced a resolution in the Political Committee of the General Assembly in October, 1948, recommending the acceptance of the report as a basis for further progress towards a solution of the complicated problem of preventing atomic warfare and freeing the world's resources of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

The Canadian delegation has also associated itself with every effort to explore the possibility of agreement between the Soviet Union and the other members of the Atomic Energy Commission. Therefore, the Canadian delegation agreed to the inclusion, in its original proposal submitted to the Political Committee of the General Assembly, of a provision that the Five Great Powers and Canada should meet to consult together in order to determine if there exists a basis upon which an agreed solution might be found to the problem of the control of atomic energy, in particular, by the removal of the political difficulties which, at present, constitute the main obstacle to agreement.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1949, pp. 28-31:

Only three days after General Romulo had opened the Fourth Session of the General Assembly with the expression of his fervent hope that it might go down in history as the "Peace Assembly", President Truman announced that an atomic explosion had recently taken place in the Soviet Union. On the day of this announcement, Mr. Vyshinsky made the first of a series of propaganda attacks on the Western countries, which did nothing to promote the atmosphere of compromise and conciliation for which the President of the Assembly had hoped, but intensified the acrimony of the "peace" debate, of which the international control of atomic energy was perhaps the focus, and of the atomic energy debate itself.

The deadlock acknowledged in May 1948, in the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission as final by the General Assembly meeting in Paris in 1948, which had requested the Commission to see what could be done, either in the Commission as a whole or by informal meetings of its permanent members, to break new ground in an effort to reach agreement. Both methods were tried without success. The deadlock continued; but some useful work was accomplished before the Fourth Session of the Assembly met. The Atomic Energy Commission's vast documentation was organized by the Secretariat in a handier form, at the suggestion of the Canadian Representative. The majority had the opportunity, in the talks held privately among the six permanent members, to make a new approach to the whole problem by condensing their proposals into the form of a few general principles. The document, subsequently published as a report to the Assembly by the five Western members, provided the best available summary of the reasons why the majority believe that the Soviet Union is holding up an agreement on atomic energy for political reasons, despite the fact that scientists of all countries consider the control of atomic energy for peaceful purposes to be technically feasible.

The atomic energy debates which preceded the Assembly had, therefore, stalled at dead centre. Little or no improvement in this situation can be recorded to the credit of the Fourth Session of the Assembly. Yet the undercurrent of urgency was never stronger. As a result of the discussions, the overwhelming majority of the United Nations has put itself on record as supporting the principles of the majority plan approved by the General Assembly in Paris in 1948, and has condemned by implication the alternative proposals of the U.S.S.R. which, the great majority obviously believes, offer no hope for genuine international security. But the Soviet Representative did not budge from his position.

Throughout the United Nations discussions of atomic energy, since the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission in January 1946, it has been difficult for the majority to get any precise and detailed statement of the Soviet plan from the various representatives of the U.S.S.R. In his major speech on this subject at the meeting of the General Assembly on November 23, 1949, Mr. Vishinsky added only a few footnotes to the Soviet proposals but forward on June 11, 1947, before he turned with greater relish to the usual theme of Soviet statements on atomic energy -- denunciations of the majority plan for the prohibition of atomic weapons and the control of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. The Soviet position continues to be based on the premise that a loose system of inspection is the only form of international control that is needed to give those nations which possess atomic weapons sufficient confidence to destroy their existing stockpiles.

The position which is being worked out by the majority is very different. As the Secretary of State for External Affairs said in his main statement on atomic energy to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Assembly on November 7, 1949.

The Soviet proposals for control admit only of fixed periodic inspections, and even that inspection is merely of such facilities as the national governments concerned may choose to declare to an international authority. The Soviet proposals also include special investigation, when there is evidence of illegal activity. But how is such evidence to be obtained? If we had enough confidence to convince us that it would be given automatically by every national government to an international agency, then we would have so much confidence we would not need any international control at all.....

Our position is that the only kind of inspection which will be adequate to convince people that international control plans and policy are observed is that which gives far-reaching powers to the inspectors, while providing against the abuse of those powers. They, the inspectors, will be the agents of the international conscience and the international community, and no government which is sincere in this matter of international control of atomic energy, as we all are, would want to restrict or restrain them so that they could not discharge their duties efficiently.

Developing the same theme in his major review of external affairs in the House of Commons on November 16, 1949, Mr. Pearson said:

They (the Russians) talk loudly, especially at Lake Success, about immediate and unqualified outlawing of the atom bomb, but they refuse to participate in any scheme in which international control and inspection would be effective and adequate for that purpose. Without such control, pledges and protocol would, in the present atmosphere of international suspicion and mistrust, be worse than useless. They would be dangerous, by providing a false facade of security behind which the aggressor could develop his evil plans. We had some experience of this in the 1930's.....

The basic difficulty is of course, the Soviet fear of any contact with the west -- a fear which is almost pathological. The Soviet leaders also stubbornly maintain that they cannot possibly accept any limitations of their sovereignty. We maintain, on the contrary, that we cannot afford to cling to an ancient concept of sovereignty when what we are seeking is a chance for survival. We shall never get anywhere, in our view, if we insist on talking about national sovereignty as if, in atomic matters, it were more important than national and international security, or if we consider that, by using our national sovereignty for joint action, we are losing it.

The mere restatement of the deadlock, however, was not satisfactory to any of the delegations at the General Assembly. While the impact of President Truman's announcement about the Soviet explosion was still fresh in their minds, the delegates were unwilling to admit defeat, and several suggestions for compromise were offered. As the Assembly turned to a discussion of atomic energy, General Romulo published an appeal to the permanent members of the Atomic Energy Commission pleading with them to accept some sort of stop-gap compromise agreement and offering four suggestions as to how such an agreement might possibly be reached. A resolution submitted by the Indian Representative called for the International Law Commission to prepare a draft declaration of the rights and duties of states and individuals insofar as atomic energy was concerned. A resolution submitted by the Argentine Delegate proposed "renunciation of the use of atomic weapons for purposes of aggression", and the Delegate of Haiti suggested that the Gordian knot be cut by a process of international legislation.

Although these suggestions were discussed in the Assembly and in Committee, the delegates did not think that they were competent to pass judgement on such matters until they had been more carefully examined, and supported instead a resolution introduced by the Canadian and French Representatives calling upon "the permanent members of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission to continue their consultations, to explore all possible avenues, and examine all concrete suggestions with a view to determining whether they might lead to an agreement securing the basic objectives of the General Assembly in this question", and recommending that "all nations, in the use of their rights of sovereignty, join in mutual agreement to limit the individual exercise of those rights in the control of atomic energy to the extent required". This Canadian-French resolution won the overwhelming support of the Assembly by a vote of 49 in favour, 5 against, with 3 abstentions.

In sponsoring the resolution, Mr. Pearson laid particular stress on the need for open-mindedness. Speaking to the Ad Hoc Political Committee on November 7, 1949, he said:

One of the principles embodied in our joint resolution is that we must keep open every channel for consultation and negotiation. We must not close any door.

The second principle is that we must also not close our minds. We must explore all possible avenues which give any promise of leading to a satisfactory solution to this vital problem. The Atomic Energy Commission must be prepared to consider any suggestion which could contribute to such a solution. The members of that Commission should be willing and anxious, and I know they would be willing and anxious, to examine ideas from any source, whether from an officer of the General Assembly, or from any government, or from the press, or from any individual in any part of the world.

As requested by the Assembly, the six permanent members of the Atomic Energy Commission resumed their discussions on December 20 under the chairmanship of the Canadian Delegate, General A.G.L. McNaughton, who proceeded to circulate to the members a summary of the various suggestions that had been made during the course of the Assembly session. These were referred to their governments and are being carefully studied.

Although the Assembly produced no remarkable decisions on atomic energy, there was a growing recognition that, in the words Mr. Pearson used in the Ad Hoc Political Committee on November 7, "if the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. did not agree on a plan for ensuring that there will not be an atomic arms race, there will be no such plan and there will be such a race, without any winnte!"

In spite of the apparently ineffectual efforts of the United Nations to deal with the overwhelming problem of atomic energy control, a plan that is technically sound has been developed and has received the political support of the great majority of nations of the world. The effort to resolve the deadlock has become the most important political problem of the day and, although the issues appear at the moment to be politically insoluble, there are perhaps grounds for the hope expressed by a great atomic scientist, Dr. Leo Szilard, as quoted by Mr. Pearson before the United Nations on November 7, 1949:

Politics has been defined as the art of the possible. Science might be defined as the art of the impossible. The crisis which is upon us may not find its ultimate solution until the statesmen catch up with the scientists, and politics, too, becomes the art of the impossible. This, I believe, might be achieved when the statesmen will be more afraid of the atomic bomb than they are afraid of using their imagination, because imagination is the tool which has to be used if the impossible is to be accomplished.

How the political problem can be solved, it is impossible to say, but, speaking in the House of Commons on November 16, 1949, Mr. Pearson made this suggestion:

The problem of peace is much broader than the problem of agreeing on the clauses of a treaty to prohibit the use of the atom bomb. It is the problem of establishing sufficient mutual confidence to tackle not only disarmament and the bomb but the whole range of major friction points -- political, strategic and economic -- which are witnesses today of the tragic division between the two worlds.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1946, pp. 29-40

What appears to be the most important accomplishment of the second part of the First Session of the General Assembly was its unanimous adoption on December 14, 1946, of a resolution on the principles governing the general regulation and reduction of armaments. No one expected, when the second part of the First Session opened on October 23, that it would be possible for all the Members of the United Nations to agree, before the end of 1946, to take this first step towards general disarmament. The unexpected ability of the Members of the U.N. to reach unanimous agreement in the Assembly on this step has done much to restore confidence in the ability of the nations to keep the peace and in the value of the United Nations, and especially its Assembly, as an instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Speaking of the action of the Assembly in adopting this resolution, the President of the Assembly, M. Spaak, the Foreign Minister of Belgium, said in his address on the closing day of the session:-

"The decision for which we have voted has raised great hopes. Since San Francisco, since the time when we adopted the Charter, we have accomplished nothing so important as the motion on disarmament. If in the months and weeks to come the competent organs [of the United Nations] really succeed in making the text we have submitted to them a living reality, I think that mankind will have entered a new era, which you have ushered in -- a fact of which you may well be proud."

The passage of a disarmament resolution by a unanimous vote of the Assembly is, as M. Spaak implied, no more than a first step. It is now the responsibility of the Security Council, with the assistance of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Military Staff Committee, to take the second and more difficult step -- to conclude the special agreements putting armed forces at the disposal of the Security Council, and to draw up concrete plans or draft conventions on disarmament for submission to a special session of the General Assembly. It will then be necessary for the Members of the U.N., meeting in special session of the General Assembly, to agree on the texts of the necessary international conventions. Finally, the conventions adopted by the Assembly will have to be ratified by the signatory states before they can come into force and the actual reduction, regulation or prohibition of armaments be accomplished.

Speaking on this point in the General Assembly on December 14, 1946, just before the adoption of the disarmament resolution, the Canadian representative said:-

"Let us not mislead ourselves and our peoples about the difficulties of the task which lies ahead of us. We will today only have laid an essential stone in the foundation of a just and stable world order, in which it may be possible for men and nations by their joint and sustained efforts to live together as good neighbours, free from fear and want and with liberty of thought and worship.

"The task of completing the edifice of peace will be heavy. It will be long and dreary. It will be full of setbacks and heartbreaks. There will be brief moments of elation, such as that of last night and of today, but there will also be periods of despair. If we, the peoples of the United Nations, are to succeed in our task we must be willing to experiment, and to run great risks to attain great objectives. We must be resolute and display in our just cause a holy obstinacy.

"We must have faith in ourselves and in each other. Above all we must remember that all men are brothers and that upon the dignity, the liberty, the inviolability of the individual men, women and children of the world depend the welfare of the people, the safety of the state and the peace of the world."

The resolution adopted by the Assembly deals with four related aspects of the disarmament problem:

- (1) the prohibition of atomic and all other major weapons adaptable now and in the future to mass destruction;
- (2) the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes;
- (3) the placing of armed forces at the disposal of the Security Council;
- (4) the general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces.

So far as the first two aspects are concerned, the resolution reaffirms the Assembly resolution of January 24, 1946, which set up the Atomic Energy Commission; it urges the Commission to fulfill its terms of reference as set forth in section 5 of that resolution, it recommends that the Security Council expedite consideration of a draft international convention, or conventions, based on the reports of the Commission; and it states that these conventions should create, within the framework of the Security Council, an international system of control and inspection operating through special organs desiring their powers and status from the conventions.

On the third aspect of the problem, "the General Assembly, regarding the problem of security as closely connected with that of disarmament, recommends the Security Council to accelerate as much as possible the placing at its disposal of the armed forces mentioned in Article 43 of the Charter."

The first two aspects of the problem had already been dealt with by the Assembly in its resolution of January 24, 1946. It was not therefore necessary for the Assembly to deal with these two aspects in detail in its December resolution.

However, on the fourth aspect -- the general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces -- the Assembly was breaking new and difficult ground. It was therefore necessary for the Assembly to go into considerable detail if its work was to be constructive.

The resolution sets forth the four stages of the process of general disarmament. The first stage is that which the Assembly took in adopting, in virtue of its powers under Article 11 of the Charter, a resolution on the principles which should govern the general regulation and reduction of armaments. The second stage is the formulation by the Security Council, under Article 26 of the Charter, of plans for the establishment of a system for the regulation and reduction of armaments. During this stage the Security Council will be doing the work of a preparatory commission on disarmament. The third stage is the consideration by all the Members of the U.N., at a special session of the General Assembly, of the plans formulated by the Security Council. The fourth stage in the process of general disarmament is the ratification by the signatory states and the coming into force of the disarmament treaties or conventions approved by the General Assembly in special session.

The resolution establishes four principles of general disarmament:-

- (1) An early general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces is necessary to strengthen international peace and security;
- (2) Practical measures shall be agreed upon to assure that the regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces will be generally observed by all participants and not by some only;
- (3) Practical and effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means shall be provided to protect complying states against the hazards of violations and evasions;
- (4) The international convention or conventions on disarmament shall create, within the framework of the Security Council, an international system of control and inspection, operating through special organs deriving their powers and status from the convention or conventions.

These principles, which are stated explicitly in the resolution, clearly imply that the international system of control and inspection of general disarmament will have to be clothed with all the powers required to implement practical and effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means and to detect and report on any breach or threatened breach of the disarmament convention or conventions. There can be no requirement of unanimity in the organs of the international system of control and inspection since, if any state had a veto over inspection and report, other states would obviously not be protected against violations and evasions by that state or by states which it was attempting to shield. Nor would there be assurance that the conventions were being generally observed by all participants and not by some only.

Not only does the resolution set forth the four stages of general disarmament and establish four explicit principles and one implicit conclusion, it also puts the responsibility for speedily completing the next stage in the process of disarmament squarely on the shoulders of the Security Council. The Security Council is asked by the Assembly to "give prompt consideration" to working out the "practical measures" referred to in the second principle and the "practical and effective safeguards" referred to in the third principle. In their turn the Members of the U.N. are called upon to render every possible assistance to the Security Council in its work.

The task of securing unanimous agreement in the Assembly on a useful disarmament resolution was one of very great difficulty. The issues were complex in themselves and were further complicated by the introduction by the Soviet delegation of a resolution on the presence in foreign territories (other than ex-enemy territories) of armed forces of Members of the U.N. The debate on this in the Political Committee immediately preceded the debate on disarmament. Later the two issues became inextricably intertwined and the final result was the passage by the Assembly on December 14, 1946, of a resolution which merely called upon the Security Council to determine, as soon as possible, the information which the Members of the U.N. should be called upon to furnish in order to implement the disarmament resolution as soon as possible.

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A comparison of the final text of the disarmament resolution with the various preceding drafts, and a study of the Canadian proposals and amendments and of the speeches given in explanation of them, indicate the nature and significance of the contribution which Canada made to the disarmament discussions which took place during the second part of the First Session of the General Assembly.

On October 29, in the opening debate in the General Assembly, the chairman of the Canadian delegation expressed the concern of the Canadian delegation over the failure of the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee to make substantial progress towards a conclusion of the special agreements with Members of the U.N. required to make armed forces and other facilities available to the Security Council. He went on to say:

"It would be in the interest of all Members of the United Nations to see the Security Council equipped and ready in fact to enforce proper decisions for the maintenance of world peace and also to see serious consideration given to the reduction of national armaments so that the productive capacity of the world thus conserved may be used for improving the living conditions of all peoples."

Later in the day on which this statement was made, Mr. Molotov put the Soviet proposal for disarmament before the Assembly. This proposal, coming as it did from one of the two most heavily armed powers of the world, made it appear that immediate progress towards disarmament should be envisaged at once as a political possibility.

The Soviet resolution, because of its inadequacies and ambiguities, required amendment. Canada did not, however, consider it appropriate that a nation with a comparatively small population which had never had armed forces which might constitute a threat to the peace of the world should take the lead in putting forward the necessary amendments. Canada considered it more appropriate that that lead should be taken by the United States, both because it was one of the two most heavily armed powers, and because its interests were especially affected by what appeared to be the Soviet proposal that the atomic bomb should be abolished before measures were agreed upon to carry out other terms of reference of the Atomic Energy Commission.

However, since the proposals made in the Soviet resolution were of direct concern to all nations and not only to the most heavily armed, there was prepared in the Canadian delegation a "working paper" setting forth a tentative draft of a possible substitute for the Soviet resolution. This "working paper" of November 4 was prepared as a basis of discussion within the Canadian delegation and was also shown as a provisional and tentative draft to a few other delegations whose general approach to the problem was thought to be much the same as that of the Canadian delegation.

An interval of a month elapsed between the presentation of the Soviet proposal on October 29 and the opening of the debate on disarmament in the Political Committee on November 28. When that debate opened, the United States was not ready to introduce a substitute resolution. The Canadian substitute resolution which was a revision of the working paper of November 4 was therefore immediately introduced. Two days later the United States introduced its substitute resolution.

After devoting five meetings to a debate on disarmament (November 28, 29, 30, December 2 and 4), the Political Committee appointed a sub-committee of twenty states to study all the relevant resolutions submitted to the committee and to draft, if possible, a unanimously acceptable resolution. This sub-committee took as the basis of its discussion the United States resolution. After four open meetings (December 5, 6, 7 and 9) it appointed a drafting group consisting of the Chairman (M. Spaak of Belgium), the rapporteur (Mr. Clementis of Czechoslovakia), the five great powers, Canada and Egypt. The drafting group held three meetings (December 9, 10 and 11) and reported a provisional draft resolution back to the sub-committee on December 11. Two further meetings of the sub-committee were held (December 11 and 12), to discuss this draft resolution. Three Canadian amendments and one United States amendment to the report of the drafting group were accepted, a number of improvements were made in the language and structure of the resolution, and a draft resolution was adopted for presentation to the Political Committee. The Political Committee on December 13, after making a few minor drafting improvements, adopted unanimously and by acclamation the resolution submitted by the sub-committee; and this resolution was likewise adopted unanimously and by acclamation by the General Assembly on December 14.

The critical stage in the discussions was the period of December 9 to 12. At its meetings on December 9 and 10, the drafting group adopted paragraphs 2 and 3 of its draft resolution. The Canadian representative was unable to persuade the other members of the group that the amendments which he was putting forward to these two paragraphs were more than

drafting amendments. He therefore had to reserve the position of the Canadian delegation on these two paragraphs. These essential Canadian amendments were, however, accepted unanimously by the sub-committee on December 12. The first was to add at the end of what became paragraph 4 of the final resolution a reference to the necessity of the international conventions providing not only for the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction but also for the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes. The second was a consequential amendment to what became paragraph 6 of the final resolution.

Canada also secured on December 12 the adoption by the sub-committee of the substance of its amendments to the first paragraph of the draft resolution submitted by the drafting group. This first paragraph became paragraph 1 and 2 of the final resolution. The purpose of these amendments was to make clear that the action of the Assembly in adopting a resolution on disarmament was only the first of four stages in the process of disarmament. This would help to lessen the danger that the resolution would unintentionally mislead the public into believing that the task of disarmament was a simple one. Moreover it was desirable, in order to avoid unnecessary debate in the future over procedure, to state explicitly the nature of the third stage in the process of disarmament -- the submission of the disarmament plans formulated by the Security Council to all the Members of the U.N. for consideration at a special session of the General Assembly at which disarmament treaties or conventions would be adopted. The Canadian amendment to state explicitly the nature of this third stage was adopted by the sub-committee by a vote of ten to eight.

Another contribution made by Canada to the disarmament debate was over the vexed question of a great power veto over the imposition of sanctions. There was danger that the interjection of this question into the Assembly's discussion of the disarmament resolution might make the attainment of unanimous agreement impossible. The Canadian representative therefore urged, at a meeting of the Political Committee on December 4, that this question be approached realistically. If, under present conditions, "there came about a situation where it was felt that sanctions would have to be applied against one of the great powers, it would be a condition of imminent war whether the opposition of that power took the form of resistance or of the veto. The only way by which it could be overcome would be by the use of force and the use of force against a great power means war."

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1948, pp. 48-50:

The Commission for Conventional Armaments was established by the Security Council in February, 1947 with the same membership as the Council. Canada therefore became a member of the Commission in January 1948 on assuming membership on the Security Council.

The first issue debated by this Commission was whether or not the question of the prohibition of atomic weapons should be considered together with the general reduction of armaments and armed forces, by the same body in drafting plans of disarmament. The Soviet Union wanted the two matters to be considered together. The majority of the other members of the Commission pointed out that the problems involved in the working out of a plan for the international control of atomic energy involved technical questions which were so essentially different from those relating to the question of disarmament and the so-called conventional weapons, that the work on the control of atomic energy should be left to the Atomic Energy Commission. In order

to separate the work of the two Commissions a definition of "weapons of mass destruction" including atomic weapons was established.

The Commission for Conventional Armaments then undertook consideration of the general principles which would govern the regulations and reduction of armaments and armed forces. The majority of the members of the Commission took the view that adequate conditions of security must be established to enable disarmament to proceed safely and equitably.

Starting with the premise that disarmament by nations requires an atmosphere of international confidence and security, the following were the principal prior conditions which the majority of the Commission thought necessary to disarmament:-

- (a) The completion of agreements under Article 43 of the Charter which would place armed forces at the disposal of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- (b) The establishment of a system of international control of atomic energy.
- (c) The conclusion of peace settlements with Germany and Japan.

The majority of the Commission also laid particular emphasis on the need to establish an adequate system of international inspection and control, which would give assurance to all states that disarmament would be on an equitable basis and that no state could take advantage of the disarmament of others.

The representative of the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, took the position that the immediate reduction of armaments and armed forces would in itself be "an essential condition for the creation of a sense of international confidence and security." The representative of the U.S.S.R. contended that the argument that conditions of international confidence and security must precede disarmament, was contrary to the General Assembly's resolution of December 14, 1946. The position of the Soviet representative on the question of international inspection and control has been that any control body must be established within the framework of the Security Council. This has been taken to mean by the majority of the Commission, that the veto exercised by the permanent members of the Security Council can apply at some stage to prevent effective inspection and control, which is so essential to a workable disarmament system.

The question of disarmament was debated at length at the third session of the General Assembly. The Soviet Union proposed that the following three steps be taken immediately towards general disarmament:-

- "(1) The reduction by one-third during one year of the present strength of the land, naval and air forces of the five permanent members of the Security Council.
- (2) The prohibition of atomic weapons intended for "aims of aggression".
- (3) The establishment within the framework of the Security Council of an international control body for the purpose of supervision and control over the implementation of the above two measures."

The main issue again raised in connection with these Soviet proposals was whether the Soviet Union would itself permit effective international inspection to be carried out in its territory to determine both quantitatively and qualitatively the armaments and armed forces at its disposal. Without an undertaking by all countries concerned that they would open their frontiers to international inspection, it was clearly impossible to arrive at a plan of disarmament which might be directly related to the needs of international peace and security. The arbitrary arithmetical formula suggested by the Soviet Union would leave that country in a position of advantage in relation to those countries, which, like the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, had already reduced their armaments and armed forces substantially since the conclusion of hostilities.

A counter resolution was submitted by the United Kingdom delegation asserting the principle already taken by the majority in the Commission on Conventional Armaments, that disarmament could only take place in an atmosphere of international confidence and security. The Canadian representative, in supporting this position in the First Committee, pointed out that no country would welcome more sincerely than Canada any progress towards effective measures of general disarmament. It was not possible, however, for Canada to support measures of disarmament at the cost of insecurity to Canada or to other nations desirous of maintaining international peace and security on the basis of the principles and purposes of the Charter. The Canadian representative emphasized in particular that the problem of inspection, verification and control lay at the root of the disarmament problem, and urged that the Soviet representative should declare whether the Soviet Government was prepared to open its territory to international inspection.

The first Committee of the General Assembly, where the question of disarmament was discussed, rejected the Soviet proposals and adopted a resolution, based upon the United Kingdom proposal, that the Commission for Conventional Armaments should continue its work in formulating proposals for the general regulation and reduction of armaments, which would include provisions for the receipt, checking and publication by an international organization of their armed forces and their conventional armaments. This proposal was adopted by the General Assembly on November 19 by a vote of 43 (including Canada) in favour, 6 (Soviet Bloc) against, with one abstention.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1949, pp. 32-33:

During 1949 the Commission was hampered in its attempts to implement this resolution by the continuing fundamental disagreement between the U.S.S.R. and the Ukraine on the one hand, and the remaining members of the Council on the other. The Soviet Representative made his Government's position clear, when the question was reconsidered in February 1949, by reintroducing the disarmament proposals which the Third Session of the General Assembly had decisively rejected in Paris. These proposals provided the measures be formulated to reduce the armaments and armed forces of the permanent members of the Council by one-third; and that two draft conventions were necessary, to take effect simultaneously, concerning the prohibition of atomic weapons and the control of atomic energy. The Soviet Representative added a further proposal to those which the Soviet Union had submitted to the General Assembly to the effect that the permanent members of the Council were to submit full data on their armed forces and armaments, including atomic weapons, no later than March 31, 1949. Western representatives characterized this Soviet draft

resolution as a manoeuvre intended to divert attention from the disarmament resolution passed by the General Assembly. Accordingly, the majority in the Commission devoted a large number of informal meetings between February and August, 1949, to the preparation of a plan for the exchange and verification of information on conventional armaments. The initiative in the matter was largely taken by the delegations of Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States which, by the end of May, had agreed upon a composite working paper setting forth proposals for the census and verification of the armaments and armed forces of member states. At this stage the proposals contained in the working paper were outlined in two sections. The first section elaborated on the aims of the resolution passed by the Third Session of the General Assembly and described the nature, scope and limitations of the proposals. These proposals were to be capable of implementation under existing political conditions, but were not designed to provide, of themselves, the safeguards essential to security. As a prerequisite to implementation they were to be accepted by not less than two-thirds of the member states, including all the permanent members of the Security Council. Section two listed the categories of armed forces and armaments on which information was to be supplied to an international control organ and outlined the verification procedures (inspections, spot-checks and cross-checks) provided.

The Soviet Union's insistence, however, on linking the regulation of conventional armaments with the control of atomic energy made it clear that the possibility of reaching agreement on effective plans for disarmament was virtually non-existent. Nevertheless, the Commission felt itself obliged to continue its efforts to devise a practicable framework for disarmament in accordance with the General Assembly's instructions. Late in June 1949 the United States Delegation presented a supplementary paper containing suggestions for the establishment of an international organ of control. This draft was incorporated as section three of the majority working paper, which the French Delegation agreed to sponsor in the Working Committee of the Commission and later in the Commission itself. On August 1, the composite proposal introduced by the French Delegation was approved by the Commission, and on October 18, after some discussion in the Security Council, it was vetoed by the U.S.S.R. The Council, however, forwarded the Commission's proposal to the General Assembly, together with its own Second Progress Report covering its activities for the period July 16, 1947 to August 12, 1948.

When the Fourth Session of the General Assembly discussed the subject of conventional armaments, the familiar arguments were reiterated on both sides. The debate centred on a joint draft proposal submitted by the Representatives of France and Norway and on a second draft resolution put forward by the U.S.S.R. The latter simply recommended that member states "should submit information on both armed forces and conventional armaments, and information on atomic weapons", and was rejected by a vote of 6 in favour, 39 against, with 9 abstentions. The Franco-Norwegian proposal provided that the General Assembly should approve the plans formulated by the Commission for Conventional Armaments for the exchange of information on armed forces and the verification thereof; and recommended that the Security Council, despite the lack of unanimity among its permanent members, should continue its study of the regulation and reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces through the agency of the CCA. This resolution, which stemmed directly from the informal agreement reached in the Commission

by the delegation of Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States, was adopted by the General Assembly on December 5 by a vote of 45 in favour, 5 against, with 5 abstentions.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1950, pp. 48-50:

In spite of the anticipated development of a "hydrogen bomb" utilizing the process of solar energy release, and the mounting international tension which flared into open conflict in the Far East, the interval between the Fourth and Fifth Sessions of the General Assembly saw no progress towards reaching agreement on either the international control of atomic weapons or the limitation of conventional armaments. The primary obstacle to agreement was the continued refusal of the Soviet Government to modify in any significant way its previous proposals which had been considered by the majority of members of the United Nations to be so inadequate as to provide no more than a mockery of the security the nations sought. Soviet intransigence was augmented by their insistence that disarmament and all other issues be subordinated to the question of Chinese representation.

Talks on atomic energy control among the six sponsoring Powers, including Canada, were resumed in December 1949 at the request of the General Assembly. These talks, however, were interrupted abruptly by the walk-out of the Soviet Representative in January 1950, as a result of the group's refusal to unseat the Representative of Nationalist China. Shortly after, the other five permanent members of the Atomic Energy Commission concluded that it would be useless to continue without the Representative of the U.S.S.R., and no further progress among the Six, or in the Atomic Energy Commission as a whole was possible during 1950.

A twenty-year peace plan, submitted by Mr. Trygve Lie in the spring of 1950, was debated at the Fifth Session of the General Assembly. It included a proposal that the problem of atomic energy control be considered by an international panel of scientists, but as the obstacles to agreement appeared to be fundamentally political rather than technical, support for this proposal was not forthcoming.

The General Assembly at its Fourth Session (1949) had asked the Commission for Conventional Armaments to continue its studies in the field of inspection, verification and reduction of conventional armaments, and as 1950 opened, talks were in progress in the Working Committee of the Commission. Like the negotiations concerning atomic energy, however, these talks were broken off by a Soviet walk-out in January over the question of Chinese representations.

In an address to the General Assembly on October 24, President Truman indicated his willingness to meet the repeated demand of the U.S.S.R. that the subjects of atomic control and general disarmament should be given joint consideration. Late in the Fifth Session of the Assembly this suggestion was taken up in an eight-power resolution establishing a committee of twelve members, to examine the possible merging of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments and to report to the next regular session. Canada, one of the co-sponsors, is represented on the committee, which was established on the adoption of the resolution by 47 votes to 5 with 3 abstentions. This resolution was opposed by the representatives of the Soviet bloc whose speeches monotonously reproduced their previous views on the subject. Their counter-proposal, calling for simultaneous conventions prohibiting atomic weapons and establishing control of atom energy, was defeated by 32 votes to 5 with 16 abstentions.

The perennial Soviet proposals in this field call for an immediate prohibition of atomic weapons and a one-third reduction of conventional armaments. Western governments mistrust these suggestions, at least in the form in which they have been put forward by the Soviet Union, for two basic reasons. In the first place, the measures of inspection and control which the U.S.S.R. has so far advanced to ensure that disarmament would actually be carried out, are totally inadequate. The West is not prepared to accept Soviet good faith alone as their guarantee that both sides would in fact disarm. In the second place, the government of the free world are conscious of present conditions of military preparedness. The Soviet Union carried out no comparable general demobilization on the conclusion of hostilities with Germany, as the West did in 1945 and 1946. Moreover, since that date the Soviet military forces have been extensively re-equipped with weapons of the most modern type. Under such conditions any proportional disarmament, even if honestly implemented by the Soviet Union, could only enhance the present military unbalance. In view of the aggressive policy followed by the Soviet bloc in the last five years, the free world cannot seriously entertain the Soviet terms for disarmament until it has brought itself to some measure of military parity with the U.S.S.R., and until an adequate system of safeguards has been established.

Although the Western countries in the United Nations are still keeping the door open, the Soviet bloc continues to refuse to consider any disarmament proposals which would not leave the Soviet Union in its present position of military preponderance. In other words, it has been unwilling to discuss any plan for genuine disarmament. Until there is a readiness on the part of the U.S.S.R. to seek a real settlement of the fundamental issues separating the Powers, it would be unduly optimistic to expect agreement on atomic energy and disarmament. Nevertheless, the Western nations stand prepared to resume serious negotiations should the U.S.S.R. be disposed to participate.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1951-52, pp. 11-16:

The Committee of Twelve recommended to the sixth session of the Assembly that such a new commission, which should be under and report to the Security Council, should be established and that the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments should then be dissolved. There was no indication beyond this of what the detailed terms of reference of the new commission might be.

The Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States, however, had been carrying on tripartite consultations on this problem and they submitted to the sixth session of the Assembly comprehensive proposals for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and armaments; the task of elaborating these proposals and embodying them in a draft treaty was to be assigned to the proposed new commission. These proposals were placed in perspective by a tripartite statement issued by the sponsors just before the opening of the Assembly, which emphasized that, while in existing conditions the three Governments were determined to develop the strength needed for their security, the danger of war could be appreciably reduced if all governments would work together on a programme to reduce and limit armed forces. Although such a programme could not be implemented while United Nations forces were resisting aggression in Korea, discussion should begin without delay. Three new and notable features of these proposals were (a) that they provided, as a first step, for a progressive and continuous system of international disclosure and verification of all armed forces and armaments,

(b) that they suggested that drawing up of criteria for limiting national armed forces and armaments, and (c) that they were to include atomic weapons as well as conventional armaments in the same scheme. The control of atomic energy and the prohibition of atomic weapons were to be dealt with on the basis of the United Nations plan unless and until a better one was devised.

The tripartite proposals were met initially by Mr. Vyshinsky's notorious comment that he "had not been able to sleep for laughing" at their inadequacy, and by familiar Soviet accusations about the aggressive intentions of the Western powers. Later, however, the Soviet Delegations produced counter-proposals which advocated: (a) that the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons should be embodied in a convention and enforced under strict international controls; (b) that the five major powers should reduce their armed strength by one-third in one year; (c) that, within a month of the Assembly's decision to prohibit atomic weapons and reduce the armed strength of the major powers, all states should furnish complete information on their armed forces, including data on atomic weapons and on military bases abroad; (d) that an international control organ should be established within the framework of the Security Council to implement these decisions; and (e) that a world conference to consider these arrangements should be called not later than June 1, 1952. The Western delegations pointed out that there was nothing new in Mr. Vyshinsky's proposals, particularly with respect to the question of inspection, on which they had already demonstrated that the Soviet position was unsatisfactory.

In the Assembly's Political Committee, to which these two sets of proposals were referred, there was general approval for the Western proposals but also recognition that little practical progress could be achieved without Soviet co-operation. When, therefore, a proposal was introduced jointly by Iran, Pakistan and Syria to establish a sub-committee, consisting of the representatives of France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the U.S.S.R. under the chairmanship of the President of the Assembly, to formulate "agreed proposals", it was unanimously accepted with the proviso that the sub-committee should report back within ten days.

The sub-commission met in closed session. Although it was unable to reach agreement on any major point of substance, except to replace the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments by a single new commission, its deliberations were amicable and businesslike, in contrast with subsequent discussions on this subject, and they achieved a moderate measure of mutual understanding. The meetings were also useful in furnishing as clear an indication as is available of the Soviet attitude on these matters. The Soviet Union is apparently unwilling to disclose any information on its armed forces as armaments until a binding decision has been taken by all the great powers to prohibit atomic weapons and reduce armaments and armed forces. It also insists that, without an immediate declaration of unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons, it will not embark on the establishment of a control plan. Under the Soviet proposals as discussed in the sub-committee, a binding decision on prohibition would be taken simultaneously with a decision to set up international control. Under this plan, there would be a period of indeterminate duration in which atomic weapons would be prohibited without there being any international control to ensure that this prohibition was being carried out. Mr. Vyshinsky admitted this

fact but claimed that the interval was inevitable and would be short. This is the "simultaneity" of prohibition and control as envisaged by the Soviet Union. It is true that Mr. Vyshinsky later suggested in the Political Committee that a compromise might be to proclaim prohibition in principle immediately and at the same time to state that it would become effective only when international control was established. This revised Soviet proposal was referred for further study to the new Disarmament Commission but there the Soviet Representative has so far refused to discuss this point in detail until the Commission first decides on prohibition.

The sub-committee having reported back to the Political Committee, the Western powers submitted a revised text of their proposals which attempted to go some way to meet Soviet criticisms. The Soviet Delegation merely submitted its original counter-proposals again. However, these proposals and other amendments by Czechoslovakia and Egypt along similar lines were decisively defeated in the Committee. The tripartite resolution as a whole was then adopted in the Committee by 44 votes (including Canada) to 5 (the Soviet bloc) with 10 abstentions (Afghanistan, Argentina, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi-Arabia, Syria and Yemen) and in the Assembly itself by a similar vote. The text of the final resolution is contained in Appendix 5.

The Disarmament Commission thus established commenced its work in March of this year in New York, where it has since been meeting periodically. Having agreed to follow the rules of procedure of the former Atomic Energy Commission, it embarked on a long discussion of its programme of work. The Soviet Representative insisted that the Commission should first decide in principle that all weapons of mass destruction should be outlawed and that conventional armaments should be reduced by a given percentage (perhaps one-third) of current levels. He persisted in presenting this issue solely in terms of the Soviet proposals made at the recent session of the Assembly, in spite of the fact that these proposals had in no sense been referred to the Commission for further examination. The Western delegations, while not objecting to examination of the Soviet proposals, maintained that they would be meaningless unless the Commission were at the same time to agree upon methods for putting them into effect, on which the Soviet proposals were deplorably imprecise.

Finally, an agreement was reached for a programme of work calling for simultaneous examination of the question of the regulation of all armaments and armed forces and the question of their disclosure and verification. Two working committees were set up, Committee One to deal with the first of these questions, and Committee Two to deal with the second. The membership of these Committees was to be the same as for the Commission itself and they were to function simultaneously.

It cannot be said that the Commission or its Committees have made any substantial progress up to the time of writing. This is partly because the Soviet Representative has confined himself to criticising the proposals of other members of the Commission and has declined to submit alternative suggestions. Another reason is that the Soviet Representative, by repeatedly alleging that United Nations forces in Korea are waging bacteriological warfare, has distracted the Commission from its proper functions. These charges, which have been much exploited by the communist press, were denied categorically by the United States Representative and were also refuted by the spokesmen of

other states contributing to the United Nations forces in Korea. The Soviet Representative nevertheless returned repeatedly to the subject and was only restrained when the Canadian Representative, who was chairman of the Commission during the month of March, ruled that consideration of these charges was not within the terms of reference of the Commission. This ruling was challenged by the Soviet Representative but was upheld by all other members of the Commission.

In spite of the lack of substantial progress, the Commission was able to submit on June 1 its first report to the Security Council in accordance with the instructions of the General Assembly. This interim report, which was adopted by 11 votes to 1 (the U.S.S.R.), describes the Commission's programme of work and lists the proposals so far submitted to it. The main proposals are as follows:

- (a) A working paper submitted by the United States entitled "Proposals for the Progressive and Continuing Disclosure and Verification of Armed Forces", which suggests a procedure whereby disclosure of information could be carried out in five stages; the information disclosed would be verified by an international control organ which would have to report the satisfactory completion of each stage before the next stage could be embarked upon; the same organ would maintain a continuing check, at all stages, on the information already disclosed.
- (b) A proposal submitted by the United States entitled "Essential Principles for a Disarmament Programme", which states in an expanded form the principles embodied in the Assembly resolution establishing the Commission (see Appendix 5).
- (c) A working paper submitted by France, the United Kingdom and the United States on "Proposals for Fixing the Numerical Limitation of all Armed Forces".

The first two proposals have received general support from members of the Commission but useful discussion of them has been hampered by their out-of-hand rejection by the Soviet Representative. By far the most important, however, is the third proposal which puts forward a "working formula" for establishing numerical ceilings for all armed forces with a view to avoiding a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security. It tentatively suggests that the ceilings for the United States, the U.S.S.R. and China should be the same and should be between one million and one and a half million; and that the ceilings for the United Kingdom and France should also be the same and should be between 700 and 800 thousand. For all other states having substantial armed forces it suggests that ceilings should be agreed on which would normally be "less than one per cent of the population" and "less than current levels except in very special circumstances", and which should be established with a view to avoiding a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security in any particular area of the world. This tripartite proposal was introduced to the Commission by the United Kingdom Representative, who pointed out that it would entail a much greater cut (about 50 per cent) in the armed forces of the major powers than would the Soviet proposal for a one-third reduction and would, moreover, apply (unlike the Soviet proposal) to all states having substantial armed forces.

Supporting statements by the United States and French Representatives emphasized that this proposal was intended to deal with only one part of a comprehensive disarmament programme. The Soviet Representative, after giving an initially cautious reception to the proposal, has since returned to the sort of purely negative criticism to which he has subjected every Western suggestion so far made in the Commission. Fundamentally, his position has been that any discussion on reduction of armed forces should be on the basis of the Soviet proposals. He has claimed that the fixing of numerical ceilings on armed forces is not a reduction but only "legalization of the inflated armed forces of the Western powers", that sea and air forces should be explicitly mentioned (this in spite of the fact that the proposal refers to "all armed forces"), that the proportions between the three services be fixed and that the proposal should provide also for the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, on which decisions should be taken simultaneously.

The Canadian position is that, in spite of the disappointing lack of progress so far made on the problem of disarmament, the Western powers must make every effort not only to secure effective international control of weapons of mass destruction and a balanced reduction of armaments and armed forces but also to convince both the Soviet Union and public opinion in general that this is their earnest aim. It is recognized that any real progress toward the goal of disarmament can be measured only by the extent to which agreement can be achieved between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. It is therefore Canada's main objective to bring about such agreement by any means which will at the same time safeguard national and collective security. To do this, there must be a balance of risks and safeguards on both sides and it therefore follows that no general plan of disarmament is likely to have any prospect to success unless it not only deals at the same time with both conventional and atomic armaments but also incorporates all three segments of the problem: a decision to prohibit atomic weapons and reduce armed forces and armaments; safeguards of disclosure and verification of information on such weapons, armed forces and armaments; and a system of international control to enforce the plan. In line with this approach, it has been the hope of the Canadian Government that the Disarmament Commission could be made into a working body rather than a forum. It is believed that the Commission can do constructive work if it concentrates on its terms of reference but that the quickest way to thwart that purpose is to indulge in mere propaganda. It might therefore be preferable if the Commission could restrict its public sessions as much as possible and do its work in closed committee. While international covenants should be made public, they may often be better negotiated in confidence, provided the principles and purpose of the negotiations have been made clearly known.

The Disarmament Commission, composed of representatives of members of the Security Council and Canada, which was established by the General Assembly on January 11, 1953, was instructed to submit proposals to be incorporated in a draft treaty on disarmament for submission to a world disarmament conference.

CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1952-53, pp. 21-22:

The Commission's second report was submitted on October 3, 1952. Discussions having failed to end the deadlock previously existing in both the Atomic Energy and Functional Armaments Commissions, the report contained neither recommendations nor conclusions. The Soviet Representative had continued

to disagree to all proposals introduced by Western countries and to insist that discussion proceed on the basis of the earlier Soviet disarmament proposals. He also failed to give any indication that the Soviet Union would accept effective measures of international inspection and control. The Western powers considered that without such measures any disarmament proposals were meaningless.

Notwithstanding this lack of progress, when the seventh session of the General Assembly discussed the Commission's report in March 1953 both the Western powers and the U.S.S.R. recognized the necessity of continuing its work. In Committee, the Soviet Delegation introduced a resolution which, while recommending the continuance of the Commission, accused France, the United Kingdom and the United States of repeatedly attempting to "substitute for the question of a reduction of armaments that of illegally obtaining intelligence reports on the armaments of individual states." This resolution was rejected by the Committee, which adopted instead by a vote of 50 to 5 (Soviet bloc), with 5 abstentions another resolution re-affirming the Commission's terms of reference and requesting it to continue its work. At the suggestion of Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, indirect reference to the destructive attitude of the U.S.S.R. in the Commission had been deleted.

At this time Premier Malenkov made his well-known statement that there were no issues between the Soviet Union and the United States which could not be "decided by peaceful means." The Soviet Delegation did not reintroduce its original proposal in plenary session but tabled two amendments to the 14-power resolution. The first of these, which dropped any specific commendation of the Disarmament Commission's work, was accepted by the Western powers. The second proposed that the terms of reference of the Commission contained in General Assembly Resolution 502 (VI) not be re-affirmed. The United Kingdom and the United States opposed this amendment as showing a lack of confidence in the Commission's work and it was rejected by a vote of 10 in favour, 33 against (including Canada) and 13 abstentions. The 14-power resolution as amended was adopted by 52 in favour (including Canada), 5 against (Soviet bloc) and 3 abstentions, (Argentina, Burma and Indonesia).

Premier Malenkov's "peace statement", the milder tone of the debate in plenary session, and the fact that the Soviet Delegation did not reintroduce its original resolution, have been regarded by some as major concessions. But there has been no real evidence of any change in the basic position of the U.S.S.R. on disarmament and, in particular, no sign of readiness to accept effective international control and inspection.

Extract from External Affairs Monthly Bulletin,
January 1954, pp. 22-3, 20-1.

On November 28 last, the General Assembly approved by a vote of 54 in favour (including Canada), none against, with five abstentions (the Soviet bloc) a resolution asking the Disarmament Commission to continue its work with a view to ending the deadlock between the Western Powers and the U.S.S.R. and requesting the Commission to report to the General Assembly and to the Security Council not later than September 1, 1954. This resolution, which had given rise to a prolonged debate in the Political Committee, had been sponsored by 14 countries which are, or will be, members of the Disarmament Commission. The Commission normally consists of the eleven members of the Security Council and Canada when not a member thereof. The Soviet Union was the only member of the Commission which did not sponsor the resolution.

The resolution approved by the Assembly suggests that the Disarmament Commission study the desirability of establishing a special committee consisting of representatives of the powers principally involved, which should seek, in private an acceptable solution -- and report on such a solution to the General Assembly and to the Security Council not later than September 1, 1954. This suggestion for private talks did not appear in the original text of the Fourteen Power Resolution and was added at the request of the Indian Delegation.

During the debate on disarmament in the spring of 1953, the Soviet Union had given indications that it might adopt in the future a more co-operative attitude on this problem. However, both in his opening speech during the Assembly general debate in the early part of the eighth session and during the discussion of the disarmament item later, the representative of the U.S.S.R. repeated his country's requests for the immediate unconditional outlawing of atomic weapons and for a one-third reduction in the armed forces of the permanent members of the Security Council. The majority of the countries members of the United Nations have up to now refused to accept the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons before the establishment of effective international control of atomic energy and unless there are clear indications that the Soviet Union is ready to accept the implications of this control, including inspection of national territories. A one-third reduction of armed forces is equally unacceptable by the Western Powers in view of the present numerical superiority of the Soviet forces. By putting forward requests which have been repeatedly rejected in the past, Mr. Vyshinsky made it clear that the position of the Soviet Union on the question of disarmament remained unchanged, even though the Soviet Delegate did not vote against the Fourteen Power Resolution but merely abstained.

In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly on December 8, 1953, President Eisenhower put forward the proposal that to the extent permitted by elementary prudence, the governments principally involved should begin and should continue to make joint contributions from their stock piles of fissionable material to an International Atomic Energy Agency set up under the aegis of the United Nations. The Agency would use this fissionable material for peaceful purposes only, experts being mobilized to advise methods whereby atomic energy would be applied for agriculture, medicine, electric power, etc. The President suggested that this proposal be examined during private conversations which might take place pursuant to the

General Assembly resolution of November 28 last which suggested that "the Disarmament Commission study the desirability of establishing a special committee, consisting of representatives of the powers principally involved, which should seek, in private, an acceptable solution -- and report on such a solution to the General Assembly and to the Security Council not later than September 1, 1954."

The Eisenhower proposal was presented as a measure designed to bring about East-West co-operation on one aspect of atomic energy, thus paving the way for a general settlement of all the problems of atomic energy including the prohibition of atomic weapons. Repeated efforts by the United Nations to solve this problem since 1946 have ended in a deadlock between the Western powers and the U.S.S.R. It is true that these efforts have produced the United Nations Plan for International Control of Atomic Energy which was approved by the General Assembly in 1948, but the Communist countries opposed the plan at the time and no progress has been made since then. The stumbling block in East-West negotiations has been the question of international control of atomic energy without which adequate safeguards against the use of atomic bombs cannot be insured. The U.S.S.R. has up to now shown no indication that it is ready to accept all the implications of what is regarded by the West as an effective international control system including continuous inspection of national territories and plants. As pointed out by President Eisenhower, his proposal has "the great virtue that it can be undertaken without irritations and mutual suspicions incident to any attempt to set up a completely acceptable system of world wide inspection and control".

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE
OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

On April 3, 1954, at the suggestion of the United Kingdom, the Governments of France, the United States and the United Kingdom requested that the Disarmament Commission be reconvened at an early date in order to pursue its work in accordance with the General Assembly resolution of November 28, 1953. The Commission held three meetings on April 9, 14 and 19. The Commission considered the suggestion made in the General Assembly resolution that a Sub-committee be established which would be composed of representatives of "the powers principally involved" who should seek in private talks an acceptable solution to the disarmament problem. At its third meeting the Disarmament Commission approved a United Kingdom proposal to establish a Sub-committee composed of the Big Four and Canada. The vote was 9 in favour, 1 against (USSR) and 2 abstentions (China and Lebanon). The Commission recommended that the Sub-committee should report not later than July 15. The Soviet Union had proposed that Communist China, Czechoslovakia and India should also be members of the Sub-committee but this counter-proposal was rejected by a vote of 1 in favour (USSR), 10 against and 1 abstention (Lebanon). The Sub-committee held its first meeting in New York on April 23. It was decided that discussions on substantive matters should be held in London on or about May 13. The representative from the Soviet Union reiterated that the U.S.S.R. was not satisfied with the membership of the Sub-committee and reserved his right to raise this question later. None of the countries suggested by the U.S.S.R. for membership in the Sub-committee are members of the Disarmament Commission.

The following is a list of selected Statements and Speeches which in whole or in part are concerned with the problem of disarmament, made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and others. Those marked with an asterisk are out of print, the balance are available upon request from the Information Division of the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa.

No. 48/52 CANADA AND THE REPORT OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

* A speech delivered by General A.G.L. McNaughton, Canadian Permanent Delegate to the United Nations, in the First Committee of the Third Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in Paris, on September 30, 1948.

No. 48/53 THE CANADIAN REPLY TO SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR DISARMAMENT

* A speech by Hon. Lionel Chevrier, Acting Leader of the Canadian Delegation, given in the First Committee of the Third Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, in Paris, on October 11, 1948.

No. 48/54 STATEMENT ON ATOMIC ENERGY

* An address by the Hon. Lionel Chevrier, Acting Head of the Canadian Delegation to the Third Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, at Paris, in the First Committee on October 18, 1948.

No. 48/57 STATEMENT ON ATOMIC ENERGY (II)

* A statement by General A.G.L. McNaughton, Canadian representative on the Atomic Energy Commission, at the Plenary meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations at Paris, on November 4, 1948.

No. 49/11 THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF ATOMIC ENERGY

* Text of an address delivered by General A.G.L. McNaughton to the National Executive, United Nations Association in Canada, at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto on March 12, 1949.

No. 49/26 THE SECURITY COUNCIL: REGULATION OF ARMAMENTS AND SUPPLY OF FORCES

Text of an address by General A.G.L. McNaughton, to the Institute for Annual Review of United Nations Affairs, conducted by New York University in co-operation with the UN Department of Public Information, at Lake Success, on Wednesday, July 20, 1949.

No. 49/40 THE PROBLEM OF DISARMAMENT

* Statement made in the Security Council, on October 14, 1949, by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the Fourth Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

No. 49/41 Statement on the France-Canada Resolution on Atomic Energy, made on November 7, 1949, in the Ad Hoc Political Committee by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the Fourth Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The following Reference Paper is also applicable:

No. 52 Reference and background material based on statements, speeches and reports relative to Anglo-American-Canadian co-operation in the field of Atomic Energy, November 18, 1949.

No. 51/47 DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS

* Text of a statement by the Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the Sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, on disarmament proposals, made in the First Committee of the General Assembly in Paris, on November 21, 1951.

No. 53/19 DISARMAMENT

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Canada to the seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. David M. Johnson, made in the First Committee, March 20, 1953.

No. 48/57 STATEMENT ON ATOMIC ENERGY (II)

A statement by General A.G.L. McNaughton, Canadian representative on the Atomic Energy Commission, at the Plenary meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations at Paris, on November 4, 1948.

No. 49/11 THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF ATOMIC ENERGY

Text of an address delivered by General A.G.L. McNaughton to the National Executive, United Nations Association in Canada at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto on March 12, 1949.

No. 49/56 THE SECURITY COUNCIL REGULATION OF ARMAMENTS AND SUPPLY OF WEAPONS

Text of an address by General A.G.L. McNaughton to the Institute for Annual Review of United Nations Affairs, conducted by New York University in co-operation with the UN Department of Public Information, at Lake Success, on Wednesday, July 20, 1949.

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