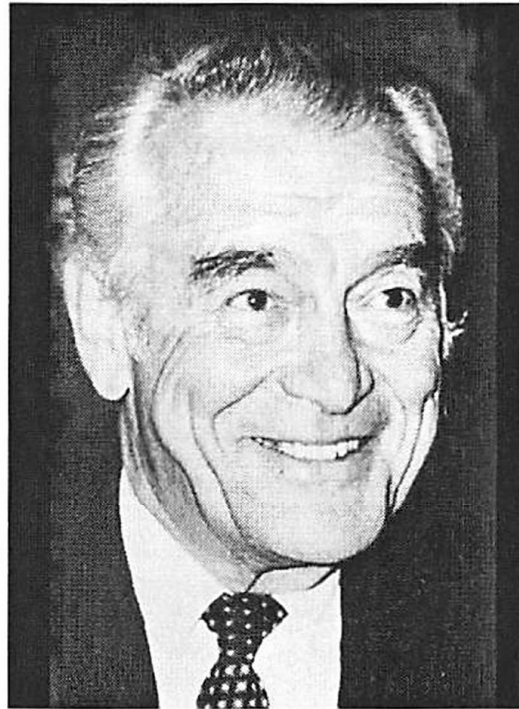


William Epstein

1913 - 2001

Bill Epstein once said he had been longer at the United Nations and working on disarmament than “anyone in history”. He was secretary of the 18-nation Disarmament Committee 1952-72, and was for many years director of the Disarmament Division of the UN Secretariat. He called that period “the golden years of developing détente”. His departmental head was always a Russian, and he said: “I got on with the intelligent Russians marvelously”. The author of six books on arms control and disarmament, he also drafted most of the statements on these subjects for U Thant when he was Secretary-General.



He was born in Calgary and, after graduating with a BA degree from the University of Alberta in 1933, he earned LL.Ds from both that university and the University of Calgary, and a scholarship at LSE. He served with the Canadian Army in World War II with the rank of Captain. He was called to the Bar in Alberta, but joined the UN Secretariat in 1946.

Bill Epstein was involved in all the negotiations for major treaties that have formed the

legal framework for global disarmament: the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty, the 1971 Seabed Treaty and the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention. He wrote the first draft for the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco that created a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Latin America. He was also a consultant involving the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty for the UN General Assembly in 1980.

Bill was a member of the Canadian delegation to the UN Special Sessions on Disarmament in 1978 and 1982 and to the General Assembly 1978-81. He was chairman of the editorial board for *Disarmament Times* in New York 1986-99.

In Canada, too, he played important roles in a variety of

organizations: the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Science for Peace, Group of 78, Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, Canadian Council on International Law, among others.

He earned many awards, including the Order of Aztec Eagle (Commander) from Mexico, the Pomerance Award for disarmament work at the UN; and the Peace Award of the World Federalists, and he became an Officer in the Order of Canada. Should disarmament ever become a global priority, the contributions of Bill Epstein will rank high on its honour roll.