



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



LIMITED  
A/C.1/PV.827  
22 January 1957  
ENGLISH

---

Eleventh Session  
FIRST COMMITTEE  
VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING  
Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 22 January 1957, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. GUNewardene (Vice-Chairman) (Ceylon)

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments: conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction: report of the Disarmament Commission [22] (continued)

Statements were made in the general debate on the item by:

Mr. Zabigailo	(Ukrainian SSR)
Sir Leslie Munro	(New Zealand)
Mr. Bernardes	(Brazil)
Mr. Thors	(Iceland)

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e., the summary record, will appear in mimeographed form under the symbol A/C.1/SR.827.

Delegations may submit corrections to the summary record for incorporation in the final version which will appear in a printed volume.

REGULATION, LIMITATION AND BALANCED REDUCTION OF ALL ARMED FORCES AND ALL ARMAMENTS:  
CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (TREATY) ON THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS  
AND THE PROHIBITION OF ATOMIC, HYDROGEN AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION;  
REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION (DC.83; A/C.1/783, 784; A/C.1/L.160, L.161,  
L.162) [Agenda item 22] (continued)

Mr. ZABIGAILO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): In the consideration of the most important problem of present international life, the question of disarmament, a matter of deep concern for all the peoples of the world, has exceptional significance. The people of the world are concerned about putting an end to the armaments race and creating the conditions which would prevent the recurrence of a new world war, for they want to achieve a better life and free themselves from the threat of new destructions and human losses.

The peoples of the world reject the road to war. This is why, with special **insistence**, they call for the conclusion of disarmament agreements. Only then will they feel free to breathe without the looming shadow of war. The Ukrainian people know full well what a war is and the warmest feeling of our people is to live at peace with other people.

The Second World War visited on the Ukrainian people, as indeed on all Soviet citizens, innumerable hardships. It caused tremendous destructions and millions of human losses. We have already healed the wounds caused us by this war which was unleashed by fascist Germany. But we realize that the imperialist forces which are so hostile to the cause of peace are hatching plans of attack against the socialist countries and the restoration of colonial rule over Eastern European countries. We are reminded of this with particular acuity by the latest events, such as the attack of the United Kingdom, France and Israel against Egypt, and the address of the President of the United States of America, Mr. Eisenhower, to Congress, when he called for a special Middle East programme.

As a result of decisive condemnation by peace-loving forces in the world, the aggression of Britain, France and Israel was broken and thus the extension of the war to other areas was prevented. Nevertheless, the danger of the appearance

of new military conflicts is looming again as a result of the plans for the use of American armed forces for the so-called defence of the national independence of Arab countries. In practice, this plan of the United States is nothing else but a new screen designed to replace the old one, and used to offer up the American expansionist plan in the Near and Middle East. We cannot pass over in silence these ominous events which make international relations more strained.

No government, speaking on behalf of the interests of its people, could avoid bearing in mind this threat to security. The Government of the Ukrainian SSR, concerned over the future security and peace of the Ukrainian people, has always sought effective ways and means which would prevent forever the repetition of the untold hardships which we have to bear as a result of two world wars.

This is why the Government of the Ukrainian SSR has always attributed, and will continue to do so, special significance to the question of a practical solution of the problem of disarmament, which we view as one of the fundamental problems before the United Nations.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR has studied carefully the documents which have been appended to the report of the Disarmament Commission, as well as the proposals which have been submitted to the First Committee by the Soviet Union and by the Western Powers. We have also followed attentively the statements of previous speakers. The proposal of the Soviet Union of 17 November 1956 was prompted by a spirit of good will and a desire to achieve success in negotiations. This proposal of the Soviet Union serves the interests of all the peoples of the world; yet, representatives of some countries attempt to belittle its significance, arguing that the Soviet Union tries to avoid any agreement on an effective system of control and inspection. These countries argue that the Soviet proposal for control is not sufficient and that it underlies the cause of failure of the negotiations. But none of the speakers who used this argument has found it necessary to bring to bear any evidence to support their contentions. This is not surprising, since no evidence of this kind can be found. It could not be found either in the outside world or in the documents of the Disarmament Commission, which documents we have studied carefully.

Representatives of the Western Powers have called international control the crux and the fundamental issue of the problem of disarmament. They view it as the keystone of any disarmament problem. And still, they refrain from stating what control actually means to them. What does effective control mean? The fundamental problem of control over disarmament, as interpreted by the Ukrainian SSR delegation, is to ensure that States which have assumed obligations under the disarmament agreement shall perform these obligations unconditionally and in due time. In other words, control should extend to the agreed measures of disarmament which will be embodied in the disarmament agreement. There is no question that the system of control must be adapted to the measures of disarmament provided. It must be closely interlocked with them; otherwise, control becomes merely a fiction. It becomes control in name and not in deed. If there is no programme for disarmament, disarmament cannot be controlled.

Thus, the first prerequisite of effective control over disarmament is its close adaptation to the measures of disarmament previously agreed upon. Furthermore, control activities should not go beyond the powers required to supervise strictly the implementation of the measure of disarmament previously agreed upon. Otherwise, undue extension of control, whether we wish it or not, can be a cause of suspicion among States. The very basis on which control rests is thus undermined and the whole cause of disarmament jeopardized.

Hence, it follows that the functions and powers of the control agency should be clearly defined and strictly limited to supervision of full implementation by States parties to the disarmament agreement of the obligations which they have assumed. Only if this prerequisite is fulfilled can a strict system of international control be established and operated.

This was the approach made by the Ukrainian SSR delegation as it attempted to assess the value of the various proposals submitted to this Committee.

We should like to explain some statements made by Mr. Noble, representative of the United Kingdom, by assuming that he has forgotten the past. The representative of the United Kingdom argued that the Soviet Union was trying to by-pass any system of control. He went on to say that only after several years of patient statement of position by the Western Powers has the Soviet Union finally accepted the principle of the necessity of a system of control. But let us recall that in 1946, at the first session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union proposed the establishment, within the framework of the Security Council, a system of international control whose function it would be to supervise the fulfilment by States of the agreement on the reduction of armed forces and armaments and the prohibition of atomic weapons, which would be the subject matter of a previous agreement.

The Ukrainian SSR delegation also deems it necessary to call attention to the fact that in all the subsequent proposals of the Soviet Union, a great deal of attention was given to international control as a means of ensuring fulfilment by States of the obligations which they may assume in the field of the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

As an example, permit me to refer to the proposals of the Soviet Union of 10 May 1955, 27 March 1956 and 17 November 1956. All these proposals are marked by a careful outline of the plan of international control which the Soviet Union deemed most effective. A study of the Soviet Union proposals convinces us that these proposals give answers to all questions arising from the establishment of an effective system of control over disarmament. There we find a close basic link between the measures contemplated for disarmament and the method of control over each stage of implementation of the disarmament agreement.

In its proposals the Soviet Union delegation has suggested for the first time the practical solution for preventing in due time a surprise attack or an atomic war. I have in mind the Soviet Union proposal dealing with the establishment on the territories of States, on a basis of reciprocity, of special control posts in harbours, in railway stations, on airfields and so on, which would ensure that no undue concentration of armed forces or armaments took place. Despite the fact that the practical significance of the Soviet Union proposal for control points should be recognized by all, doubts have been expressed whether this system of control check points would actually prevent sudden attack. It was argued that the Soviet proposal did not go far enough and that it was, therefore, not sufficient. Some representatives argued, for instance, that railway centres and marshalling yards had lost their military significance in modern warfare. There is a hypothesis as to how a surprise attack could be launched without concentrations at main railway centres, but we are not engaging in imaginative games here. If it is felt that railway centres, harbour facilities and airfields are not important for the launching of a new war, why, then, do we see so many countries, on the pretext of national security, building up those very installations?

In the Ukraine we have had a bitter experience which enables us to assess on the basis of hard facts the significance of the Soviet proposal, and we feel that it fully ensures the establishment of a system which would be watertight against surprise attack. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR believes that the establishment of this kind of control would be an important initial step towards the creation of conditions which would ensure a peaceful life for all the peoples of the world. If these proposals were accepted the peoples of the world could face the future in all serenity. It would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international confidence and would prepare the ground for a future expansion of the functions and powers of the control organ as and when the agreed disarmament programme was implemented.

The Soviet proposals on control are not limited to finding a solution to the problem of preventing surprise attack. They go further. They provide for the establishment of control over the elements of the disarmament plan -- that is to say, over all measures for the reduction of armaments and armed forces and for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons which would be provided for in the

disarmament agreement. Under the Soviet proposals the international control agency would have a wide ranging network of institutions. Apart from its central board, it would have special branches in the capitals of countries parties to the disarmament agreement, and would have in each of those countries a staff of inspectors selected on an international basis. The whole of this system, from top to bottom, should be set up ahead of time so that the machinery of control might begin to operate as soon as the States began to carry out the obligations which they would assume under the disarmament agreement. In its inceptive activities the international control agency would not have to grope its way. It would not have to waver and to seek ways and means through which it should operate.

The Soviet proposals provide that States parties to the disarmament agreement shall submit to the control agency full data on their armaments and armed forces and on their military budgets. Therefore, the control agency would have all the elements of the problem in its hands as soon as it began to operate and to supervise all the measures agreed upon by the States parties to the disarmament agreement in connexion with the reduction of armaments and armed forces and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, from beginning to end.

The Ukrainian delegation emphasizes the importance of the activities of this organ, and other delegations have also stressed this importance. It should be pointed out, however, that the control agency should, first of all, have a very clear-cut sphere of competence. Its terms of reference should be very clearly set forth.

As it turns to the Soviet proposals, the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR finds a very rational allocation of functions between all the elements of the system of control and, at the same time, a sufficient degree of power granted to these different elements to enable them to fulfil all the functions which they are called upon to fulfil. Let us deal with these powers. First of all, the control agency is given full and free access to data dealing with budgetary appropriations for military purposes, and this right to receive data is not limited to budgetary appropriations voted by the legislative branch of a Government. The control agency has also the right to go into details with regard to the manner in which the executive branch of a Government allocates the budgetary means at its disposal within the military establishment. Judging by the documents of the United Nations

Disarmament Commission it appears that much emphasis was placed on a financial and budgetary system of control, which was viewed by several countries as a very effective system. The branches of the control body in the capitals of the various States parties to the disarmament agreement would have the right to be in touch with the Governments of the countries concerned and to subject to searching analysis the information which they received from those Governments. That would establish a close liaison between the control body and its branches in the capitals of the Governments parties to the disarmament agreement. Thus conditions for a very smooth joint operation of the system of international control would be established.

Finally, an inspectorate is to be set up. The Ukrainian delegation considers that this is an important provision which would permit the control agency to keep a constant check on all the ways in which the Governments parties to the disarmament agreement fulfilled the obligations which they had assumed.

(Mr. Zabigailo, Ukrainian SSR)

The inspectors are given the power to ask for free access to any facilities subject to control, and to do so at any time. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR deems it necessary to deal with this question at some length.

As one can see from the records of the meetings of the disarmament Sub-Committee, the Western Powers opposed the Soviet proposal concerning the right of free access for the inspectors of the agency, on the pretext that the power given to the inspectors was not wide enough. The Soviet proposal indicated that the powers of the inspectors would apply within the scope of the system of control and only to the objects of control. An analysis of the argumentation used by the Western Powers in the Sub-Committee has convinced us that that argumentation was entirely groundless.

As regards the formula "within the scope of the control functions exercised", the objections of the Western Powers gives rise to the following question: In the last analysis, what is an inspector and what should he do? The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR believes that an inspector of the international control agency is an official sent to perform official duties on the territory of a given State. His functions are essentially those of supervision of the way in which a State party to the disarmament agreement performs the obligations it has assumed. The Government of the State party to the disarmament agreement must co-operate with the inspectors in the performance of their duties as official representatives of the international control agency. Nothing more is involved. It would be a tautology to say that the official functions of the inspectors could be anything other than the strictly defined functions of control conferred upon them. It would be an abuse of power if the inspectors were to attempt to extend their functions. Any inspector guilty of such an abuse of power would of course be the object of distrust by the Government of the country on whose territory he was operating; such a person could not be viewed as someone in whom confidence could be vested. I leave it to the imagination of representatives here to find a suitable description for an inspector who would act in abuse of his powers.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR is convinced that the Soviet formula is indispensable, because it fully meets the aims of control. As everyone here

(Mr. Zabigailo, Ukrainian SSR)

recognizes, the purpose of control is to enhance mutual confidence among States parties to the disarmament agreement.

I should like to deal now with the objects of control. In its proposals of March 1956, the Soviet delegation clearly indicated the objects which would be controlled: military depots, ammunition supply depots, naval and air bases, plants producing conventional armaments, and so forth. It is, therefore, proposed that not only the armed forces themselves but also their operational bases and sources of supply should be inspected. We should like to repeat that the purpose of the inspection is to determine whether a State party to the disarmament agreement is carrying out the obligations which it has freely assumed under the agreement. It would seem to go without saying that the inspection of such establishments as I have mentioned is sufficient to give the control agency a picture of the way in which a State is performing its obligations and to establish whether any violation is likely to occur.

Some representatives of the Western Powers say that the Soviet proposals do not go far enough, that they place limitations on the objects of control, on the list of establishments which should be controlled. We do not see how anyone could accept this view unless, instead of genuine disarmament, he sought something quite different. If that is the case, it would be better not to play "hide-and-peek", but to declare quite frankly here that these representatives were concerned not so much with control as with something quite different, as with a form of supervision having little in common with genuine disarmament.

We cannot accept at their face value the statements of some Western representatives to the effect that control should be extended to glass factories since in some cases glass is used in ammunition. If one carries the matter that far, one will end up by asking for inspection of chewing gum plants, since chewing gum is very popular among the members of the United States armed forces and is therefore essential to their morale. If we embark on such a course of action, we shall place the disarmament question into such a tangle that no efforts will be successful in putting it straight again. I take it that that is not what the Western Powers desire. Certainly, it is not what we desire.

(Mr. Zabigailo, Ukrainian SSR)

That is why we support the clear and well-thought-out proposals of the Soviet Union, which point the way to an effective and strict system of international control over disarmament. The Soviet Union proposals do not omit the important question of the measures which should be taken in the case of a violation of the agreement by one of the parties to it. Under the Soviet Union proposals, the international control organ would make recommendations to the Security Council concerning the means to be used to stop such a violation. These proposals are in full harmony with the United Nations Charter, which has placed on the Security Council the main responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I should like to call attention to another aspect of the Soviet approach to the question of control. The Soviet Union proposals and the documentation of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee which has been made available to us make it clear that, in the course of the discussions, the Soviet Union paid due attention to the position of the other Powers taking part in those discussions and consistently attempted to make allowance in its proposals for the views of the Western countries.

The most recent example of the way in which the Soviet Union takes into account the proposals of the Western Powers is to be found in the Soviet Union statement of 17 November 1956, in which the Soviet Union expresses its agreement to consider the question of establishing an aerial inspection zone on both sides of the line separating the armed forces of the NATO countries from those of the Warsaw Treaty countries.

(Mr. Zabigailo, Ukrainian SSR)

In drawing up a general balance sheet of all the questions of international control over disarmament, we reach the following conclusions. Firstly, the Soviet proposals view the establishment of international control as a matter closely connected with the implementation of all the measures agreed upon for the reduction of armaments and armed forces and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons. Secondly, the Soviet proposals ensure the initiation and establishment of control measures before the first disarmament measures are carried out. Thus, from the first step to the last, all disarmament measures would be under the supervision of the control organ. Thirdly, the Soviet proposals ensure the establishment of an effective system designed to prevent any surprise attacks by one State upon another. Fourthly, the Soviet proposals clearly define the functions of the control system in all its elements, and confer upon the control system wide powers which would enable it smoothly to discharge all the functions it would be called upon to perform.

The Western Powers have submitted their own proposals. The Ukrainian delegation has studied these proposals with great attention, and must note that they are far removed from the establishment of a true system of international control, although this term "control" appears in the title.

It is not necessary to take the time of the First Committee by considering such questions as the proposal made by the United States in the past about the submission and verification of data, because this kind of proposal has nothing in common with the problem of disarmament. Nor can the "open skies" plan be considered as part of a genuine disarmament programme. The chasm between this plan and genuine disarmament is really too wide to be bridged.

Let us deal with the disarmament proposals of the Western Powers which really bear on the question of disarmament and which were explained during the course of our present discussion. At a first glance, one can see that these proposals are characterized by a complete refusal to take any concrete measures for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons and for effective cuts in armaments and armed forces. The Western Powers would confer upon the control agency functions which go far beyond genuine questions of disarmament.

Let us take, for instance, the well-known proposal about the principles of control and the working paper submitted by the United Kingdom and France, which contained proposals on control. It will be seen that in these two documents

(Mr. Zabigailo, Ukrainian SSR)

of 21 April 1955 and 21 March 1956 the Western Powers are not so much concerned with finding the best way to implement the disarmament agreement, but rather with finding the most effective means to delay and impair the implementation of such an agreement. Under these proposals, the control agency would become, as it were, a creator of obstacles to the implementation of the disarmament measures agreed upon. So many conditions are established for the inception of concrete disarmament steps that it would not require much effort on the part of any of the parties to avoid disarming altogether from the very beginning of the entry into force of the agreement.

According to the proposals of the Western Powers, the control agency would be called upon to gather military information as a first step. One may well wonder whether the Western Powers do not want the control agency to gather as much information as it can and then, once this information has been collected and the concrete measures of disarmament are due to begin, to avoid any disarmament, to undermine the whole affair after the intelligence objectives sought by the control agency had been achieved.

Let us take, for instance, the United States proposals of 3 April 1956, contained in document DC/SC.1/42. It will be seen that according to these proposals the control agency will be called upon to collect information about the military establishments of the countries which were parties to the agreement, as well as information about factories, plants, industrial centres, communication and transport points and so on. As far as concrete disarmament itself is concerned, that would be postponed to the indefinite future. Judging from the memorandum submitted by the United States delegation to this Committee, it would appear that the United States abides by its original proposals and that, therefore, it is not making any effort to narrow the gap between the different positions in order to find a speedy solution to the disarmament problem. If we disregard the main problems of inspection and supervision over the way in which the States carry out in practice the obligations they have assumed under a disarmament agreement, then our negotiations about international controls will not lead anywhere.

In this connexion, I would draw attention to the proposal of the United States delegation for the establishment of a so-called international organ for the regulation of armaments. It should be noted that this is no longer a proposal to establish an organ of control over the implementation of the obligations assumed

(Mr. Zabigailo, Ukrainian SSR)

under an agreement calling for the reduction of armaments and armed forces and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, but an organ which would merely regulate armaments. What would such a proposal achieve, if it were carried out in practice? It would merely give the illusion that something was being done in the field of disarmament. In fact, however, the attention of the world would have been taken from the burning and urgent issue of disarmament by a fruitless discussion on questions connected with the establishment of such a regulatory organ. A new reason for delay and deferral would thus have been established. The labours of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee would thus continue to be in vain, as they have been in the past, and the question of disarmament would remain static. This cannot be permitted, but this is the true substance of the Western proposals.

In contrast to this, the Soviet proposals point the way to the establishment of a genuine and strict system of international control and open up the possibility of carrying out a genuine programme of disarmament. The Ukrainian SSR delegation expresses its confidence that the Soviet proposals will find warm support in the United Nations and from all those who, not only in words but also in deeds, are striving for the liquidation of the threat of a new war and for the strengthening of international peace.

Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand): During the debate on this item last year, the New Zealand representative made a very full statement of my country's position. This permits me to be relatively brief, for there is no need to repeat our attitude to old proposals and, indeed, the progress made during the interval between the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh sessions has been regrettably slight. During the period, moreover, the international atmosphere has deteriorated. It is true that the optimism, widely shared, which followed the Summit Conference in 1955 -- the so-called Geneva Spirit -- may have contained an element of wishful thinking. It may be that if current great Power relations are less friendly than they were then, they are at least more solidly based on the realities of long-term national interests and policies. It is nevertheless unfortunate that the great Powers could not take advantage of the better atmosphere engendered by Geneva to make greater progress in disarmament. The negotiations which followed the Geneva meeting proved clearly that a relaxed atmosphere and a spirit of goodwill are not enough. Disarmament will not come about until the Powers principally concerned are satisfied that an agreement on disarmament is in their long-term interests -- so much so as to make it worth their while to accept a fool-proof control and inspection system.

The Western Powers have always felt that a disarmament agreement without such a fool-proof system was unacceptable. In their view, with which we agree, an attempt to put into effect an uncontrolled programme of disarmament would tend to increase tension and would thus defeat its purpose.

The Soviet Union, it is true, has joined the Western Powers in accepting in principle the necessity for effective control and inspection. It has, however, consistently rejected practical proposals designed to ensure that the control is in fact effective. We are inclined to think, perhaps optimistically, that the Soviet Union is gradually coming round to the view that an international programme of disarmament is worth having, even if it entails the subjection of all the Powers concerned, including the Soviet Union, to an effective system of inspection and control. The Soviet counter-proposal on aerial inspection is perhaps a step in this direction although, as the representative of Belgium and others have pointed out, it is a timid step indeed. It misses the whole point of the original conception of President Eisenhower, which was to build confidence by opening the territory of the two great nuclear Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States,

(Sir Leslie Munro, New Zealand)

to reciprocal inspection. The Soviet counter-proposal of course excludes the territory of both countries, and to that extent at least its value is limited. We are glad to observe, however, that the Soviet Union has apparently abandoned the argument that aerial inspection is bad in principle and that it would actually increase tension. If aerial inspection of a limited area is a good thing, then a fortiori the inspection of larger areas -- areas moreover in which nuclear armaments are made and presumably are concentrated -- must have even greater value. In time, we believe that the logic of this argument will be accepted by the Soviet Union.

Previous speakers have referred to the long-standing deadlock in negotiations for a comprehensive and balanced disarmament programme, and have suggested that if progress towards an over-all agreement is not immediately possible, some more limited advance might nevertheless be made which would be both valuable in itself and which might assist in creating the climate of confidence in which a comprehensive agreement might be reached. My delegation has much sympathy with this viewpoint. Certainly we would not reject out of hand the view that half a loaf is better than no bread. But perhaps a word of warning is not out of place. In our opinion, an effectively controlled, balanced and comprehensive system of disarmament, universally applied, would automatically increase the security of all countries. This is not necessarily the case, we believe, with schemes of partial disarmament. To be acceptable such proposals must meet two tests: first, they must be subject to control, which includes on-the-spot inspection if that is necessary for purposes of verification, and which is equally as effective as that required for a comprehensive programme; secondly, they must not accentuate existing imbalances or create new ones.

My Government will carefully scrutinize all proposals for "preliminary" or "partial" disarmament with these criteria in mind.

Undoubtedly the "first step" towards disarmament which has the widest public appeal, and which would seem to be relatively the easiest to police, is the limitation of nuclear weapons tests. Early action along these lines would, we believe, be responsive to a world-wide consensus of public opinion which, while not yet fully informed of the exact extent of radiation hazards, is satisfied -- rightly or wrongly -- that such hazards exist, and demands therefore that a limit

(Sir Leslie Munro, New Zealand)

be put to the release of new radioactive material into the atmosphere. My delegation agrees with the United Kingdom that, in the absence of a comprehensive disarmament agreement, consideration should be given at an early date to the possibility of limiting tests outside the context of such an agreement. The proposal of Canada, Japan and Norway for the registration of nuclear test explosions with the United Nations would be a useful first step. This proposal, together with more radical proposals such as that of the Soviet Union in the first of its two draft resolutions, should be referred to the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, which should seek to reach agreement on practical steps within the coming few months. As the representative of Canada has pointed out, the Assembly's Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation can obviously play a useful role in this matter.

I propose to follow the example of most previous speakers in refraining from detailed comment on the new proposals advanced by the United States. I agree with the representative of Poland that these proposals are worded in very general terms, but I differ from him perhaps in that I regard this as a merit. Not only were these proposals presented by Mr. Lodge in a notably moderate and non-polemical speech, but also they are remarkably flexible. In short, they seem to us to offer a serious basis for negotiation. We hope that they will be accepted as such by the Soviet Union.

Useful suggestions have also been made by the representative of the United Kingdom. It is of course natural that we should concentrate in the first place on the problem of nuclear weapons and the terrifying new means of delivering them referred to in the United States proposals; but it will not do to overlook such relatively orthodox weapons as submarines, which exacted a terrible toll in two world wars and which have since been "improved" -- if that is the proper word in a disarmament debate -- out of all recognition. It is indeed remarkable that in all our long debates so little attention has been paid to what are now merely the workhorses of war -- ships and planes and artillery. We may recall from our experience between the two world wars that balanced reductions of even such orthodox items as these can cause endless difficulty. The suggestion advanced by Commander Noble for a study of the problems involved in the reduction of so-called conventional armaments may therefore be regarded as timely.

DR/rd

A/C.1/PV.827  
29-30

(Sir Leslie Munro, New Zealand)

May I say next a word about the means by which further talks on disarmament should be conducted. Various suggestions have been made. A formal proposal has been advanced by the Soviet Union for a special session of the Assembly to take up the question of disarmament. I must confess I find it difficult to understand the timing of this proposal. It is true that pressure of other events has forced us to deal with this important item rather more hurriedly at this session than is usual or desirable.

But the twelfth regular session is only nine months away. Nothing has more clearly emerged from our present debate than the recognition of the need for further serious negotiations among the relatively small group of countries which is sometimes described as those principally concerned. It is true that disarmament is in fact equally the concern of us all. It is equally true that there is a very small group of countries which can make or break the chances of a disarmament agreement. They have a responsibility which corresponds to their power. It would be illusory to suppose that any kind of majority in this Assembly can impose its will upon them. They must negotiate freely together, preferably in private. Nine months is all too short a time for them to achieve a substantial measure of progress; but if their efforts are crowned with success, the regular session of the Assembly will, I suggest, be very ready to put aside its other business in order to translate that success into a general agreement. I therefore feel strongly that this is not the time for the Soviet proposal.

Several speakers have expressed dissatisfaction with the role and composition of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee. My delegation would agree that the role of the Commission should be an active one. When New Zealand was a member of it during 1954 and 1955, we expressed our disapproval of the tendency to treat it as a cipher. We are glad to note that last year a full and vigorous discussion was held in the Commission and that one non-member of the Commission, India, availed itself of its right to participate. The lack of progress in the Sub-Committee thereafter could hardly be laid at the door of the Commission.

We find it hard to accept the argument that the Commission should have a substantially larger membership than the Security Council, the organ charged with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international security, or a substantially different membership. If an increase in the membership of the Council is effected, the Commission will also be enlarged automatically. There is, as I have already noted, provision for non-members to take part in its debates.

As far as the Sub-Committee is concerned, my delegation regards its composition as correct in present circumstances. To reopen this question today would cause, I suggest, unnecessary dissension which might make it difficult for the Sub-Committee to function effectively. In my delegation's view, the private meetings of this small body still offer the best hope of real progress. We look to it to continue to play a most active role.

The feeling of frustration referred to yesterday by the representative of Norway is, I agree, widely shared. It is accentuated when we hear speeches like that of the representative of the Soviet Union which, in long passages totally irrelevant to the question at issue, revealed a startling misconception of the temper of this Committee. With this exception, and a few predictable echoes, most of the speeches have been constructive and responsible. I would certainly include in this category the remarkable statement of the Chairman of the Polish delegation, far though I am from accepting all of his arguments.

Frustrated we may be, but I detect no slackening in the Assembly's determination to press on towards agreement. And this, after all, is only a reflection of the fact that the struggle for disarmament is an essential part of our struggle to preserve human civilization.

In the Disarmament Commission last year, the representative of Peru remarked that English is the language of understatement. I conclude, therefore, with an understatement notable even in that tongue: the struggle is worth continuing.

Mr. BERNARDES (Brazil): If proof were required that the problems of disarmament are among the most difficult and challenging problems faced by world diplomacy, a simple glance back over the work done in this field by the United Nations in the last ten years would be convincing enough. Millions of words have been spoken; scores of proposals have been presented. Having arrived at the present stage at the end of ten years of strenuous work, we cannot, in all fairness, but ask ourselves this simple but basic question: Is disarmament on a world-wide basis a possibility at all?

I would venture to answer this question in the following manner. Disarmament is a possibility today -- I stress the word "today" -- on a limited scale. If this premise is correct, we might introduce a new element into our thinking which might prove conducive to certain specific and practical results. We have perhaps been too ambitious in planning ahead for total disarmament. I contend that no country whatever could commit itself in detail in vital matters such as the one we are dealing with, five or ten years in advance. No nation or group of nations has the necessary power to ensure that world events will move in a pattern that will fit exactly within the plans of disarmament that have been devised beforehand.

Look at the state of international affairs only last October and look at it today. How can one devise a tight system of control for nuclear weapons when nuclear science itself is in the process of rapid development? The control, for instance, of a source of uranium today, may be rendered useless tomorrow, when some startling discovery makes nuclear fission from uranium a thing of the past. Some experiments being carried out and widely publicized in this connexion present a good example of the point I want to make.

It has also been ascertained that no control is possible over stockpiles of fissionable materials produced in the past. This fact today is an insurmountable barrier to an effective system of control and therefore to a total disarmament plan.

The formula I advocate and, with your permission, respectfully submit for the consideration of this Committee, could be phrased this way: aim at total disarmament but plan for limited disarmament. This principle would apply both to nuclear weapons and to conventional armaments. Since I have gone thus far and since I want to be as explicit and practical as possible in dealing with this complex question, I consider it my duty to put forward some concrete views on what should be the next step in a limited disarmament plan.

In our view the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee should, in this first stage, concentrate on nuclear weapons. The reason for this choice rather than conventional armaments is twofold. First, nuclear weapons present the most acute danger to the very existence of the civilized world; second, only a very few nations are today in a position to manufacture weapons of that kind. It might therefore prove easier to establish some system of control and inspection while the production of nuclear weapons is still restricted to a few countries.

Our first care, before we go into any blueprints of a restrictive nature should be the establishment of a system of control. That is the premise that one has to start from. A tight system of controls, tested and found effective, will have to be in existence before we begin reducing, restricting or prohibiting the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons. The same principle applies also to conventional armaments.

Not so long ago, eighty-one nations, meeting in this very room, devised and agreed upon a system of controls and inspections to ensure that fissionable materials intended for peaceful purposes would not be diverted to military ends. This system of controls is embodied in the statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which we all hope will very soon be in operation. We should concentrate our efforts to put this agency into operation as soon as possible and watch closely how the system of controls and inspection will function. If they do function effectively, I submit that a great step will have been taken on the road towards total disarmament.

Always following the idea that the best course to follow is to go step by step, we should not try to foresee exactly what the next phase in the disarmament problem will be. It will depend to a great extent on how the first phase, which in our opinion should be to test the system of controls envisaged for the agency, will be carried out. One should resist the strong temptation to try to plan in advance in every detail and to attempt to predict every possible loophole in an international system of controls and inspection.

In our view, therefore, the first phase should comprise three parts: first, to test the system of controls of the International Atomic Energy Agency; second, to apply it to the wider field of disarmament; and, third, to divert to peaceful uses all future production of fissionable materials. The second phase will follow in due course but should not be planned at this time.

The argument may be advanced that, if we deal only with nuclear weapons in this first phase, the situation concerning armaments of the conventional type will be one that may upset the existing balance of power in the world. I venture to submit that this will not be so. Classical armaments are bound to be used only in what one may call local wars. The big Powers, if they ever come to grips with each other, will make use of the more deadly forms of mass destruction represented by nuclear weapons.

If, however, the necessity is felt to couple certain restrictions in the nuclear field with corresponding measures in the realm of conventional armaments, I suggest that a ban on the export of arms should be considered in this first phase. This would render more difficult the waging of local wars or at least would make them less deadly.

It is perhaps a mistake to worry too much about the size of the armed forces of the big Powers at the present juncture. The more they progress in nuclear fission for military purposes, the more they will reduce of their own will the size of their armed forces, especially ground troops. No clear-cut directive seems to be necessary now for that purpose. If we do, however, establish a maximum limit to the armed forces of the leading nations of the world, we run the risk of creating the impression that they are abiding by the decisions taken in a world forum such as the one we are taking part in, when in truth they will be just following their own interests, with no great advantage to world disarmament or lessening of international tension.

I should like to say a word now about the banning of nuclear tests. It is impracticable today to legislate on this matter in a definite form. The same principle of limited progress should, in our view, be applied. The draft resolution presented by Canada, Japan and Norway seems, in this connexion, to be quite sufficient for the moment.

The more we know about radioactive fall-out, the better position we shall be in to judge what steps it will be necessary to take next. I contend that, once the effects of radiation are ascertained, the necessary measures to safeguard human life will be taken with the unanimous consent of all nations concerned.

These are the thoughts that my delegation wishes to put forward concerning the problems of disarmament now being discussed. We humbly submit these views for the consideration of this Committee and also for examination by the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee. We reserve our right at a later stage of this debate to express our views on the draft resolutions submitted for discussion.

Mr. THORS (Iceland): I speak here for a nation that has nothing to disarm, simply because we have no armed forces. You may, therefore, well wonder why Iceland dares to make its voice heard in the debate on this most important question of disarmament. The reason is that we are deeply concerned about the arms race that is taking place in the world today. We fear that this arms race may sooner or later lead to the outbreak of armed conflict, which would likely spread and could quickly lead to world war III, involving the big Powers and all the nations of the world. With the stockpiles of atomic and hydrogen bombs and all the other diabolic forms of modern weapons, it is all too evident what fate would then await mankind.

On the very day when Iceland first took its seat in the United Nations, in November 1946, the First Committee was discussing disarmament. We may have been naive enough to think that then something positive would be achieved. Since then, more than ten years have elapsed, and what has actually happened? Let us look calmly and briefly at the record. True enough, this matter has been treated in every session of the General Assembly during these ten years -- or rather, no treatment has been found possible since 1946, when the ice-cold winds of the cold war began blowing. No positive result has been reached. Resolutions after resolutions have been passed year after year -- a whole pile of often high-sounding resolutions. While the production of peaceful resolutions fared well, the production of armaments flowed also incessantly and ever increasingly. All kinds of armaments, from small ammunition to the most destructive type, those intended for individual killing, for mass murder, wholesale slaughter, to the point of complete destruction and extinction of huge areas of land and human life -- all kinds and all sizes of munitions are available, to suit any place and any congregation of human beings.

Today we are not only talking about armed forces, land, air and sea, and conventional armaments, but the most effective nuclear weapons stand out in terrifying potentiality. So do chemical and biological weapons, although such devices hardly deserve the name of weapons. We can now also add to the list such ingenious phrases as inter-continental missiles, earth satellites or projectiles entering outer space. These come under the category of long-range unarmed devices. Now that man has the means to destroy this planet of ours he is not satisfied -- other planets must be visited. Not only have the skies been scrupulously utilized; we also have submarines capable of underwater endurance of 15,000 miles, or so we are told, and we are told also that these submarines can be used as launching platforms for guided missiles.

All these almost supernatural developments have been going on while the United Nations has been debating disarmament for ten long years. No wonder the United Nations is sometimes called a debating club for big boys. But earnestly speaking, who wants this wild arms race. The United Nations was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, yet it has done nothing positive in this vital matter. Tension remains in world affairs. The burden of fear hangs over the life of every thinking man everywhere. The temperature in the cold war goes up and down. That does not make much difference so long as the cold war continues. There is still winter in international affairs all around us. Yet the leaders of the world talk about peace and the people everywhere pray for peace. The peoples of the world know that if the wall of armaments could be lowered and if tranquility and trust could be restored and could prevail among nations, enormous amounts of money could be made available for material and social progress in each and every land. Just think of all the welfare that could be spread to every corner of the globe if only a few of the more than \$100 billion spent on armaments every year could be saved for humanitarian purposes.

The reduction of national armaments could also make possible, on a permanent basis, the continuation and strengthening of the United Nations forces, which would become constant vigilant guards of peace and security all over the world. The armament race could thus be halted and every nation could look with confidence to the United Nations forces for protection and security.

The world has two roads to choose between, as has already been said here and will be said over and over again. One is the road of disputes, disagreements, discords and conflicts. This is bound, sooner or later, to lead to war, to ruin and to the extinction of civilization. The other road leads to peaceful co-operation among all nations under the dome of the United Nations. There is practically no limit to the prosperity and progress that could become the share of humanity if its leaders would agree to live in peace and understanding, and if the flow and fruits of human ingenuity and invention were allowed to stream forward like a flowing spring bringing blessings and benefits to generations alive and still unborn.

Now let us review briefly and realistically where this Committee stands in its hitherto academic discussions of disarmament. In December 1955, we adopted a resolution which recalled the resolution of 1954, calling for a further effort to "reach agreement on comprehensive and co-ordinated proposals to be embodied in a draft international disarmament convention". The resolution further expressed the hope that efforts to relax international tensions, to promote mutual confidence and to develop co-operation among States, such as the Geneva Conference of the Heads of Government and the Bandung Conference, will prove effective in promoting world peace.

We all know that since December 1955 the international atmosphere has deteriorated considerably, the temperature in the cold war has fallen, and international tensions have increased. But let us not lose hope. Temperatures go up and down.

The resolution of 1955 stressed many good and useful ideas. It was full of good intentions. The whole question was referred to the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission. The Sub-Committee met in London for about six weeks, from the middle of March to the beginning of May 1956. The matter was subsequently treated by the whole Disarmament Commission here at Headquarters for two weeks in July last, then thrown back to the Sub-Committee, where it has rested until this General Assembly began handling the matter.

Now here in the First Committee we have heard speeches by the great Powers. Despite some exchanges of accusations and counter accusations, there seem to be a few but most important aspects on which agreement is not so far away. These points are the following:

First: Some initial reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces, limiting the forces of the United States and the Soviet Union to 2.5 million men and of the United Kingdom and France to 750,000 men, with proportionate reductions by all other nations.

Second: Limitation of nuclear test explosions and their eventual registration as a preliminary step.

Third: Control of fissionable materials, and commitments to use all such material in the future for peaceful purposes exclusively.

Regarding all these points the main obstacle is still what kind of control is possible and acceptable. It is on this point where the crucial question of confidence among the leading Powers is decisive. That question will not be solved inside this Committee or through public debate. This must come gradually, stage by stage, and so must any agreement on disarmament.

(Mr. Thors, Iceland)

The main thing is to begin to take some steps, cautiously at first, and then to move slowly, and at last to walk briskly ahead. It is no use to claim all or nothing.

We now have before this Committee three draft resolutions. Two are from the Soviet delegation, the first one (A/C.1/L.160) about discontinuation of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons, and the other (A/C.1/L.161) is to refer all other proposals to the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, and later to convene a special session of the General Assembly on matters of disarmament. Then we have the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.162) presented by Canada, Japan and Norway to establish a system for registration of nuclear test explosions.

Whereas my delegation would be prepared to vote for the proposal of Canada, Japan and Norway, we consider that under the present circumstances, it is the wisest procedure and the one most likely to obtain some result to leave the matter in the hands of the big Powers in the Sub-Committee on disarmament. Continued debate in the General Assembly, we fear, would only lead to continued controversy and even propaganda, and would hinder realistic treatment of the problem from its very roots. We therefore think that a special session of the General Assembly is not warranted, nor would it serve any useful purpose. Let the Sub-Committee handle these matters and present some positive and progressive proposals to the twelfth session of the General Assembly in September of this year. Any such proposals would be greatly welcomed by the General Assembly and we are confident that the General Assembly would be happy to give them priority on its agenda.

The fact is clear that the question of disarmament rests with the big Powers. They have been spending their money to build up their armaments to the point of ingenuity and even at the risk of financial exhaustion, at the cost of great sacrifice in conditions of life, of facilities and of enjoyment of their peoples. The big Powers are the parties in the fantastic arms race, causing anxiety and fear to all the nations of the world.

(Mr. Thors, Iceland)

Of course, we are told that all these dreadful armaments are only for defensive purposes. But have we not been told that all the wars in history have been started for the defence of the real aggressor. In our opinion, the danger of war grows as the weapons heap up. When the toys pile up, does not the child want to throw them around? And how easy it is to reach anyone in our small world. Around the world in forty-five hours today. Tomorrow even shorter.

It is clear that the great Powers have the responsibility in this matter and they dominate the destiny of the human race. We the small nations can do nothing. In the free world, and particularly inside the United Nations, we have the right, even the duty, to speak our minds. We now ask the great Powers to get down to business and to take the first steps toward essential disarmament, for which the world has anxiously been waiting for more than ten years. The responsibility of the leaders of the world is grave and great for history and for the present and coming generations. Theirs is the power. Let us hope theirs will also be the glory, and as Abraham Lincoln has said: "We cannot escape history".

Instead of adopting many resolutions once again at this session of the General Assembly, let us only adopt one resolution of mind, which tacitly claims: There shall be disarmament.

The price of peace, of which President Eisenhower spoke so inspiringly in his great and magnanimous speech yesterday, can only be but a trifle compared with the horrors and destruction of war.

Let us hope that all the nations of the world are willing, and prefer, to pay the price of peace.

The CHAIRMAN: I have on the list for today the name of the representative of Australia. Unfortunately he was unable to be present. In the circumstances, we will hear him at a later meeting. But before adjourning the meeting, I desire to make a short statement.

As members of the Committee are aware, the discussion on this item began on the 14th of this month. It was then confidently hoped that we would conclude the general debate here in the course of this week. But due to conditions completely out of our control, the debate has had to be continued. As the Committee is aware, the work was interrupted because of plenary meetings of the General Assembly, and also because of the Security Council meeting. Nobody is to blame for the situation. Reasons beyond our control compelled us to go on in this manner.

However, it is necessary that the general debate should be concluded by the end of this week. No meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow. As the Committee is aware, an important meeting of the Security Council has been fixed for tomorrow in order to consider the Kashmir question. The Security Council must necessarily get priority, discussing as it does such an important issue. But even otherwise, it would be impossible to have a meeting of this Committee tomorrow since all the speakers who are on the list for tomorrow are taking part in the discussion in the Security Council.

In the circumstances, no meeting will be scheduled for tomorrow. However, if for some reason or other the Security Council should adjourn early enough for us to have a meeting, I trust that the members of this Committee would be ready to meet at very short notice. For the same reason, no meeting has been scheduled for Friday, because it is quite likely that the discussion in the Security Council may go on until Friday. But at any time that the Security Council finishes the work for the day, members of course may be notified of a meeting of the Political Committee, and I trust that the members of the Committee will co-operate, although it may be inconvenient, in order that the discussion on this item may be concluded.

The position therefore is that although there are no meetings of the Political Committee fixed for Thursday and Friday, the members of the Committee must be in readiness for a meeting at short notice. On Friday it may even be an afternoon session or perhaps an evening session, because it is desirable that

AW/mm

A/C.1/PV.827  
49-50

(The Chairman)

we should conclude the general debate, even if it is on Saturday. Members of the Committee, I trust, will be ready to meet even on Saturday if the eventuality demands it. I have no doubt that all members of the Committee will co-operate to bring the general debate to a close soon.

As the members of the Committee know, there are other important items to be considered and if we cannot conclude early enough, we will find ourselves in difficulty with regard to the timetable. The Chairman has tried his very best to accommodate all speakers and now the time has come for us to accommodate ourselves to the work we have ahead of us.

Mr. MOCH (France) (interpretation from French): In the first place, I should like to know how many speakers remain on the list for the general debate. Furthermore, I should like to know whether we could not schedule a night meeting for Thursday, 24 January, in order to end the debate. I do not think that the general debate should take up more than one more meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: We still have six speakers on the list and I think that the suggestion of a night meeting on Thursday is a welcome one, provided the Security Council does not hold a meeting at that time. In the latter event, of course, the Committee will meet on Friday.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) (interpretation from French): I wish to put a question on a matter regarding which I have some doubts. I quite appreciate the fact that we cannot hold a meeting tomorrow as the Security Council is ~~scheduled~~ to meet morning and afternoon, but why is it impossible to arrange a meeting for Thursday on the understanding, of course, that if the Security Council's debate does not end tomorrow evening and the Council decides to meet on Thursday morning, the meeting of this Committee could be cancelled. I do not see that any other obstacle would be encountered in scheduling meetings of this Committee for Thursday morning and afternoon, 24 January.

The CHAIRMAN: For the simple reason that, on the list of speakers for our next meeting appears the name of the representative of India and, therefore, it would be obviously impossible for the Committee to hold a meeting in the circumstances.

If there are no further observations, the meeting is adjourned until further notice.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.

