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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 15 January 1957, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. BELAUNDE

(Peru)

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. Noble (United Kingdom)

Mr. van Langenhove (Belgium)

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PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I have studied attentively the suggestions made by the representative of Greece at our meeting yesterday and in connexion therewith I should like to make the following remarks.

I do not feel that it would necessarily help us in our work if we were to study two subjects simultaneously. Apparently that method has never been followed in the General Assembly; therefore, we could scarcely invoke past experience to support such a procedure. Personally, I believe that it might cause confusion if we were to undertake the discussion of two subjects simultaneously. Furthermore, it sometimes happens that a change in the personnel of delegations is required when a different subject is brought up. Psychologically, the success of our work is centred on the fact that a delegation is concentrating its efforts on solving one problem and should not, therefore, be asked -- nor should the Chairman be asked -- to divide its attention. The concentration of attention on one item, obviously, will redound to the benefit of the Committee in reaching a solution of such problem.

I also feel impelled to say that it is the duty of the Chair to see that the work of the Committee is carried out with efficiency and that each delegation should be given time to study each subject before the Committee. In that respect I entirely agree with the representative of Greece and I shall spare no effort to see that all subjects are given due attention. It is desirable that the Chair should have the benevolent co-operation of all representatives so that our work may proceed rapidly and efficiently. If it should become necessary to call a night meeting or a Saturday meeting -- which would be an extraordinary procedure -- the Chair, with the agreement of the Committee, would be obliged to take such measures. But the Chair cannot take such measures now; it would be premature. What would be gained today, for example, by calling a night meeting if we do not have a sufficient number of speakers? But I can assure the representative of Greece that when the time comes in the course of the debate that it seems in order to accelerate our work in order to conclude such debate, a night or a Saturday meeting may be called. Obviously, in that case, the Chair would consult the Committee and, if the Committee so decided, would call a night or a Saturday meeting.

(The Chairman)

I am sure that the representative of Greece must now be satisfied with my reply to his suggestions. Of course, the most delicate point would be that of asking now that we postpone our debates and decide on another deadline for the Assembly then 15 February. This, of course, would have to be put to the General Committee, but I think that if we make an effort now that request will be unnecessary. If, however, the Chair is convinced, and the Committee feels, that there is not time between now and 15 February to conclude our work, I will definitely ask for a postponement of the deadline, but I am convinced, making a prudent estimate, that we can finish our work in time. Thus, for example, in connexion with the item we have before us, I realize, because of a remark made today by the representative of France this morning, that as very interesting proposals were submitted by the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union the oratorical inhibition, should I say, is not due to a lack of co-operation. It is not due to the fact that we are just desirous of holding our peace. It is simply the result of the fact that representatives have to have time to think and ponder these proposals, and then make known their views on the basis of careful thought.

Naturally, immediately representatives have made up their minds where they stand I am convinced that members of the Committee will ask to have their names put on the speakers list and that speeches which will illuminate our debates will be pronounced. I am sure that I and those who are co-operating with me are correct when we say that by 24 or 25 January we might consider the debate on this question wound up, all the more so since there seems to be an agreement -- and this was requested by a number of delegations -- that we send the entire matter, with recommendations, to the Sub-Committee.

That would leave us a week for the Algerian question, a week for the Cyprus question and a few days or a week for the West Irian question.

This, I think, replies to the suggestions and questions of the representative of Greece.

Mr. CARAYANNIS (Greece): On behalf of my delegation I should like to thank the Chairman for his explanations and to express the hope that, under his wise guidance, we shall be able to have a full discussion of all items. In particular, we have been satisfied to hear that if that is not possible the Chairman will seek a postponement of the finishing date of the session.

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 [Agenda item 22] (continued)

Mr. NOBLE (United Kingdom): I speak as a newcomer to these disarmament discussions, but I know how complicated a subject it is. I have listened with interest to the speeches of my American and Soviet colleagues, and I look forward to listening to other authorities such as M. Jules Moch who has devoted years of study to this problem. I also look forward to hearing the views of those countries whose representatives are able to take part in the disarmament discussions this year for the first time.

The people of the United Kingdom know full well the horrors of modern warfare. They want peace, a secure peace, and I can assure my colleagues in all sincerity that I stand ready to do everything in my power to advance the cause we all have at heart -- the removal of the threat of war and the reduction of the burden of arms.

Anyone who is not conversant with those problems could not be disappointed by the meagre progress that has been made during the last ten years. Yet it would be naive to expect that problems which so directly affect the vital interests of States can be easily resolved. It would be even more naive to expect them to be quickly resolved in the atmosphere of the cold war. Disarmament requires trust. Without at least a modicum of trust, it is difficult to believe that any agreement will ever be signed and even more difficult to believe that, if signed, it would long endure. We must press on with our discussions. And we must hope that progress in these discussions will in itself be a factor contributing to increased trust and confidence between States. But we cannot, if we are sincere, launch disarmament proposals that fail to take account of the state of the world in which we live.

(Mr. Noble, United Kingdom)

Despite the complexity of the problem, there are I feel certain causes for encouragement. It seems to me that since the middle of 1955 something more hopeful has come into the disarmament discussions. It is as if the different participants in the five-Power disarmament Sub-Committee were at long last on the same wavelength. Differences of view still exist. Occasionally there are lapses into the crude vocabulary of the cold war. The representative of the USSR gave us an example of this yesterday, and I fully support the ruling of our Chairman that this is not the occasion for that sort of invective. I only hope that, having got it off his chest, the Soviet representative will now discuss, to use his own words, "calmly and in a businesslike manner" (A/C.1/PV.821, p. 18-20), the various disarmament proposals before us.

Nonetheless, progress in certain fields is noticeable. For example, after years of dispute there is now general agreement amongst the members of the disarmament Sub-Committee on the levels to which the armed forces of the great Powers should be reduced in the first phase of a disarmament plan. It is encouraging to think that there need be no more disputes over this particular point, at any rate.

Again, there has been some advance towards an understanding on the objectives of nuclear disarmament. It is encouraging that during the more recent talks there has been no repetition of the slogan "ban the bomb", which used to be repeated as if it were some magic formula for disarmament. There is now a more realistic recognition that our objectives are to prevent a world-wide nuclear arms race, to guard the health of this and future generations from radiation hazards, and to hasten the day when nuclear material can be safely devoted throughout the world to peaceful purposes only.

There is, however, one feature of the latest Soviet proposals which puzzles me in this connexion, and the Soviet Union representative's speech yesterday did nothing to clarify the position. Point (ii) of the proposals of 17 November 1956 talks of the complete destruction of nuclear stockpiles and the withdrawal of these weapons from national armaments. Yet I find in the Soviet proposals of 10 May 1955 the assertion that:

"there are possibilities beyond the reach of international control ... for organizing the clandestine manufacture of atomic and hydrogen weapons". (DC/71, Annex 15, page 18)

These proposals also say that, even if there is a formal agreement on international control, States might be able to retain or accumulate stocks of nuclear weapons. Now, if that is true, I cannot help asking myself whether the Soviet Union Government itself would be willing to destroy all its own nuclear weapons on the basis of a bare assertion by the United States or United Kingdom Government that the nuclear stockpiles in the United States or the United Kingdom had been destroyed. It is this problem, and not any retreats by the Western Powers, that is responsible for the slow progress made on nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Noble, United Kingdom)

It would certainly help us if the Soviet Union representative would explain exactly how much control can, in his view, be effectively attained in the nuclear field -- as regards both past and future production of fissionable material and nuclear weapons. If he will do this, we shall stand much more chance of achieving a common wavelength on this question, too.

In the field of control, it is also possible to record some progress during 1956. I was greatly puzzled yesterday by the Soviet Union representative's statement that the Soviet Union Government had been the first to make proposals about international control. A study of the records had brought me to precisely the opposite conclusion. After years of patient exposition by the Western Powers of their own positions, and after repeated questioning of the obscurities of the Soviet position, it appears that the Soviet Union Government has acknowledged that no disarmament treaty will be worthwhile without an effective international control system, that the control organization must be recruited and in position before disarmament actually begins, and that it must have access to the objects of control throughout the whole disarmament process.

It appears that the Soviet Union Government is now even prepared to visualize the control organization's possessing an aerial component. But I hesitate to state anything definite on this, because it is only six months since Mr. Gromyko was dismissing the whole idea of aerial inspection as having nothing whatever to do with disarmament, and because the passage on aerial inspection in the Soviet proposals of 17 November is so hedged round with limitations and obscurities. In these proposals, the Soviet Union Government speaks of being "ready to examine the question" of aerial inspection in a limited area in Europe. Does this mean that the Soviet Union Government has in fact accepted the principle of aerial inspection as being a necessary part of an effective international control system? Further, would the introduction of aerial inspection in a limited area lead eventually to its operation on a world scale? I was sorry that the Soviet Union representative offered no clarification of these questions in his speech yesterday. I should therefore welcome most sincerely any amplification of the Soviet views on this and some of the other unresolved questions relating to the international control system -- notably the question of how the Soviet Union Government proposes to ensure that the disarmament control organization will not be afflicted by the veto problems which have so often frustrated the Security Council.

There is one other area in which some advance has been made since disarmament was last discussed in the General Assembly. At that time, my delegation played a leading part in directing the Assembly's attention to the two alternative approaches that might be made to this problem -- that is to say, through a comprehensive disarmament plan providing for all the conventional and nuclear disarmament that can be controlled, or through a partial plan providing for all the measures of adequately safeguarded disarmament that are feasible in present conditions. Both of these approaches were mentioned in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1955.

It appears that, when the Disarmament Commission reviewed, last July, the interim report of the work done in the Sub-Committee in the Spring of 1956, there was a definite shift of opinion in favour of seeking some limited approach which would enable disarmament to get under way. This was noticeable in the speeches of the Yugoslav and other representatives.

I should like to confirm now that my Government stands ready to participate in a plan of either type. We still feel that the Anglo-French plan, as revised and amplified on 19 March 1956 -- the text will be found in Annex 2 of the Sub-Committee's third report to the Disarmament Commission -- provides the best outline yet conceived of comprehensive disarmament, both conventional and nuclear. It shows how this could be carried out in stages under an effective and expanding control system. It also relates disarmament -- as any realistic plan must do -- to efforts to reduce international tension. The late Mr. Vyshinsky said in October 1954 that he was ready to take the Anglo-French plan as the basis for future discussions of a disarmament treaty. In our view, it remains the best guide to a full-scale disarmament programme. I would also call my colleagues' attention to Annex VIII of the third report of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, which describes in detail the kind of control organization which would be relevant to such a plan.

On the other hand, if there is strong feeling that we should seek some simpler way of getting disarmament started, the United Kingdom would be glad to explore all the possibilities. We should only wish to underline two conditions.

First, even a partial disarmament plan must be accompanied by agreement on a control system adequate to ensure the carrying out by all States of the obligations laid down in the plan.

Secondly, under such a plan, if it is to be applied in the near future, States cannot be expected to deprive themselves of the weapons on which they rely most to deter aggressors. A start in disarmament can undoubtedly be made in the world as it is today and I think the Soviet representative greatly exaggerated the dilemma of the chicken and the egg. But for full-scale reductions in both conventional and nuclear armaments, it is necessary to rely on a comprehensive plan such as the Anglo-French plan which makes provision for disarmament and progress in removing political tensions to develop step by step.

The new United States proposals which were outlined to us on 14 January were a most interesting, fresh attempt to find a limited approach to the disarmament problem and my Government will give them sympathetic and intensive consideration.

It is obviously difficult in a Committee as large as this to make rapid progress on such technical and complicated questions. That is why the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee exist. Detailed discussions can clearly be much more beneficially carried on in these bodies, and my Government recently informed the Soviet Government that we hope they will agree that the discussions in the disarmament Sub-Committee should be resumed soon.

Perhaps in fact, the most useful task we can perform in this discussion is to clarify the questions to which we believe the Disarmament Sub-Committee should turn its attention in 1957. In this connexion, I would like to offer the following practical suggestions to the Committee on behalf of my Government. I have three points in mind -- conventional armaments, experiments in control and the problem of nuclear test explosions.

First, having agreed on the force levels to be achieved at the end of the first stage of reductions, the disarmament Sub-Committee might now turn to the question of reductions in conventional armaments. The United Kingdom delegation introduced a paper on this question on 21 May 1954. We suggested at that time that efforts should be made to agree on which weapons should be prohibited and which should be limited under a disarmament treaty. The matter has never yet been discussed in detail. Yet it is obvious that reductions in military manpower without reductions in weapons would give no security. Likewise, measures to limit or prohibit nuclear weapons without limitation on and controls over conventional weapons would give no security.

Under the Anglo-French plan, the production and use of nuclear weapons would eventually be banned. Doubtless, all weapons of mass destruction including chemical and biological weapons would be similarly prohibited in any disarmament agreement based on the Anglo-French plan. But there are other instruments of war, not necessarily in the nuclear category, which are scarcely less menacing than nuclear weapons themselves. The United States Government now proposes that the development of vehicles entering outer-space should be internationally supervised and that these projectiles should be devoted exclusively to scientific and peaceful ends. This would mean, in fact, the banning -- provided an adequate control system can be agreed -- of inter-continental ballistic missiles. The United Kingdom agrees that this question should be urgently studied.

I vividly recall the occasion in 1946 when, through the courtesy of the United States Government, I was an official observer at the explosion of two atomic bombs at Bikini Atoll. Who would have thought that the explosions I saw then would, within ten years, have been superseded by such new and immensely powerful weapons that they would be technically completely out of date. Incidentally, the name of that atoll has now acquired a sartorial rather than an atomic significance. But, in all seriousness, there was a moment in 1945 and 1946 when united action might have prevented the whole development of atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons. We missed that moment to our cost. Today however, there may be another opportunity -- which will not long remain -- to agree on the banning of these new inter-continental ballistic weapons while they are still only in the development stage. We would be failing in our responsibilities if we did not face these facts and give this question the priority it deserves.

Another weapon of a particularly menacing nature is the long-range submarine. These are capable of underwater endurance of up to 15,000 miles. Further, they can be used as launching platforms for guided missiles. Such submarines are offensive and not defensive weapons. Clearly, a disarmament programme which banned the atomic bomb but left such offensive weapons uncontrolled, would give little real security.

Long-range ballistic missiles and long-range submarines are only two examples of the weapons that will have to be covered by a comprehensive disarmament plan. It will also be necessary to limit and control military aircraft, warships, armoured vehicles, guns of all types, flame-throwers, rockets and other weapons. The United Kingdom suggests, therefore, that the disarmament Sub-Committee should embark on a study of the problems posed by these weapons.

Secondly, the United Kingdom suggests that the Sub-Committee might give priority to resolving the outstanding questions of control. I have already alluded to some of these problems. We need not only theoretical discussions of this problem but also practical experiments. The Soviet Union's latest proposal for experimenting in aerial inspection in an area extending 800 kilometres east and west of the dividing line in Europe is, as I have suggested, a far cry from President Eisenhower's original "open skies" plan.

(Mr. Noble, United Kingdom)

However, the disarmament Sub-Committee might usefully search for mutually agreed areas where tests of control and inspection techniques could be made, including Mr. Bulganin's idea of ground posts at strategic centres to prevent surprise attack.

Thirdly, the United Kingdom suggests that the disarmament Sub-Committee should investigate the possibilities of agreeing on the limitation of nuclear test explosions, either as part of a disarmament plan or separately. The United Kingdom Government has made it clear that it would like to see limitation and prohibition of tests included in a comprehensive disarmament agreement. But it has also expressed its readiness, in the absence of agreement on disarmament, to consider the possibility of limiting tests outside the context of a disarmament agreement in consultation with the other Governments concerned.

This is still our position and we hope that the disarmament Sub-Committee will study this problem. We are aware of public anxiety about the possible effects on health of nuclear test explosions. In this respect the reports published last June by our own Medical Research Council and by a similar Committee in the United States were on the whole reassuring and helped to put in perspective the relative hazards from natural and artificial sources of radiation. None the less there is a problem which we should try and tackle for the future. We have been studying all aspects of this complicated problem in recent months, and we believe that the disarmament Sub-Committee should also consider it in the coming year.

I offer these practical suggestions to the Committee. I have spoken at length because of their importance. I hope that they will find favour with my colleagues and that, together with such other ideas as may emerge from our discussions, they will be referred for further study to the Disarmament Commission and the disarmament Sub-Committee in 1957.

Finally, my delegation will continue to play a constructive part in the search for a disarmament agreement which will provide peace and security for all nations of this world.

Mr. van LANGENHOVE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): It is normal for the disarmament debate to be initiated by the Powers belonging to the group of five States to which the Assembly has especially entrusted the study of the question. Our expectations in this respect have not been disappointed. Yesterday and this morning we heard long statements, the tendencies and the tone of which continue to be very different.

It would certainly be bold to take a stand on these statements before having carried out the thorough study which they call for. This is particularly true of the proposals made by the United States delegation, and this morning by the delegation of the United Kingdom, which include important new ideas and which will be developed, we are told by the United States delegation, during the negotiations in the Sub-Committee.

Thus I shall not presume to anticipate the study to be carried out by the Sub-Committee. I shall confine myself to presenting some observations on the present state of the question.

The debate on disarmament furnishes an opportunity at each session of the Assembly to draw up a balance sheet of the work carried out during the past year. This balance sheet is more and more necessary because the subject has become so enormous, so complicated and so technical that the number of people who can master it is constantly growing less.

The study of the question is carried out mainly in the Sub-Committee made up of the five Powers which play the principle role in this question. The Sub-Committee holds closed meetings. When, after a few months of deliberations, it breaks off its work, the mass of memoranda and records is heaped up on the table of the Disarmament Commission. Last year, the Disarmament Commission deliberated on these matters in its turn. The report which finally reaches the Assembly takes the form of a simple list of documents, and at this time this is the basis of our discussion in the First Committee.

It may be understood in these circumstances that the layman may lose his footing and that all he can do is to attempt to grasp the essential elements of the problem. Although I have had the honour of sitting on the Disarmament Commission during these last two years, my contribution to the present discussion will not exceed this modest objective.

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

The year of work devoted to disarmament may be divided into two parts: the first, which corresponds to the most active phase, continues until the middle of July. It was taken up by a long session of the Sub-Committee and a thorough discussion in the Commission. During the second part, the Sub-Committee did not meet again. The Commission itself held only a brief and purely formal meeting during which the report to the Assembly was adopted almost without debate.

This second part was, however, held outside of the Commission and the Sub-Committee by the statement which Prime Minister Bulganin addressed to President Eisenhower on 17 November, as well as to Prime Minister Guy Mollet and Sir Anthony Eden.

This statement has more than one paradoxical aspect.

It was made at the height of the Hungarian crisis and at the height of the Middle East crisis, that is, at a time of great international tension, which is not usually considered as being particularly propitious for making progress in the question of disarmament.

It was, moreover, drafted in aggressive terms, terms which were even threatening, with respect to its recipients. The feeling stirred up by the aggression of the Soviet army against the Hungarian nation was then at its peak. So much so that one could wonder whether this was not, above all, a manoeuvre designed to divert attention and to intimidate. However, the statement contained elements concerning the question of disarmament and it should therefore be added to the record, all the more so since the Soviet Government itself brought it to the attention of the Assembly and since, in their replies, the Governments involved expressed the view that it was within our Organization that that statement should be considered. The representative of the Soviet Union yesterday devoted an important part of his statement to that matter.

The programme, as the General Assembly's resolution laid it down in 1954, includes three essential and inter-dependent objectives:

First, the regulation, limitation and considerable reduction of all armed forces and all conventional armaments.

Secondly, the complete prohibition of the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Thirdly, the establishment of effective control through the creation of a control organ possessing rights, powers and functions designed to ensure respect for the reductions agreed.

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

As regards the first point, a rapprochement has occurred which would take as a first stage a reduction of the forces of the three greatest Powers to 2.5 million men, and this was confirmed yesterday by the statements of the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union and confirmed this morning by the statement of the United Kingdom. The representative of the United States pointed out yesterday that his country proposes to take this first step forward by setting up gradually and progressively a system of effective inspection concurrently with the reduction contemplated; and the representative of the United Kingdom has just proposed that the Sub-Committee devote its attention to the reduction of conventional armaments and the proposals of his delegation will serve as a useful basis for discussion.

However, it is in the two other fields, the fields of control and of nuclear weapons that the greatest difficulties have lain since the outset. These two fields are, moreover, connected. Of course the Soviet Union accepts in principle the need for effective control but it has refused up to now to discuss the Western Powers' plan dealing with the organization, the duties and the powers of the international control organ, particularly in the case of the discovery of treaty violations. It has accepted, it is true, the establishment of fixed posts at principal communication junctions, the inspection of military budgetary documents and visits to military establishments. The Western Powers rightly consider that this is inadequate because the Soviet Union plan does not provide for any control over industrial enterprises, which can work for defence purposes even though they are not supposed to do so and because the Soviet Union plan does not provide any control over stockpiles set up outside military establishments.

According to the Western Powers, disarmament should not only be carried out by stages but each stage should be made dependent upon the completion of the preceding stage and checked by appropriate inspection which the Soviet Union has not yet accepted.

Surprise attack has now become one of the most formidable dangers. The representative of the United States recalled that yesterday. To meet this danger, the Western Powers rightfully consider that the inspection system should include aerial survey. Until recently the Soviet Union had refused to consider proposals to that effect. Its declaration of 17 November, however, takes a timid step forward in this field. It does not object in principle to aerial surveys, but by

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

restricting such surveys to a zone of 800 kilometres, it provides for a limitation which removes the greater part of their usefulness and it is, moreover, an illogical position. If the principle of such surveys is recognized as a good one, why should it not be applied to the regions where it would be most useful?

Now there remains the field of nuclear weapons. In this respect, it seems that the Soviet Union adheres to the over-simplified idea which it has maintained for more than ten years, an objective expression of which is to be found in the draft solemn declaration submitted to the Disarmament Commission last July according to which States would assume a solemn obligation not to use atomic and hydrogen weapons. But such a commitment would obviously be only a symbolic gesture because it would lack all guarantees of implementation.

The Soviet statement of 17 November adds to the prohibition of nuclear weapons, as its earlier proposals had done, the cessation of production and the total destruction of stockpiles. But to decree such a destruction where it is impossible to guarantee that it will be in fact effective would be, as has been said, not only vain but dangerous. Nothing has better demonstrated this than the Soviet Union itself. It is not without interest to repeat the terms which the Soviet Union used on this subject in its proposals of 10 May 1955:

"...there are possibilities beyond the reach of international control for evading this control and for organizing the clandestine manufacture of atomic and hydrogen weapons, even if there is a formal agreement on international control. In such a situation, the security of the States signatories to the international convention cannot be guaranteed, since the possibility would be open to a potential aggressor to accumulate stocks of atomic and hydrogen weapons for a surprise atomic attack on peace-loving States." (DC/SC.1/26/Rev.2, page 18)

This is what the Soviet Union was saying in 1955. Now it is attempting to reassure us. It guarantees us that we can have confidence in the peace-loving spirit which inspires it.

According to its statement of 17 November, the military and strategic positions of the Western Powers in Europe were supposed to have been very much weakened at that time. The strategic position was supposed to have been more favourable for the Soviet Union, it says, than it had been at the end of the Second World War, a time at which its completely mobilized and equipped army could have become

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

the master, if it had so wished, of all Western Europe. If it did not do so, the Soviet statement of 17 November goes on, it was because of its devotion to the principle of the peaceful co-existence of States.

While it was studying this statement, the whole world was witnessing the Hungarian drama and it saw what the principle of peaceful co-existence means in practice. No one, moreover, could have forgotten that right after the war this principle had not prevented the Soviet Union from extending its domination of a large part of Europe. Thus, it is not unreasonable to think that if the Soviet Union did not make greater use of its military superiority and did not conquer all of Europe, the reason is to be found less in its peace-loving spirit than in the deterrent effect of the atomic weapon.

To ban the atomic weapon before effective control becomes technically possible -- and everybody acknowledges that it is at present impossible -- would be to decree a prohibition the implementation of which could be guaranteed by no one. At the same time this would increase the danger of aggression for, as I pointed out last year, if there was a potential aggressor we would be reassuring him as to the consequences of his act and therefore encouraging him to commit such an act.

Basic difficulties persist which it would be vain to deny. But it is nonetheless true that unless we can overcome them now an arms race is the only alternative. To prevent this, we must be convinced first of all that disarmament is inevitably linked to a satisfactory settlement of the political question without which the indispensable minimum of confidence could not exist. Was it not the Soviet Union itself which recognized this when, in its proposal of 10 May 1955 it noted that peace and tranquillity are conditions necessary for the implementation of a comprehensive disarmament programme?

While beginning to work out a comprehensive plan we must, as the representative of the United Kingdom has just said, accomplish without delay all the progress which is possible at the present time and this was recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution of 16 December 1955 when it asked that an effort should be made in the first place to carry out the measures of implementation which are possible now under adequate guarantees.

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

The proposals which the representative of the United States brought to our attention indicate paths on which we can embark right now without running into insurmountable technical obstacles. He suggested in the first place that an agreement might be sought under which at an early date and subject to effective international inspection all future production of fissionable materials would be used or stockpiled solely for non-weapons purposes under international supervision. This is no doubt an important objective, which seems indeed to be within the limits of what is presently possible.

The question of experimental nuclear explosions should be approached in the same spirit. Following the oversimplified method it usually prefers, the Soviet Union has merely proposed a pure and simple prohibition. Mr. Moch, whose outstanding competence and profound devotion to the cause of disarmament are recognized by all, has analyzed the various aspects of the question during the debates of the Disarmament Commission. He showed the complexity of these matters. Finally, he proposed the following: first, to request experts to propose a limitation in number, type and power on experimental explosions; secondly, to prohibit national explosions for military ends, but in close connexion with the prohibition and control of manufacture for military purposes; and thirdly, to authorize experimental nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, carried out under international scientific control.

The Western Powers, moreover, have provided that the disarmament programme, in addition to the cessation of the accumulation of stockpiles of nuclear weapons, should include at appropriate stages and with the necessary guarantees the imposition of limitations on nuclear weapons tests. As an immediate measure and as something preliminary one may consider, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway suggested, previous notification and registration of experimental nuclear explosions. Such a measure might lead to an agreement through which the nuclear Powers would impose a limit on themselves with respect to the volume of radiation caused by these explosions. These are proposals of limited scope, but practical in nature, the implementation of which seems to fall within the bounds of what is presently possible. It is desirable, as the representative of the United Kingdom has just proposed, for the Sub-Committee to devote attention to these matters.

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

Public opinion understands that the disarmament programme is not one of those which can be settled by hollow words and resounding declarations without practical scope and of a publicity nature. It realizes the complexity of this problem, and it knows that the political situation determines the solution of this problem. The same is true of the progress of modern technique, which may create new possibilities or bring out new aspects of the problem. For example, the United States Government is proposing here to include in our programme devices which go beyond atmospheric space, the existence of which recently was not even imagined.

The minds which are most sincerely devoted to the cause of disarmament have recognized the need to proceed by stages, each of which would be dependent upon the duly verified completion of the preceding stage and by the achievement of the first objectives as they become practicable. It is this realistic method which the Assembly recommended in its previous resolutions, and I am sure that it will wish to remain faithful to this method.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I am sorry to say that there are no more speakers on our list for this morning's meeting. Therefore, once more I am forced to make an appeal to the members of the Committee to speak now or in the course of this afternoon's meeting.

Mr. Krishna MENON (India): It is not quite possible for either you, Mr. Chairman, or any one of us to insist that anyone in particular should speak. On the other hand, those of us who come to hear about this question only at the meetings of the General Assembly are entitled to hope that the countries which have been entrusted by the United Nations to deal with this question in the interval between Assemblies will assist this debate by expressing themselves first. I am referring particularly to the countries in the Disarmament Sub-Committee, three of which we have heard and two of which we have not. We have not heard, in the remarks of the three speakers that have preceded, that the views of the remaining two will be identical with any of the views that have been expressed. Therefore, if this debate is going to be helpful, as we agree we would like it to be, so far as my delegation is concerned, in

(Mr. Krishna Menon, India)

order to assist it to make observations of as helpful a character as it can, if it were possible for the members of the Disarmament Sub-Committee and of the Commission to express themselves at an early stage of this debate, it would be helpful. I believe that this is a reasonable request to make.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): You have heard the request of the representative of India. Does any member of the Disarmament Commission wish to speak?

Mr. MOCH (France) (interpretation from French): If I correctly understand the representative of India, he has raised a question with respect to the representatives of Canada and France, who are the two who have not as yet asked to speak. I beg to differ because I believe that the right to speak freely has a corollary -- that is, the right to speak when one has something to say and one has made his choice. Therefore, I am sorry that I cannot obey the suggestion of Mr. Menon. I shall speak when I have something to say, and that is not at the moment.

Mr. Krishna MENON (India): There must be something wrong with the translation system because I made only a request in order to enlighten myself. This is not with regard to future use but in order that we might understand how the position stands in relation to the twelve months that preceded.

I think that I prefaced my observations by saying that neither you, Mr. Chairman, nor any one of us could decide these matters, but we are entitled to express our views and make requests to people. If a request is to be construed as an instruction, I am extremely sorry. I would also venture to think that if people did speak in the beginning and they had other ideas to put forward afterwards they would not be precluded by the Chairman from doing so. That has been the practice of this Committee, and that is the reason why I made the suggestion in all humility and without any disrespect to the representative of France.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): In view of the fact that there are no other speakers for this morning's meeting, I shall have to ask the Committee whether any representative wishes to speak this afternoon.

As there appear to be no speakers for a meeting this afternoon, I shall be compelled to postpone our next meeting until tomorrow afternoon, and I should like to ask the Committee to permit me to close the list of speakers at 6 p.m. tomorrow.

Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In view of the fact that this problem is an extremely important one, representatives apparently wish to use their time for preparation after having heard the statements of the positions of several delegations. It therefore seems to me that it would be a bit premature to decide to close the speakers' list at 6 p.m. tomorrow. I think we should leave the matter open and consider it again after we have heard other delegations. I would therefore propose that the decision to close the list should not be taken for the time being.

Mr. MOCH (France) (interpretation from French): On this point, at least, I agree with my colleague from the Soviet Union. I believe that the suggestion just made by the Chairman was a trifle premature. I presume that many representatives not only have to go through all the verbatim records referred to here, which are not the least important of all the documents before us, but also wish to have time, as I myself need time, to think about the speeches that have already been heard. We have to consult our Governments -- at least, many of us do -- and we have to await replies from our Governments. Therefore, I think it would be too early, when only four of the eighty delegations present here have been heard, to say that the list of speakers will be closed at 6 o'clock tomorrow evening. I think that the Chairman's suggestion might be raised at a later point. Personally, I could not go along with the suggestion as it now stands.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Naturally, I am always open to any suggestions by members of the Committee. It is, of course, up to the Committee to make the final decision. I made my suggestion in order to try to galvanize the members of the Committee into making speeches as soon as possible. But **if there is objection, as I see there is**, on the part of the representative of the Soviet Union and also the representative of France, naturally I shall be quite happy to postpone the closing of the speakers' list until Thursday. In due course, I shall consult the Committee on that date also. In this case, as in all cases, the Chair wishes to remain the faithful servant of the Committee.

Mr. LODGE (United States of America): Let me simply say that I think the Chairman has made a wise decision in keeping the speakers' list open a little bit longer. We of the United States delegation realize that proposals as far-reaching as those which have been made here require some time for consideration and consultation with Governments. I think the Chairman is correct in assuming that the lack of speakers now does not indicate any lack of interest. In fact, it may very well indicate the contrary.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The Chair is certain that all representatives will take full advantage of the time during which no meetings are being held so as to make the best possible contributions to our debate.

We shall meet again at 3 p.m. tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.