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on Monday, 25 October 1948, at 10.30 a.m.

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1. Discussion of the Belgian amendment to the French draft
resolution (A/C.1/SC.12/2)

Chairman: Colonel W. R. HODGSON

Australia

Rapporteur: Mr. de SOUZA GOMES

Brazil

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The CHAIRMAN recalled that at the previous meeting the representative of Belgium had stated that he had further ideas to lay before the Sub-Committee. These were now before them in document A/C.1/SC.12/2.

Mr. ROLIN (Belgium) said that at the previous meeting the Chairman had requested the authors of different proposals to try to produce a common text. He had entered into discussions with the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States and although the text now presented was not an agreed one, it was acceptable to them as a basis of discussion if it should be acceptable to the representative of France, who had been unable to attend their private discussions. The Belgian amendment was very similar to the French draft resolution. The first paragraph was the same. The second paragraph did not cite the USSR proposal for it was felt that reduction of armaments was an idea contained in the Charter and their efforts should be directed in accordance with the Charter. It was believed that the text should show the first step required to reach their objective which was to make available information on existing armaments. Clearly before a reduction was accepted it must be known whether the procedure would consolidate the existing proportion and if so, what that proportion would be. The question should be approached from the logical and not the ideological standpoint and no agreement was possible if there was no information available. The wording used was as precise and as cautious as possible. It was not stated that a reduction was not attainable but rather that an agreement could not be reached in the absence of information. As long as the existing proportion remained unknown there could not be any agreement upon perpetuating that proportion nor would there be a known basis for altering the proportion.

The third paragraph contained the idea which was accepted by almost all representatives, namely that an atmosphere of international confidence was a prerequisite to reduction. However the fourth paragraph presented the idea that the beginning of the regulation of armaments was an essential element in the establishment of such confidence and that the first step to that end was to lift the veil of secrecy.

The operative part of the Belgian draft had been taken in spirit if not entirely in letter from the Syrian draft resolution. The Belgian draft, however, referred to Article 26 of the Charter rather than to Article 11 because it was felt that the primary responsibility in this matter belonged to the Security Council and Article 11 referred to the Assembly.

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The following paragraph was comparable to the United States proposal but was more complete. The first step was defined as more than an inquiry. It was set forth as the preparation of concrete proposals for the machinery for checking information on armaments. If the Commission for Conventional Armaments was able to complete its work in time and the Security Council was able to discuss it, the next General Assembly could have concrete proposals before it.

The final paragraph followed the French proposal in inviting the Security Council to report progress to the next Assembly. Mr. Rolin added that he had not indicated during his remarks which parts of the text had actually been taken verbatim from the French proposal for practically all the provisions of the latter were reflected in the Belgian draft, which had the same spirit and made changes in form rather than in substance.

Mr. de la TOURNELLE (France) said that the French proposal was a constructive one with limited scope. It was not polemical nor did it make any accusations in connexion with the proceedings of the Commission on Conventional Armaments. The USSR draft resolution had contained such accusations and the proposals of other delegations had followed this lead. The French delegation however did not believe that this was the way to create the goodwill necessary for the regulation and reduction of armaments.

The French proposal was limited in scope and did not deal with the reduction of armaments but with the procuring of information and its verification. This information was necessary for any discussion of armaments. The French delegation had examined the USSR proposals critically but in a spirit of goodwill and had decided to submit counter-proposals. The USSR proposal referred to reduction by one-third without giving any reasons for the selection of this figure. The French delegation considered the figure to be of importance and although questions had been asked concerning the reasons for it, no answer had yet been given. In this connexion the question arose whether the USSR troops stationed in Byelorussia and in the Ukraine would be included in the general figure from which a reduction was to be made. The point arose because these countries were independent members of the United Nations. This question had not been answered.

The French delegation had been greatly interested in the statement made at a previous meeting by the USSR representative regarding the veto in relation to the system of control. It had been said that the veto would operate in the Security Council during the discussion on the

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establishment of the control system but that after the system had been established and control had been inaugurated, the veto would not apply. In this connexion the question arose as to what good the controls would be if, because of the veto in the Security Council, the activities of the control organ would be so limited that they could only make blindfold checks. If the French proposals were accepted, they would be in a position to receive information which had been checked. This was not the beginning of disarmament but it was preparation for it. The first essential was goodwill and by controlling information they would make a start towards international co-operation by giving proofs of goodwill.

With regard to the remarks of the representative of El Salvador concerning the implication in the French proposal that the work of the Commission on Conventional Armaments would not be continued, Mr. de la Tournelle said that this was not the intention of the French proposal. On the contrary by securing information they hoped to facilitate the future work of that Commission.

The Belgian amendments, which had just been presented, were largely acceptable. However, the second to last paragraph, which was based upon the French proposal, seemed to have watered down the original idea concerning the system of control. Consequently although his delegation could generally accept the Belgian amendment, they would ask the Sub-Committee to adopt the French text for this paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN observed that the Belgian amendment was less a proper amendment to the French draft than a complete text, which contained the French idea of securing information and added to it the Syrian proposal. Moreover there seemed to be a distinction in that the French text clearly envisaged a new organ of the Security Council apart from the Commission on Conventional Armaments. On the question whether Article 11 or Article 26 of the Charter was the appropriate one to be cited, the Chairman drew attention to the fact that Article 26 referred only to the work of the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee in connexion with the regulation of armaments. On the other hand, Article 11 stated that the General Assembly might consider the principles involved and make recommendations. Accordingly, the Chairman was of the opinion that the Syrian text, which referred to Article 11, was the more appropriate.

Mr. ROLIN

Mr. ROLIN (Belgium) said it was true that the French text proposed a control organ which would be different from the Commission on Conventional Armaments. However, the study for the establishment of this organ would be carried out by that Commission and consequently there was no contradiction between the French and Belgian ideas. The Commission on Conventional Armaments would present its proposals through the Security Council and Mr. Rolin believed that he had accurately reflected the views of the French and of other delegations. Secondly, Mr. Rolin felt that if he had put forward the Belgian text as an independent proposal, he might be accused of plagiarism since he had included the French ideas as well as a part of the United States proposal. The intention had been to reduce the area of disagreement and simplify their future work by having one text instead of five.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he would reserve the right to discuss the Belgian proposal after giving it further study. However, a preliminary reading indicated that the Belgian Delegation had been impressed by the figures quoted from an obscure journal by Mr. Osborn at their last meeting. The Belgian delegation seemed to think that reduction of armaments should not begin with an effective reduction by some agreed fraction but rather with the collection of information. Mr. Malik drew attention to the methods of computation used by Mr. Osborn when quoting the military budgets of various countries. Previously he had dealt with Mr. Osborn's tendency to quote items out of their context and no further general comment seemed to be required. Mr. Osborn had attempted to compare the military budgets of the USSR and the United States and had said that the United States appropriation for 1949 was \$12,140,000 plus a few hundred million dollars for atomic energy expenses. Mr. Malik noted that by so saying Mr. Osborn had confirmed the fact that the United States was preparing for the use of atomic weapons. However, this was not the main point. Mr. Osborn had quoted this figure of some twelve billion, yet the August 1948, issue of the United States Army Information Digest, an official publication, presented the budget confirmed by Congress in Law No. 766 as \$15,272,518,163. The distribution was about seven billion to the army and its air force, about 3.8 billion for the navy, and just over half a billion for the production of aircraft. For aircraft production Law No. 547 provided 3.2 billion and the occupation expenses in Germany amounted to 1.3 billion. These figures indicated that the appropriation was in fact something about 15 billion. Even if the occupation expenses were deducted, the military budget would amount to some 14 billion and not to the figure given by Mr. Osborn. This military budget represented 36.1 per cent. of the Federal budget for 1949 but instead of computing the military expenditures

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as a percentage of the over-all budget, Mr. Osborn had related it to the gross national income of the United States. By so doing, Mr. Osborn had declared that the United States expended only 6 per cent. of its national income for military purposes in an attempt to conceal the huge figure. The Federal budget and the national income were entirely different, which was realized by Mr. Osborn, and when he spoke of the military expenditures of the USSR, he had reversed the process. Mr. Osborn knew from the official report of the Finance Minister of the USSR that defence expenditures for 1948 represented only 17 per cent. of the total budget and not of the national income. However, by distorting the facts, Mr. Osborn stated that the USSR expended almost 16 per cent. of the national income for military purposes. However, Mr. Osborn did not reveal where he had got the figure for the national income. After the facts and figures were straightened out, it became quite clear that the United States was prepared to spend 36.1 per cent. of its budget for military purposes while the USSR provided for only 17 per cent.

In addition it should be taken into account that the expenditures of the USSR on its armed forces during 1948/49 had been reduced absolutely. From 1947/48 they had been reduced by 2,500 million roubles. On the other hand it would appear from the official information in the War Department publication and in the message of the President of the United States, published in the New York Times of 16 August 1948, that the military appropriation of the United States for the budget year 1948/49 had increased 42 per cent. over the previous year. When considering this figure, allowance should be made for the fact that it did not include the expenditure of a half billion on atomic energy production, some 600 millions for the stock piling of strategic material, and 400 millions for military aid to Greece, Turkey and China.

These facts made it clear that Mr. Osborn was inclined to treat figures lightly in his attempt to prove that the military expenditures of the United States were negligible in order to justify the unwillingness of the United States to reduce its armaments and armed forces. Again quoting from an obscure French publication, Mr. Osborn had tried to show that after reducing its forces by one-third the USSR would still have 150 divisions while the United States would have only six. If this were to be given credence, it would appear that at the present time the United States had only nine divisions. According to the War Department publication, the total number of officers and soldiers in the United States armed forces on 1 August 1948 was 1,425,000. According to Law No. 758 of 28 June 1948, the armed forces were to be increased to 2,166,000, i.e. by 52 per cent. Even if it were assumed that there had been no increase since the passage of that law, the question arose as to

how 1,425,000 men could be fitted into nine divisions. Mr. Osborn might explain that these figures included the naval and air forces but to this Mr. Malik would reply that the U.N. also had naval and air forces. However, when Mr. Osborn quoted figures for the USSR, he did not break them down into land, naval and air forces. If it were agreed that a division amounted to between 10,000 and 12,000 men, it would appear that the armed forces of the United States represented at the present time between 120 and 140 divisions. If the forces had been increased pursuant to Law No 758, the total would be in the neighbourhood of 200 divisions.

From the foregoing it could readily be concluded that the figures quoted by Mr. Osborn should be checked at basic sources. It could also be concluded that the military expenditure of the United States was more than 36 per cent. of the Federal budget and had been increased during the past year by 42 per cent. while the size of the armed forces was being increased by 52 per cent. Thirdly it could be concluded that the United States military expenditure for the year 1948/49 was practically the same as their expenditure in 1945 during the course of the war, which had amounted to \$15,434,814,795. These were facts which no distortion of figures could successfully conceal from the world.

The CHAIRMAN observed that the Sub Committee was seeking to agree upon the text of a resolution and the item before them was the Belgian amendment. He considered the remarks of Mr. Malik to be suited only to a general debate and asked the Sub-Committee to confine its discussion to the matter before it.

Mr. OSBORN (United States) said that at the request of the Chairman he had met with other representatives since the last meeting and had been greatly interested in the development of the ideas of the representative of Belgium. The Belgian amendment seemed to be constructive and valuable and was acceptable to the United States delegation. Mr. Osborn said that it was accepted in the original French because in the English translation it would appear that the word "programme" would be more accurately rendered by the phrase "plan of work". Again in the English text "main attention" would perhaps be more properly rendered "in the first instance". Accordingly the United States delegation would accept the Belgian amendment, reserving the right to suggest minor changes during the discussion. Accordingly the United States amendments were withdrawn, subject to the right to re-introduce them or other amendments if the Belgian amendment was not accepted. With regard to the statement

by Mr. Malik, Mr. Osborn was of the opinion that this gave additional support to the proposition that it was necessary for them to know exactly what they were talking about.

Mr. FAILA (United Kingdom) said that his delegation found the Belgian amendment acceptable as a basis for discussion. His delegation would withdraw the amendment submitted, subject to the right to introduce amendments to the Belgian text when it was discussed.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the present position was that the Sub-Committee had before it the USSR proposal, the French draft resolution, the Belgian text and the proposals of Lebanon and Syria, although the latter had been incorporated in the Belgian amendment. The texts submitted by El Salvador, the United Kingdom and the United States had been withdrawn. The main document before them apart from the basic USSR proposal was the Belgian text and he asked for discussion upon this text.

Mr. OSBORN (United States) as a point of order remarked that as the Belgian text had been introduced as an amendment to the French draft they should continue to treat it as an amendment unless the Sub-Committee were to decide otherwise.

Mr. LAPTER (Poland) was of the opinion that the Belgian text amounted to a new proposal and was not an amendment, properly speaking, to the French draft. He believed it should be dealt with as a new proposal.

The CHAIRMAN said that he did not believe that it made any material difference whether they considered it to be a new proposal or an amendment

Mr. CHANG (China) stated that his delegation had no objections to the Belgian amendment but would like certain clarifications. Firstly, he would like to hear from the representative of Belgium on the question of whether Article 26 or Article 11 should be cited. Secondly the penultimate paragraph referred to the formulation of proposals. The United States amendment, now withdrawn, mentioned working out a plan. Mr. Chang asked whether there was a significant difference. Thirdly the first paragraph of the operative part was unclear as to whether study of the question should be begun as soon as the international atmosphere permitted or whether it was intended to convey the idea that concrete

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results could only be obtained in the appropriate atmosphere.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he reserved the right to speak further on the Belgian draft after giving it further study. However, with regard to one of its essential ideas, namely the collection of information, the USSR delegation had already stated why it considered the recommended approach to be unacceptable. In the Belgian text it was proposed that first there should be information gathered and thereafter there should be a reduction in armaments. The USSR delegation believed that this reversed the question and had put forward a concrete proposal of securing a one-third reduction in the course of a year. The idea of putting the collection of information first was unacceptable. His delegation had also said that unquestionably the five Great Powers would have to present data on their armaments and forces if the USSR proposal were accepted. Accordingly his delegation had decided to present an amendment to its own proposal. Mr. Malik then read a paragraph to replace the last paragraph of the USSR proposal (document A/C.1/SC 12/3). He hoped that this amendment would be acceptable to those delegations which were so concerned about the collection of information upon armaments.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.