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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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GENERAL

A/AC.105/PV.18
26 April 1963

ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 28 February 1963, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. MATSCH

(Austria)

Organization of the work of the Committee in 1963

63-c8820

(42 p.)

ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE IN 1963 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: At its last meeting, the Committee reached agreement on the date of the next session of the two Sub-Committees, namely the second half of May for the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and 16 April to 3 May for the Legal Sub-Committee.

The Committee, on the other hand, could not agree at its last meeting on the place for the sessions of the two Sub-Committees and requested the Chair to continue its consultation with members of the Committee in this respect. In deference to the wishes of the Committee, the Chair has most willingly continued these efforts and has again had consultations with all members of the Committee on these questions.

It is with sincere regret that the Chair has to announce that despite repeated efforts, agreement between all members could not be reached in the course of these consultations. We therefore have to continue the debate on item 1 of the agenda, as agreed at our last meeting.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): I should like once again, if I may, to make my delegation's position absolutely clear. As I stated at our last meeting we very strongly prefer that the Legal Sub-Committee and the Technical Sub-Committee meet here at United Nations Headquarters, and we are convinced that this is where they should meet.

First, as was pointed out by the representative of Canada at our last meeting, there is the need, if we are to achieve progress in this complex field of outer space, to bring together the three types of people on whose collective efforts success depends: the diplomatic permanent representatives, the legal experts and the scientific or technical experts. Up to now what progress this Committee has achieved has resulted solely from the work of its sub-committees. We believe this pattern in which substantive work is given to expert sub-committees is proper and should prevail and continue. But the final responsibility for carrying forward expert recommendations rests right here on us in this full Committee and on us and our fellow representatives in our parent body: the General Assembly.

The twenty-eight Members represented in this room today must carry forward both in this Committee and in the General Assembly the recommendations given to us by our expert sub-committees. Oftentimes these recommendations, be they legal or technical, will be of such complexity that unless we have the opportunity ourselves to observe or to participate in their formulation, we cannot claim to have a thorough understanding of them.

When this Committee met here last September to receive the results of the work of our sub-committees, all of whose meetings had been held in Geneva, many of us felt handicapped because we had no direct knowledge of what had taken place in Geneva. True, we had records, but the fact is that even these were not available here until more than two months after the Geneva meetings; presumably this delay was caused by conflicting demands on the Geneva conference facilities. This year the demands on those facilities will be greater and our ability to follow and keep abreast of the work of our sub-committees would be seriously reduced if they were to meet away from our Headquarters.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

One of the principal tasks given us by the General Assembly many years ago is to promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space and to give effect to programmes which could appropriately be undertaken under United Nations auspices. We cannot expect to carry out this mandate if we deliberately divorce ourselves from the substantive work of our own sub-committees. That is the first reason why we favour United Nations Headquarters as the location of all meetings of both sub-committees.

Another reason why we favour United Nations Headquarters is one of principle and of prior decision. At its twelfth session the General Assembly adopted resolution 1202 (XII) in which it examined the pattern of conferences and decided -- and I emphasize "decided":

"... that, as a general principle, meetings of United Nations bodies shall be held at the established headquarters of the bodies concerned ...".

(General Assembly resolution 1202 (XII), paragraph 2)

This resolution listed certain exceptions such as ECOSOC, the Economic Commission and the International Law Commission, but none of these exceptions apply to this Committee or any other body established by the General Assembly.

The status of our Committee, as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, is set forth in rule 162 of our rules of procedure and this decision of principle applies to us. Although it is true that the Committee is free to make an exception if a majority of the Committee so desires, any decision to convene either sub-committee away from United Nations Headquarters would be in violation of a general principle which was specifically decided by the General Assembly -- our parent body. It would be ironic if we were to consider general principles relating to outer space without being able to observe general principles when they apply here in this room.

Closely related to the question of principle is the question of finances. Meetings of the sub-committees here at Headquarters would not require any extra expenditure of unbudgeted funds. If the Legal Sub-Committee were to meet in Geneva, it would cost the United Nations an additional \$38,000. If the Technical Sub-Committee were to meet in Geneva, it would be an additional \$20,700. If both

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

were to meet in Geneva it would cost an additional \$58,700. Surely, with the United Nations in its present financial difficulties it is the duty of all of us to see to it that those difficulties are not added to by one dollar of unnecessary expense. Some individual countries whose scales of assessment for the regular budget are low might feel that from their viewpoint they would save more money on transportation expenses to Geneva than they would be required to pay at their assessed rate if we added \$58,700 to the annual budget. But this may be false economy. With regard to the Technical Sub-Committee the fact is that because facilities in Geneva in the latter half of May are as crowded as they are, the Technical Sub-Committee would be allowed to meet only once a day, whereas the same results could be achieved here at Headquarters in approximately half the time through having two meetings a day. Those Members who plan on sending qualified experts to this Sub-Committee will find that those experts would strongly prefer to meet two and even three times a day in order to reduce the amount of time which they spend away from space and space-related programmes. If we wish to conserve the valuable time of these experts and the expense of keeping them away from their work, United Nations Headquarters is clearly preferable for the work of the Technical Sub-Committee.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

With regard to the Legal Sub-Committee, the fact is that many if not most of the twenty-eight members of this Committee will be represented on the Legal Sub-Committee by members of their permanent missions if the Legal Sub-Committee meets at United Nations Headquarters. If, on the other hand, the Legal Sub-Committee were to meet in Geneva, many members would wish to send not only legal but also political advisers to attend, and many of them will be from the Permanent Missions right here at Headquarters.

I say this because I believe it is widely recognized that the Legal Sub-Committee, when it takes up the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly's resolution, must address itself to problems which are both legal and political in nature. There can be no doubt that issues of great and obvious political magnitude will arise under at least one of the four topics which this Sub-Committee must address itself to, namely that of general principles. This being so, it may well be false to argue that individual members, leaving aside the extra expense to the United Nations, will find it more economical to meet in Geneva than here at Headquarters.

Furthermore, there is the time factor. If the Legal Sub-Committee meets at Headquarters, it will be completely free to determine its own pace. There will be times when two meetings a day are required and there will be times when only one meeting a day will be preferred, and there will be times when time should be allowed for consultation without meetings. The flexibility allowed meetings here at Headquarters will permit more work to be done in a shorter time and with more flexibility than would be possible in Geneva.

These are the reasons why we strongly prefer to follow the normal pattern in keeping with the principle established by the General Assembly and have both Sub-Committees meet at Headquarters. Any suggestion that the exception for Geneva made last year was intended as a pattern to be followed in subsequent years is absolutely and completely contrary to fact. Our preference for United Nations Headquarters last year was shared by many if not most of the members of this Committee. We acceded to the entreaties of one member whose participation in the work of this Committee, it was alleged, would be threatened if the Sub-Committees met at Headquarters. We made clear at that time that we were prepared to accede for 1961, and 1962 only, and that thereafter there should be no question but that all meetings would follow the normal pattern and remain at United Nations Headquarters.

(Mr. Plimpton, United States)

As I made clear at our last meeting, the United States was prepared, despite its strong preference, for one or more of the Sub-Committees to meet away from Headquarters this year if this were the desire of the majority of the members of the Committee. I notice, as I think we all did, that we have heard no such statement that the Soviet Union would be willing to accept the wish of the majority. In recent days it is well known that the United States, despite the strength of its preference, is not inflexible. The Soviet Union, however, without once presenting a defensible case for departing from the normal pattern, has shown not the slightest interest in anything but its own demands.

Under the circumstances, the United States maintains its strong preference that both Sub-Committees meet at United Nations Headquarters. We do not agree that either Sub-Committee should go to Geneva. We are prepared to have this Committee express its preferences by majority votes. We would vote against any proposal favouring Geneva over United Nations Headquarters. In the absence of any formal proposal or decision to the contrary, both Sub-Committees should follow the normal pattern and meet at Headquarters at the times previously agreed.

It was agreed at the very outset of this Committee's work that it would be the aim of all members to work by agreement without need of voting. We respect this aim and we think it should be maintained. But this Committee is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and as such is governed by the rule of procedure of the General Assembly. We will not acquiesce in either receiving or, still less, giving the veto power to any State in any Committee of the General Assembly. This Committee must today decide whether it will attempt to carry out the mandate given it by the General Assembly or whether, in the face of Soviet obstinacy, it will cease to function.

There is no purpose in postponing the issue. We have been confronted by it for many weeks and everybody's position is clear and well-known. The issue is indeed trivial, but the Soviet Union has made it one of importance. It would be indeed ironic if the United Nations effort in the field of outer space were to be blocked by such triviality.

The CHAIRMAN: I now invite members to make a statement if they so desire.

Mr. MENIEZ (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): In view of the difficulties which seem to be in our path, I would like very briefly to present the point of view of my delegation. As I had occasion to state in the preliminary conversations which were held concerning this problem, we are in favour of holding both meetings at New York. The reasons for this preference seem to be very clear.

In the first place, there is the economic consideration, which was made very clear by the representative of the United States. Our delegation attributes great importance to this aspect because, on the one hand, there is a relationship to those countries having lesser income and, on the other hand, there is the situation of the United Nations itself. The financial difficulties of our Organization have been repeatedly set forth here, and very clearly.

For these reasons, I think that we would not be justified in sending United Nations staff abroad since it would involve an extraordinary expenditure of some \$50,000, and especially when such expenditure could be avoided by holding the meetings of the two Sub-Committees at Headquarters, which is the natural place for them to be held. And we cannot overlook the fact that this is not simply a question of expense for staff, in which all Member States will participate proportionately. In addition, many delegations will have the expense of transferring their experts and advisers from New York to Geneva.

To sum up, we believe that up to the present time we do not have a clear picture of why these meetings should be held in Geneva since they would involve a heavy extraordinary expenditure and since such additional expense would not even result in greater facilities. On the contrary, as was brought out very clearly at our last meeting, it might even involve lesser services from the Secretariat. We do not believe that because two sessions were held in Geneva this is a sufficient precedent; it could give rise to a traditional practice that would make it impossible for the Sub-Committees to meet at Headquarters.

(Mr. Mendez, Argentina)

These then are the reasons why we prefer New York. But I would also like to point out that we do not think that this preference should constitute any obstacle to our accepting any other solution which the Committee may feel preferable so as to assure the good functioning and success of its activities. We believe that the norm which we consider to be in full practice here, so as to achieve decisions in complete harmony without having any votes, that this norm should have priority over any other consideration. Therefore, we would like to say that we are ready to accept a compromise proposal that would allow us to achieve a satisfactory solution to this question and, at the same time, a decision which would represent the desire of the majority here.

Mr. ARNAUD (France) (interpretation from French) My delegation does not share in every respect the views that have just been expressed by the United States representative, if only because he concluded his statement by recommending New York as the choice for the holding of the meetings of the Sub-Committees. My delegation would prefer that the meetings of the Sub-Committees be held at Geneva. Nevertheless, from this intervention there seems to emerge a very positive element which should engage the attention of the members of this Committee. The United States representative declared beforehand that he was prepared to accept the decision which emerged from the expression of views of the majority of the members at this meeting. It seems to me that this is an element which should guide us to a solution of this problem.

Indeed, this problem is not one which challenges the fundamental interests of any delegation or country. It is a relatively minor problem in comparison to many others which the Committee will have to consider, or in comparison to the many problems which the Sub-Committees will have to consider. Therefore, it seems to my delegation that this is a problem on which the majority of this Committee could agree and on which the members of the minority should be able to align themselves with the views of the majority. I would say, beforehand, that while my delegation has a marked preference for Geneva, it would not seek to oppose the majority view in this Committee if that majority were to express itself clearly in favour of some other meeting place.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would propose that you appeal to all delegations here and now clearly to indicate their preference, so that we might have a clear view of the situation. Once all the delegations have indicated their preferences, and I know that you have taken much of your time in engaging in consultations outside this room, it seems to me that matters would be facilitated and that a solution would be hastened. In the consultations which have taken place at different periods, discordant results may have been yielded, and the views of delegations which were not too clearly stated may possibly have changed. Therefore, if the representatives in this Committee were to speak one by one in order to indicate their preferences, we might gather unquestionable, unchallengeable and incontrovertible information as to the direction in which the majority is inclined.

Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have just heard statements on a question which has not yet been sufficiently studied and which has therefore not yet been decided.

First of all, I would refer to the statement made by the United States representative. To begin with, we are struck by the petulant tone and the peremptory way in which the matter has been presented, as also by the position taken by the United States representative. The impression created is that what we have heard here, uttered in almost metallic tones, is in the nature of an ultimatum: either accept what we have offered you or put an end to the work of the Committee. It seems to us that such a tone and such a way of addressing an international forum are hardly in consonance with the responsibility of our Committee and the nature of its work. I believe that more forbearance and more calm should be employed, together with a desire to find a solution which would satisfy all, not only one country or one side.

We shall, therefore, venture to recall again those considerations that were put forward by the Soviet delegation at the previous meeting of our Committee.

We value highly the fact that in this Committee traditions of understanding and co-operation are being established, an understanding which does not necessarily require voting upon. Everything should be done to find mutually acceptable solutions, to achieve a mutual understanding that would be in keeping with the interests and the importance of those tasks that stand before us, without trying to threaten anyone or any way to affect the nervous systems of any of those taking part in the meeting. We wish to recall that this question of the place of the meetings of the Committee and its Sub-Committees was discussed last year, as a result of which an appropriate decision was taken.

As you remember, everyone agreed that the Committee should meet at Headquarters in New York, which is what it is doing. Everyone also agreed that the Sub-Committees (Technical and Legal) should hold their sessions at Geneva. Experience has demonstrated the correctness of that decision and the fruitfulness of the work done by both the Committee and the two Sub-Committees.

This points first and foremost to one conclusion: we must preserve and maintain this co-operation, carry it on and strengthen it in every way.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

In embarking upon the work of our Committee we assumed that there were no problems in connexion with the place of meeting of the Sub-Committees. Nevertheless, we are now confronted with a new problem. That new problem has been created by the representative of the United States, who has put it in a most dramatic form.

First of all, what grounds are there for creating this new problem? On the previous occasion technical considerations were put forward. Soon, however, those technical considerations fell by the wayside because they were far-fetched. Then financial considerations were put before us but they too were unable to stand up under criticism. Now resolutions are being dragged in, references are being made to former decisions. But we are very well acquainted with those decisions. They in no way imply that the meetings must be held in New York, as certain speakers here have said.

Thus there is no reason why this new problem should arise. It would have been better not to complicate matters, just as it would have been better not to put artificial obstacles in the way of the Committee's work.

We considered and we consider now that the best place to convene the Sub-Committees is still Geneva. Nor is that only our opinion. We are happy to note that it is the opinion of the representatives of many other countries in the Committee. This shows that we are correct in our understanding of the situation and that our considerations are well founded.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

We are not insisting that the Sub-Committees or the Committee should meet in the territory of, let us say, our own country. It need hardly be demonstrated that we would have had certain good reasons for making such a proposal. But no one should put his own convenience ahead of all other considerations. What are the reasons for the position of those who are so insistently and stubbornly trying to obtain a decision that the Sub-Committees should, at all costs, be convened in New York? None, except that it suits their convenience, that for them New York is "home". But the interests of the other delegations, the interests of mutual understanding and international co-operation, cannot be disregarded for the sake of the convenience of one delegation.

For us this question of the place where the Sub-Committees are to be convened is a matter of principle. As we are not insisting that they should be convened in the territory of our State or of another socialist country, we are entitled to expect reciprocity. Accordingly, we propose as a compromise decision that the Sub-Committees should meet at Geneva, as in the past.

We repeat that it is not right to complicate the matter, to create new problems and to make the work of the Committee more difficult. If, by complicating the question of where the Sub-Committees should be convened, the United States wishes to make co-operation in the Committee more difficult, its representative should say so openly. Then responsibility for all the consequences would fall squarely on the United States.

It seems to me that if the atmosphere has not yet matured enough for a solution of the question it would be reasonable to prolong the consultations, to show some patience, commonsense and a spirit of co-operation, and to refrain from making undesirable statements in an intemperate tone.

The CHAIRMAN: Since no one else appears to wish to speak now, I shall sum up what has been said so far.

We have heard the suggestion of the representative of France that the Chairman should appeal to every delegation to make clear its views here in the

(The Chairman)

Committee. We have heard the statement of the representative of the United States that the United States position is not inflexible. At the end of his remarks, the representative of the Soviet Union said:

"... if the atmosphere has not as yet matured enough for a solution of the question it would be reasonable to prolong the consultations"

(Supra., page 16)

I am, of course, prepared to continue my efforts. I must note, however, that since the beginning of January I have been trying, through consultations, to find a solution agreeable to every member. Unfortunately, these efforts have failed.

I therefore now invite the Committee to pronounce itself about what should be done to resolve the impasse. I would appeal to members to make suggestions on how to overcome the impasse created since our last meeting. As I have said, I have not been able to find a solution agreeable to all members.

Mr. TREMBLAY (Canada): As is known, the delegation of Canada is one of the delegations which has expressed a definite preference for holding the sessions of the two Sub-Committees in New York, for the reasons which have been very ably and lucidly outlined by the representative of the United States. However, from the various statements that have been made it seems that we have now, as the Chairman has just said, reached an impasse in the work of the Committee. If the two positions are maintained, the only way out of our predicament would be to determine the majority opinion. But I suggest that if we do that we shall be casting away one of the most precious rules under which this Committee has worked so far -- that is, the rule of unanimity in its decisions.

Therefore, the question in our mind at the moment is whether some compromise formula could not be put forward which would rally general support -- in the best interests, of course, of the future work of our Committee. In an effort to obtain a clearer indication of the consensus of the Committee, in accordance with the remarks made a moment ago by the representative of France, my delegation

would suggest that the Legal Sub-Committee should meet in New York and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in Geneva. If enough delegations take a similar position, there will be an obvious consensus in the Committee, which would enable the two major space Powers to accommodate themselves to that consensus, we would hope, thereby solving the problem without the Committee's having to resort to a formal vote.

Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Poland): Since this is the second meeting which has dealt with the problem of where the two Sub-Committees should meet, I think that all the members of this Committee have heard quite a number of arguments in favour of New York and quite a number of arguments in favour of Geneva. In the opinion of the Polish delegation, this is a most unfortunate discussion, and it is most unfortunate that such a divergence of opinion has occurred at all. I do not want to demonstrate in an artificial way the importance or lack of importance of the question, but I must say that to many outsiders listening to our discussions this whole thing must sometimes sound very amusing.

(Mr. Lewandowski, Poland)

As for my own delegation, Mr. Chairman, I think on several occasions we have informed you that our preference is for meetings of those Sub-Committees in Geneva. We could cite a number of arguments to make Geneva the place for the meetings of the two Sub-Committees, and as a matter of fact we have expressed such arguments in private talks. As you know, Poland is honoured by being the host to the COSPAR meeting. We are rather directly, and perhaps formally more than any other delegation, involved in the work of the Legal Sub-Committee. The arguments I mentioned could be set forth publicly, but I am not going to do that. However, for all those arguments which I have heard from the representatives of the United States, Canada, Argentina and those who spoke at the previous meeting, there is a sufficient number -- I would, of course, say more than a sufficient number - of counter-arguments. Take the question of political involvement in the work of those two Sub-Committees. I could not agree more with that, that of course we would be involved, and I could not agree more with the representative of the United States that the final responsibility rests with the General Assembly, that we are only a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. But the argument is exactly that direct involvement in the specific work of the Scientific and Legal Sub-Committees is not necessary because in the final outcome the questions will come here to the meeting of the plenary Committee, as they did last year, and then to the General Assembly, which will have to deal with them, and that there will then be enough room for direct political involvement in those questions.

Furthermore, you gentlemen around this table are more experienced than I in international negotiations and debates and know full well that it sometimes is very good -- especially for a problem as difficult as this one and as new as this one; for certainly questions involving the legal and scientific problems of international co-operation in outer space are of such a nature that they are new to all of us -- especially where there are divergent points of view, to divert the proceedings and negotiations from the direct political involvement of what my friend, the representative of Canada, referred to as the ministry for foreign affairs representatives.

(Mr. Lewandowski, Poland)

Now, I am not one to cut off the branch on which I personally am sitting; but in the past we did it and we did it with success.

As to the question of finances, we could of course spend a lot of time here making computations. I know that for some of it we could even request the aid of some computers -- nowadays that is the fashion in problems of outer space -- and prove that for some delegations it would be cheaper and for some it would be more expensive. In matters of United Nations expenditures, we think, of course, that nobody wishes to act light-handedly. But for that matter, there are so many problems involving expenses for the United Nations in which savings could be achieved. I am not proposing to take those matters up now before this Committee; that is not within our terms of reference and they will, I hope, by reason of our Permanent Representatives' political involvement in them, be thoroughly discussed at the next General Assembly session.

Then there is the final argument about last year's agreement: for how long was it valid? I for one did not directly participate in last year's private discussions between the outer-space Powers on the question of the meetings of the plenary and the Sub-Committees, but if I recall, the discussions started from the presumption that one view was that the meetings of the plenary sessions of this Committee and the Sub-Committees' meetings should be taken somewhere else, namely Geneva. Then after some debate -- and about this I heard only second-hand -- we were faced with the consensus and agreement that the Sub-Committees last year should meet in Geneva and the plenary in New York. I was under the impression -- perhaps mistaken, perhaps not -- that the agreement stood and that we would meet no difficulty this year in following that agreed line. I do not know whether the agreement was formalized or not for 1962 or for permanency. I for one am not familiar with that. But suppose the talk was about 1962 only: why then change something that has been established and that has already started to work? We know full well how many difficulties those Sub-Committees have had to meet and will meet because the problems are new. None of us has any ready-made formulas which will solve everything. The question, therefore, for my delegation at least, is one of anxiety and unrest as to why one or two of the delegations have brought up this

(Mr. Lewandowski, Poland)

matter of departing from what already might be considered a sort of tradition agreeable to everybody, and making of it an issue.

I am not prepared to take any of those arguments as formal ones -- financial, organizational, political involvement -- and to regard them as having any decisive validity, because, again, for each of those arguments and for many others, perhaps, that have not yet been set forth, there could be a good number of counter-arguments -- and that, of course, would not lead us to anything.

So then the representative of the United States and the others who brought up anew the question of the meetings of the Sub-Committees should not be surprised that I, for one, am very anxious and worried about this problem which, to my mind, has been artificially raised here, nor should they be surprised at the intense feelings concerning any change in last year's pattern.

Of course, I am not a representative of any of the Powers which have a lot to say about outer space; we are still in the rather theoretical phase, if not in the science-fiction stage, of development in that area, and, like many of our friends around this table, I suppose, we are watching these problems very carefully and watching especially the positions taken on problems of co-operation in outer space by the great Powers, that is by the Soviet Union and United States. If then this artificial problem is brought into our debates and if what was working last year suddenly cannot work this year any more, in the opinion of one of them, what, frankly, can be the prospects of further co-operation? I hope that in the speeches here and later on in practice I will be shown that I am completely mistaken in my anxiety and that a final solution of that problem will be achieved.

There was some talk about a compromise and the representative of Canada suggested something here. Let us be frank around this table: we have been hearing about this for a few days and I believe some of us were aware that certain delegations might come here with that sort of proposal, namely to split the meetings of the two Sub-Committees. Well, last year I heard that a compromise had been reached, that the meetings of the plenary Committee would be held here and that the Sub-Committee meetings would be held in Geneva. Is this now a sort of piecemeal tactic, so that now we have to make a compromise between last year's compromise and the new stand taken by one of the parties involved?

(Mr. Lewandowski, Poland)

What will happen next year? Suppose, theoretically, that we take up this compromise. Will there again be a new difficulty? The question in a real sense will not be -- at least to my delegation -- of the overpowering importance of the solution of that question as it will not solve the question of co-operation in outer space. But the approach to that question might help or might hamper progress in co-operation in outer space. Therefore, I would suggest that we should ponder that issue. Since the proposed dates for the meetings of the Sub-Committees are still not immediately around the corner, perhaps we could try -- looking at this problem not from the point of view of the arguments advanced on political involvement, finances or organization but from the point of view of the political importance of co-operation in this Committee -- to find a solution. With this in mind perhaps we could find a solution.

Mr. MATSUI (Japan): My delegation's own preference on the site of the meetings of the two Sub-Committees was and still is New York Headquarters for both of the Sub-Committees. We believe that this is the best arrangement for most of the delegations and for the Secretariat because of all the conveniences it offers. I am not here repeating all the arguments that would justify our point of view because they are well known to everybody and because this would save our time. It is very regrettable that, despite your strenuous efforts, Mr. Chairman, and those of other delegations, no agreement has so far been reached on such a technical question as the one facing us and that we still find ourselves in a deadlock. Under such circumstances, my delegation is ready to modify its position and to go along with the suggestion of the representative of Canada who presented a compromise solution, to hold meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee in New York and those of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in Geneva, if other members of this Committee would be willing to show a spirit of compromise as well. If they are not ready to do so, the only alternative left to this Committee would be to resort to the normal procedure by which any subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, like our own Committee, is expected to conduct its business under the rules of procedure since such procedure is not in any way precluded by the understanding reached at the outset of our Committee's work.

(Mr. Matsui, Japan)

This, however, would not be necessary if all the members of the Committee would proceed in the same spirit which led to the understanding that was reached when we started our work last year, the understanding that I mentioned. I would therefore support the compromise suggestion made by the representative of Canada, and I would appeal to the other members to go along with this compromise so that the Committee can conclude its organizational consideration and look forward to successful and substantive progress at the meetings of the two Sub-Committees.

Mr. COOK (Australia): The Australian delegation has one reason of principle and several of efficiency and convenience for preferring both Sub-Committees to meet in New York.

The reason of principle has been mentioned several times and is specifically set out in resolution 1202. It has been argued against that general principle laid down in the General Assembly resolution that the Committee itself last year took a decision of principle: that the two Sub-Committees should meet in Geneva and the full Committee in New York. This has been further represented as a compromise decision.

As far as Australia is concerned, it was no part of our understanding, when we agreed against our preference to go to Geneva for both Sub-Committees, that this was a compromise, nor indeed that a general rule had been set up. Furthermore I do not see how we could have agreed to this sort of understanding because the sequence of events last year was that a proposal was made that the two Sub-Committees should meet in Geneva; there were consultations to and fro on this particular point; and it was eventually agreed by virtually everybody that the two Sub-Committees should go to Geneva. The request was only then raised, for the first time, that the full Committee should also meet in Geneva. This was rejected with some indignation by a number of countries, including Australia, and there the matter rested. Now the point of that history is that there could not have been a compromise because it was agreed first that the Sub-Committees should go to Geneva, and that was a single, separate issue. The reasons Australia has

(Mr. Cook, Australia)

of efficiency and convenience for preferring New York are three. First of all, I think that what all of us here should have first regard to is the efficiency of the work of the Sub-Committees. This is what we are talking about at the moment; this is where a lot of the important work of the Committee is at least initiated. It was quite clear from our experience last year in Geneva that the work of the Sub-Committees did suffer from the lack of conference services and facilities in Geneva. This was beyond the control of the Secretariat in Geneva. There were just too many meetings going on. Last year's records came extremely late, and they did not come in all languages. Special interpreters had to be hired who were not as good at their job as the interpreters here in the United Nations in New York. Furthermore, it was also a fact that the work of some experts on the Sub-Committees suffered because many delegations, or at least some delegations, have no office in Geneva; they have no ready means of getting secretarial help, of having somewhere to work, of communicating with their own capitals. For all these reasons, the work of the Sub-Committees did suffer last year and it would suffer again in the same way this year when, if anything, the schedule of meetings in Geneva is even more crowded.

(Mr. Cook, Australia)

A second consideration, it seems to me, is the work of the Committee as a whole, and here again I think the advantages lie with New York. When we met here last September it was very clear that a number of delegations that had nobody who had been at Geneva were at a disadvantage of sorts in not having an intimate knowledge of the background, the atmosphere, the cross-currents which had gone on in the Sub-Committee meetings in Geneva. The Australian delegation feels that, if possible, this sort of situation should be avoided. It does not help the Committee in its work, when it is trying to come to decisions on Sub-Committee reports, if it does not really have an intimate knowledge of how those reports were arrived at and the cross-currents which went on behind them. Similarly, it is a fact that most delegations here are represented on the First Committee when the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space comes up there, and again it is useful for them to have a knowledge of what has taken place.

The third reason is one mentioned by the representative of the Soviet Union, that is the convenience of the experts involved, perhaps the national convenience. This seems to me the last of the considerations to which we should pay regard. Quite obviously they are selfish reasons - whether it is easier for countries in Europe, for example, to go to Geneva, or whether it is easier for countries in North America, or for Australia, to attend a meeting in New York. Nevertheless they are valid reasons and it is clearly open to everybody to put them forward and to press them. But they are the least of the reasons. Members ought to be prepared in the interests of furthering the work of this Committee, which is of far greater importance than the convenience of experts, to come to some modus vivendi, if that is required, to advance the work of the Committee.

In the same way as the delegation of Poland is closely associated with the Legal Sub-Committee, the Australian delegation is closely associated with the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. As I have stated, we would prefer New York. But we would be perfectly prepared, if the majority of the Committee were to decide otherwise, to go to Geneva. It seems to me that there is a lot to be said in the present state of feeling in this Committee for the suggestion put forward by the representative of Canada. Members should pay close attention to that suggestion to see whether it would not be possible to come to some agreement on those terms.

(Mr. Cook, Australia)

It has been suggested that perhaps there is still room for reaching full agreement on some other suggestion, or on some different compromise. I have heard this argument in the past few days, and I have also asked what sort of fresh compromise might be evolved in the next few days or weeks, given the history of consultations to date. I have met nobody who has been able to suggest any possible compromise other than the one suggested by the delegation of Canada. The Australian delegation would be perfectly happy to agree to a delay of a few days or weeks if it were requested because some delegations were at present unable to agree to the Canadian suggestion and needed a little more time to recommend to their Governments that this was a reasonable way out, and to receive a reply. But it does not seem to me that any purpose would be served in agreeing to a delay if those delegations opposed to the compromise have no intention of trying to come to some agreement. In those circumstances, we should think very seriously of how we next proceed.

Mr. CAMPBELL (United Kingdom): We do not propose to argue further about the comparative merits of New York and Geneva as a place of meeting. We think that those merits have been sufficiently argued by other delegations, and we ourselves put forward certain considerations the other day. What we would like to address ourselves to is rather how this Committee should now proceed in order to get ourselves out of the present difficulty.

It seems to us that all delegations have now had time to decide upon their own preference in this matter. Some of us have already stated our preference and others have not. At the same time, it has been argued by a number of delegations that it would be better to work in such a way as we have in the past, that we do not as a Committee have to vote. But now in these circumstances, since as I say we already have the elements upon which we could take a decision, if we do not in fact proceed to a vote, how then can we ever reach a decision? It seems to our delegation that it would be most unsatisfactory simply to leave the matter undecided. The representatives of various countries on the Sub-Committees are entitled to know now, or at least within the next day or two, where it is that they are expected to meet. We have already decided the time. It seems to us that we really ought to take a decision about the place, and we are not at all attracted by the idea of further delay in reaching this decision.

(Mr. Campbell, United Kingdom)

Therefore, we are attracted by the idea which was put forward earlier by the representative of France. This suggestion, as I understood it, was that the Chairman might invite each delegation in the Committee to state, if it is in a position to do so, its preference. In that way, it seems to us, the majority view of the Committee would emerge quite clearly. The view with respect to one Sub-Committee might be different from the view with respect to the other. That remains to be seen. But it seems to us that a useful first step might be to ascertain from each delegation that is willing to give its view what in fact its preference is for each Sub-Committee.

I want to add only one thing: for our part we should be perfectly ready to fall in with the compromise suggestion made by the representative of Canada, but I remark in passing that our own preference, if the Chairman asks it, again is to confirm New York in the case of both Sub-Committees.

Mr. COLLIER (Sierra Leone): My delegation considers it rather unfortunate that we have had these difficulties in deciding the matter of where the Sub-Committees should meet. We think it unfortunate because, if we have difficulties on a procedural detail such as this, it augurs rather badly for the more important substantive matters which will have to be debated later on.

I do not wish to go into detail here on the arguments which have been expressed at great length in support of a preference for meeting in New York or a preference for meeting in Geneva. As the representative of Poland has said, arguments could be found for either point of view, depending on how one intends to argue. In fact, for a country like mine, with a small delegation and limited resources, there are difficulties either way, particularly on the financial level. There are also difficulties of personnel. As I have said, arguments could be advanced to support either claim.

However, what I think is important is the attitude to the question, whether delegations are prepared to continue in the spirit with which we started out last year, when there was a readiness to give and take on important matters. I remember the congratulatory remarks, when the general political meeting was held, about how well we had been able to proceed, even though there had been some difficulties in the Legal Sub-Committee, because there was this willingness to co-operate.

What I should like to say here with some force is that I wish we could show this spirit of compromise in this matter. It is a matter for satisfaction that some delegations have already indicated their willingness to go along with the majority view, whatever that may be. That is exactly the position of my delegation, and I think this ought to be of some significance, because we have something to lose either way, and yet we are prepared to go along with the majority view -- whatever that may be -- in the interests of having the work of this Committee proceed in the best spirit. We think that, if delegations are willing to say that they will accept the consensus, whatever that may be, there need not be much trouble. It is quite natural and inevitable that there should be initial disagreements as to where a particular meeting should be held; it is natural that there should be different points of view. But what I think is a bit regrettable is that people should feel too strongly about their own preferences, because that leads to a chaotic situation.

(Mr. Collier, Sierra Leone)

Some delegations, notably the delegation of Canada, have suggested that some compromise could be reached if certain delegations continue to feel strongly that their preferences should be adhered to. I think there is a lot to be said for that, and my delegation is quite willing to go along with any compromise proposal which might lead to having one Sub-Committee meet in New York and the other in Geneva. Perhaps, if we canvass this idea with vigour, we will be able to find a way out of this impasse.

One last point: I think it may yet be possible to get a consensus on the matter of accepting this compromise if we do not force it to a vote now. Perhaps we might take an adjournment on this matter and discuss next time the question of a compromise solution, whatever the details of that compromise might be. I am not going into the details of where each Sub-Committee should meet, but I see no reason why we should not agree on the desirability of a compromise, since we already know quite clearly that we cannot get all delegations to agree on one place for both Sub-Committees to meet.

The CHAIRMAN: If no other representative wishes to speak now, I should like to sum up the discussion held this afternoon.

There are three main elements. One is the proposal of the French delegation that the Chair should make an appeal to each delegation to make its preference clear on the question of the site of the meetings. Secondly, we have heard from two delegations that the atmosphere does not seem ripe for a solution and therefore that efforts should be made to reach a compromise. In that connexion, the last speaker, the representative of Sierra Leone, thought that an adjournment might be helpful. The third proposal was made by the representative of Canada, who said that perhaps it should be decided as a compromise that the Legal Sub-Committee should meet in New York and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should meet in Geneva, and that this might be decided upon in order to avoid a vote, which was the intent of the agreement reached last year and repeated at the beginning of our meeting at this session.

(The Chairman)

These three proposals are now under discussion, and I would appreciate it if the members of the Committee were to consider the following solution: if the Committee agrees, the Chair would make an appeal to all delegations, as suggested by the French delegation, to state their views now and also to take a position on the so-called compromise proposal put forth by the delegation of Canada. I would like to hear some views, because only a few representatives have so far expressed themselves. I should also like to hear whether it is felt that a short adjournment might be helpful from the point of view of reaching agreement.

Another procedure that could be envisaged is to invite each delegation, in order to shorten what might otherwise be a lengthy debate, to state its preference in a letter addressed to the Bureau of the Committee. In this way, we would have a collection of views as to whether Geneva should be the site, or New York, or whether the Canadian proposal would be acceptable.

I would request members to pronounce themselves on what further guiding lines should be observed in this impasse. We have already heard with satisfaction, as the representative of Sierra Leone has said, that some members have indicated a willingness to change their position, that they do not have a rigid position. If the discussion is continued, we may hear further statements of this sort, which would be very helpful from the point of view of reaching an agreed solution.

I therefore appeal to the members of the Committee to pronounce themselves on the situation as defined just now by the Chair.

Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India): Our position has already been expressed at the previous meeting, and I do not want to reiterate it. We have heard very good arguments as to why the Sub-Committees should meet in New York or why they should meet in Geneva. But I should like to point out that, before we accept the valuable suggestions made by the representative of France or the representative of Canada or any other representative, one point has to be borne in mind: that this Committee is one of the few whose working depends completely on the co-operation of the two space Powers. If twenty-six of us agreed and the two space Powers did not agree, we would not have advanced at all. That is an unfortunate fact, but we must face the reality of the situation.

(Mr. Chakravarty, India)

I would therefore request that there should be a further effort made for consultation and discussion between the two great Powers themselves, with your assistance. We hope that they will come to some agreement between themselves as they have done in the past on equally contentious issues or perhaps more contentious issues. They have not disappointed us when we have left the matter to them. I suggest that before we go into this question of voting or ascertaining the wishes or preferences of other members, you should make another effort. That is my proposal.

Mr. CUEVAS-CANCINO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): If my memory serves me correctly, our Committee was established in 1958. At that time there was some difficulty concerning the membership of the Committee. In 1959 neither the Soviet Union or certain other Members participated. I believe I am right when I say that those meetings were held academically. We were meeting almost behind closed doors and what we might decide we knew in advance would have only relative value. That was the situation then. We believe that this is the reason why we do not wish to proceed to a vote in this Committee. This procedure of voicing a majority opinion here does not have the same value in this Committee as it does in other Committees. Therefore I would join and support the reasons advanced by the representative of India.

I would also recall that in the work of the Legal Sub-Committee in 1959 my delegation submitted a working paper in which a series of questions were made concerning the future of this science as we saw it as a result of the development of science at that time. I went over this document a few days ago and I realize the very great development that has taken place since then. Many of the question marks which were suggested at that time, and which we felt would take decades to find answers for, have now been answered. Unfortunately, this is not the case with the agreement of the great Powers here in our Committee.

I view with great regret -- and I say sometimes it is difficult to maintain faith in the United Nations -- the sort of impasse which we find facing us. Allow me to speak for a moment about the very nature of our Committee. This is not a question of the great problems of space or great legal problems which must govern

(Mr. Cuevas-Cancino, Mexico)

development in space. This is simply a question of where our sub-committees shall meet to discuss - not to take decisions - but just to discuss these matters. These sub-committees are simply going to hold discussions. In space matters one speaks of great spaces, distances and velocities that almost escape our human intellect. Does it not seem almost laughable that we are sitting here arguing whether we are going to meet on this or the other side of the Atlantic?

Therefore, my delegation is against the idea of our proceeding to a vote. We cannot proceed to take votes. It is not possible in this Committee and we will say so till the very last moment, whether it is a clear vote by show of hands or by one of these new methods which are proposed, and which nevertheless would be voting. I would emphasize the proposal advanced by the representative of India to the effect that the negotiations must continue. We cannot simply come here and vote when we know that the two great Powers have not reached any agreement. Our task is to make them realize that they must reach agreement. That is why an appeal is made for negotiations to be resumed and that before we go ahead in the work of the full Committee some agreement must be reached by the two parties.

Mr. VAKIL (Iran) (interpretation from French): In the view of my delegation the principles that should guide us in the choice of a site for the meeting of the two sub-committees are principles that have been enunciated in two resolutions of the General Assembly, one of which has been mentioned a few moments ago and the other one having been adopted last year. These are considerations of a practical nature that must guide us in the choice of the site or of the sites for these two sub-committees rather than considerations of a political nature. These principles have been recalled in a report which the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly on 1 December 1962 in which he refers to certain principles that were established:

"...to govern the planning and financing of meetings of the United Nations ...in order that the most rational and economical use might be made of the resources of the Organization and the effective participation of Members facilitated." (A/5317, paragraph 1)

In that report the Secretary-General makes an analysis of the way in which the plan proposed by the General Assembly has operated; On page 3 he provides a list of conferences that have been held during that time; it is a sufficiently long list,

(Mr. Vakil, Iran)

the majority of the conferences having been held in Geneva. He added that as would be seen from the table given on pages 3 and 4 of document A/5317, this table indicates that the majority of these conferences have been convened at the Geneva office or elsewhere in Europe. The primary servicing responsibility, accordingly, has fallen on the Geneva Office. He goes on to say in substance that the volume of work for conferences should be distributed between the Headquarters of the United Nations and the European Office in such a fashion that the permanent staff, located here at Headquarters and in Geneva, might be able to cope with the work of the conferences concerned.

Then there is another consideration. On the proposal of the Secretary-General the Assembly has extended for a period of one year this plan for meetings and conferences because the Secretary-General had deemed that the year 1964 would have to be an exceptional year for meetings at Headquarters and that therefore it was preferable to have transmitted to the next Secretary-General the adoption of any plan of conferences for a longer period.

The last paragraph of the resolution which was adopted reads as follows:

"Invites the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the competent organs the importance and urgency of the measures outlined in paragraph 11 of his report, as well as the need for moderation on their part in fixing their programmes of meetings in New York for 1964, in view of the major reconstruction work to be carried out at Headquarters."

(A/RES/1851 (XVII))

(Mr. Vakil, Iran)

This is an indication that, if this Committee or its Sub-Committees are to meet next year, it will probably be very difficult for them to meet here in view of the construction work that will be taking place. Therefore, I am under the impression that for these considerations of a technical and practical nature, we might perhaps agree on some compromise plan as proposed, I believe, by the representative of Canada. This seems to meet the wishes of all with regard to the Scientific Sub-Committee since no one seems to have opposed the idea. There is also the existence of another very valid reason, as pointed out by many representatives, to the effect that this Sub-Committee meeting will be held before a large-scale scientific conference in Europe which the technicians and scientists who are members of the Sub-Committee, might attend before returning home.

The same reasoning does not apply, we believe, to the meeting of the legal experts, because there are countries here which are not necessarily members of the International Law Commission, and also because the members of the International Law Commission do not represent their Governments; they are there as individual experts. So that I do not think the situation is similar in the case of the two Sub-Committees.

To sum up, I think that these are considerations of a practical nature, and particularly the principles enunciated in the resolution of the General Assembly. It is these principles that should guide us in the choice of the site, and particularly for the reasons given in the last paragraph of the General Assembly resolution, which states that it will be difficult to hold these meetings here in 1964. We might therefore agree upon a solution or compromise.

The CHAIRMAN: It does not appear that any other member would like to speak now. Therefore, I shall take up the request of the Indian representative, supported by the Mexican representative, that further efforts should be made between the two major Powers, with the assistance of the Chairman, to try once more to reach agreement. I am now going to put this request before the Committee. Is there any opposition to the request made by the representative of India and supported by the representative of Mexico?

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): The United States has indicated flexibility; the United States has indicated its preparedness to go along with the consensus of this Committee. If the Soviet Union accepts those two positions, I see no reason why we could not settle this matter now. If the Soviet Union is not willing to accept either of those conditions, I am at a loss to see what good further discussions would have.

The United States believes in international co-operation, in working together. It believes that that involves flexibility and that it involves willingness to go along with a consensus. That is our concept of international co-operation. If that concept is not shared by others, any lack of international co-operation from there on will be the fault of that country.

Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (Interpretation from Russian): First of all, we must note the more moderate tone of our United States colleague. We must realize that we have a common interest in seeking acceptable solutions. Accordingly, it seems to me that we have no basis for rejecting those considerations which have been advanced by the representative of India and supported by the representative of Mexico.

Once again I should like to point to the need for displaying maximum patience in searching for constructive solutions, and for the maximum need of co-operation in achieving a solution of this question. I do not understand this excessive haste on the part of the representative of the United States who is calling for an immediate solution of this matter. It seems to me that everything lies on the side of reason. We should once again weigh the situation, once again ponder, once again attempt to find a common language and understanding.

Why do you, Mr. Plimpton, turn a deaf ear to the voice of reason? We support the proposal of the representative of India with which the representative of Mexico has associated himself.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I wonder if you would permit me to ask my colleague from the Soviet Union whether he is willing to accept the principle of flexibility and the principle of co-operation with the consensus of this Committee.

Mr. FFLCFENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, let me thank the Chairman for having stated accurately the position of my delegation, thus answering the question raised by the United States representative, although I am of course very disappointed that this deprives me of the pleasure of answering Mr. Plimpton directly. I hope, however, that I will be able to have a direct exchange of remarks and courtesies with him on some future occasion.

We are also grateful to our Polish colleague for having correctly understood and supported our position.

Now let me make a few remarks in connexion with the statement of the United States representative. His behaviour reminds me of the conversations in detective stories between police officers and persons charged with a criminal offence. The tone of a police interrogator is out of place, to say the least, in an international conference such as this. The United States representative should refrain in future from resorting to that dangerous method. It does him no honour and it does not become the representative of a great Power, particularly in the presence of representatives of many different States. Let him not forget himself. In this international gathering he has been entrusted with the task of addressing representatives of Powers which are no less independent and no less great than his own. Let him weigh his words and behave with restraint.

As regards the notion held by the United States representative that New York is the most suitable place for the sessions of the Committee and the Sub-Committees, this is clearly an exaggeration. Everyone knows that in addition to the considerations set forth above, New York is far from meeting the most elementary conditions which are required if foreign representatives are to be able to live and carry on their business under normal conditions. Our diplomats here, including those of the highest rank, are not always, by any means, protected against discrimination and the violation of their immunity. On quite a few occasions New York has failed to ensure the security of even the official residences of ambassadors, including the representative of the USSR.

(Mr. Fedorenko, USSR)

That being the case, what kind of working conditions does New York have to offer other delegates and specialists?

We share the views expressed by the representative of India with the support of Mexico, the Polish People's Republic and, I believe, many others, that a greater effort should be made to reach an understanding, to find common ground and come to an agreement on the question of the place of meeting of the Sub-Committees. We hope that Mr. Plimpton too will show the spirit of co-operation and understanding that has been displayed by many of the representatives in our Committee.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I wonder if you would permit me to ask my colleague from the Soviet Union whether he is willing to accept the principle of flexibility and the principle of co-operation with the consensus of this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: May I add to this that if I have correctly understood the representative of the USSR, he has just indicated that he is prepared to seek constructive solutions. Therefore, he has already indicated his willingness to make a new effort. He has also supported the Indian request that the two major Powers should make another effort, with the assistance of the Chairman.

May I add that to me it seems that the main thing is that the scientists and the legal advisers already know the time they should be available for their assistance in the two Sub-Committees. The question as to where they have to go, either to Geneva or New York, is not of a decisive character, and does not have to be decided today, or tomorrow, or in two weeks.

(The Chairman)

Therefore, I think it is the consensus of the Committee that a new effort should be made between the two main countries, and that if this effort fails, then the Committee will be convened again and we will have to face the situation as it is then presented.

I should like now to hear whether other members favour the Indian request.

Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Poland): We congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, in that, basing yourself on the agreement made last year, you did not apply the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. That is another proof of the correctness of your position and proof that the representatives of India and Mexico were right that voting here would not solve anything if there were not agreement and no meeting of minds. If it were otherwise, they would be acting completely illegally, according to rules 119 and 117 of the rules of procedure, which state that there should be no debate when a proposal for adjournment is made. Of course, I think that you were perfectly correct, and that is why the pressure for a vote on this or the other issue was contrary to the previous consensus and was politically unjust.

Therefore, I support your presentation that anybody who wishes to may take the floor in order to oppose the proposal made by the representative of India and supported by the representatives of Mexico and the Soviet Union. I believe that neither the United States representative nor myself are opposing it, and we should wait until all the representatives who wish to have spoken on the proposal. The situation would then be solved correctly, as you have done it, by not applying rules 119 and 117.

The CHAIRMAN: In reply to the Polish representative, the Chair would state that none of the members has asked for an adjournment under rule 119, and the request made by the Indian representative was that further efforts should be made by the two major Powers. If the Chair does not hear any opposition, he will take it that this request is acceptable to the Committee.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I appreciate, as I am sure our Soviet colleague does, your interpretation of his remarks, but unless he does say himself that the position of the Soviet Union in this matter is flexible and that it is willing to abide by the consensus of the wishes of this Committee on this matter, I do oppose an adjournment.

Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, may I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for having accurately stated the position of my delegation and thereby answered the question put by the representative of the United States, although, of course, I am quite grieved that you have deprived me of the opportunity of answering him directly. However, I am sure that I will have the opportunity of exchanging mutual pleasantries and courtesies with him. I am also grateful to my Polish colleague for having correctly understood and for having supported our position.

Now, Mr. Plimpton, your manner of speaking reminds me of a detective novel in which there is a dialogue between a policeman and a man accused of some criminal act. I do not recommend you to resort to that method in the future. It is not becoming to the representative of a great country, particularly in the presence of so many worthy representatives of so many countries. You should not speak in the language you have used to the representative of a no less independent and no less great Power than yours.

Since you have touched upon this criminal method, I must say that for some reason you have refrained from answering in other instances in which you have been involved personally. I regret it very much, but when we speak of the convenience or the advantages to be derived by holding meetings in your own country, you force us to say that New York is far from always having the necessary facilities for our work.

I repeat what I have said before. We share the considerations put forward by the representative of India and supported by the representatives of Mexico and of the Polish People's Republic, as well as, we believe, by many other representatives, that more energy should be displayed and more effort should be exerted to try to find a common language in coming to agreement on this question. I appeal to you, Mr. Plimpton, to show the same spirit of co-operation and understanding that is being displayed by certain other representatives here.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Committee agree to the proposal of the representative of India that a last effort should be made to reach agreement?

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): I simply wish to point out that we regard this matter as one for the twenty-eight members of this Committee and not merely for two members of the Committee. If it is the wish of the majority of the Committee that there should be an adjournment, I would point out that this is not a problem between the Soviet Union and the United States: it is a problem for all of us. We do not subscribe to the idea that this is a "duopoly". We regard this Committee as the master of its own affairs. If there is to be an adjournment, we ask that it should be on the assumption that it is the concern of every member of this Committee to resolve the Committee's problems. I repeat that this is not a problem for two countries: it is a problem for all of us.

The CHAIRMAN: In reply to what has just been said by the United States representative I would say this: During the past weeks I have, I think, proved that I consult all the members. But with regard to matters of outer space it appears that a precondition is that the two main Powers in that field should come to an agreement. I personally undertake to inform all the other members of the Committee, as I have done in the past, and to try to obtain their views and their agreement. It has been my experience that in many instances small countries have very valuable suggestions to make. As I have said, I shall continue to keep in contact with all twenty-eight members of this Committee.

The representative of the United States has, I believe, made no reservation except that other members of the Committee should also be requested to co-operate in the efforts to reach agreement.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): Would the Chairman be willing to tell us whether the results of his consultations so far shed any light on the preferences of the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Does the representative of the United States have in mind the results of my previous consultations -- that is, the consultations that I have held up to today?

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Since our last meeting, I have made renewed efforts, in accordance with the wishes of the Committee, to find a solution that would be accepted unanimously. I have consulted with all members to that end. On the basis of the preferences expressed by the members of the Committee during those consultations, I have the impression that a large majority of the Committee would favour a session of the Technical and Scientific Sub-Committee in Geneva and a session of the Legal Sub-Committee in New York. This afternoon, some representatives who have been in favour of another solution have gone along with the proposal on those lines made by the representative of Canada. Perhaps we can reach some agreement on the basis of the Canadian proposal. However, it is necessary to continue the efforts because the representative of Canada has officially put forward the proposal only this afternoon.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): In what I hope will be regarded as a genuine spirit of compromise, I may say that the United States will accept the Canadian proposal as a compromise decision.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the United States representative, but I think that the efforts must still be continued. In that connexion the United States representative has expressed no reservation except that this is a matter not for only two members but for all the members of the Committee.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): Would you wish, Mr. Chairman, to ask the Committee now whether there is any objection to such a compromise? If there is no objection, your problem is solved.

Mr. CUEVAS-CANCINO (Mexico)(interpretation from Spanish): I venture to appeal to that flexibility to which the United States representative has referred. I do not think that a decision should be taken at the present meeting. I think that the purpose of the proposal made by the representative of India and supported by me would be somewhat distorted if we were to follow the procedure suggested by the United States representative. Since this is a question of extraordinary importance, I would appeal to the United States representative to take into account the proposal we have made. We have requested the Chairman of the Committee to intervene with the two great Powers. I hope that it is evident that our interest in the matter is very great indeed.

The CHAIRMAN: The United States representative has suggested that the Committee should be consulted now on whether it would accept the proposal made by the representative of Canada. I think that such a consultation should be deferred, since the proposal was made only this afternoon and many delegations have no instructions on it. Thus, if I were to ask the Committee to pronounce itself on the Canadian proposal, many members would not be able to respond because this is a new proposal to them.

I have now stated the impression I have as a result of my consultations. I would therefore prefer it if the United States representative would not press for putting this question to the Committee now. I think that it would be better to await the outcome of the new effort to be made between the two main Powers. These efforts should start immediately, so that by next week at the latest the Committee may be convened again to hear the results of those efforts. If the new efforts do not succeed and if no agreement is reached, we shall be at a total impasse.

(The Chairman)

Also, it seems that the Committee would like to avoid any voting. However, if after all the consultations and all the efforts have failed there still is no agreement, the only alternative is to resort to another procedure. Therefore I think the two major Powers will do their utmost to reach agreement, and I believe that this afternoon's meeting has been very useful, for we have already heard many delegations changing their rigid positions and trying to get along with a compromise solution. The Chair is therefore not absolutely convinced that no solution can be found. The fact that some delegations have already announced their preference for a compromise solution along the lines of the Canadian proposal is a hopeful sign and I do trust that the two major Powers can arrive at an agreement.

Having said this, I hope that the representative of the United States will not press for consultation of the Committee this afternoon for pronouncement on the proposal made by the representative of Canada.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America): I would remind the Committee that this problem has been under discussion since sometime in January. It simply must be decided; something has got to be done about it. The United States is perfectly willing to agree to an adjournment of twenty-four hours so as to make possible a final effort to reach some sort of agreement; but we have been at this so long that the United States really sees no chance of reaching a solution unless this is done promptly. We are, of course, thoroughly prepared to engage in further consultations immediately, and I would suggest an adjournment for a very short time, for otherwise we are just never going to get this problem decided.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee is now in agreement that the two major Powers, with the assistance of the Chair, will continue their efforts. As to the time of the next meeting to be convened to hear the result thereof, tomorrow is Friday, and I hope that if the two Powers can start their consultations immediately, by sometime during the next week at the latest the Committee can be convened again.

(The Chairman)

Before adjourning this meeting, I would ask the Committee if this is agreeable, and if I hear no objection I will take it that it is.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: Also before adjourning, I would ask the representative of the United Arab Republic, who had indicated that he wished to speak on another subject, whether he is prepared and would like to speak this afternoon.

Mr. RIAD (United Arab Republic): I would prefer, Mr. Chairman, to speak later, not today.

Mr. COOK (Australia): Just a point of clarification, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned in your statement a short while ago that the reason for the adjournment was that the Canadian proposal had just been introduced this afternoon and that the various delegations needed more time to determine their positions on this. Do I take it, therefore, that this is the purpose of the adjournment, that we all here are to determine our positions on this proposal and see whether our Governments have any objections to the Canadian proposal?

The CHAIRMAN: It is up to every delegation to ask for instructions on this new proposal. But the main reason for our adjourning now is to agree to the request of the representative of India that the two main Powers continue their efforts to reach agreement. Such agreement can also be in another sense not involving only the proposal of Canada. The Canadian proposal is a very valuable effort to break the impasse, but perhaps there are other solutions also. We have even heard some interesting suggestions by the representative of Iran to the effect that in 1964 our Committee, and the Sub-Committees probably, will be unable to meet here in New York because of extensive repair work envisaged in this building next year. This is another new aspect that came out this afternoon, and I think that this meeting has produced some new aspects which may lead to real agreement.

If no other member now wishes to take the floor, the Chair will adjourn the meeting.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.