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Third Session

SUB-COMMITTEE A OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING

Held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris,  
on Friday, 8 October 1948, at 3:00 p.m.

CONTENTS:

Continued discussion of the draft resolutions relating to atomic energy.

<u>Chairman:</u>	Sir B.N. RAU	India
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. R. SANDLER	Sweden

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The CHAIRMAN stressed that the aim was to produce in the minimum time an agreed resolution or one with the maximum support. He proposed to deal consecutively with the following problems: (1) whether or not to approve the recommendations and findings of the Atomic Energy Commission; (2) what action should be taken after such a decision; (3) whether the USSR proposal for two simultaneous conventions was acceptable.

After discussion it was agreed to deal first with the operative part of the Canadian draft resolution (A/C.1/308).

General McNAUGHTON (Canada) noted that all the draft resolutions revolved about acceptance or rejection of the Atomic Energy Commission's recommendations. He urged an immediate decision that any resolution must include approval of the Commission's Reports.

He intimated that he would later propose the incorporation of the New Zealand draft resolution (A/C.1/314) in his own.

Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) disagreed with the Canadian representative's formulation of the issue, which in his opinion found no support in the resolutions before the Sub-Committee. His own belief was that the First Committee had established the Sub-Committee to find a way out of the impasse.

At Mr. Osborn's request, Mr. SANDLER (Sweden) elucidated his Government's position as one of support for the findings of the Atomic Energy Commission, which, however, had left certain questions undecided.

Mr. OSBORN (United States of America) desired to have the attitudes of the sponsors of the Syrian and New Zealand draft resolutions ascertained from the records of the First Committee.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished to direct the discussion into the right channel. Many representatives supported the majority plan, but a number favoured prohibition of atomic weapons, while others had welcomed the USSR draft resolution for simultaneous resolution of the problems of prohibition and control as overcoming one of the main points of previous disagreement.

General McNAUGHTON (Canada) stressed that the Australian resolution and the Syrian amendment were additions to the Canadian draft resolution. He reaffirmed the point at issue as not the adoption of one or two conventions but settlement on a democratic basis of the principle of support for the Atomic Energy Commission's recommendations as asserted in the Canadian draft resolution which he wished to have considered by paragraphs together with the proposed changes.

/ Mr. MANUILSKY

Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) reaffirmed the independence of the New Zealand draft resolution. The Syrian amendment also stressed the importance of new efforts to reach agreement. Finally, the Australian draft also proposed a new beginning in order to reach agreement. To begin with the Atomic Energy Commission's findings would make agreement impossible.

Mr. TSIANG (China) who thought paragraph 8 of the Canadian draft resolution the central point on which the Committee must make up its mind, quoted from the verbatim record the statement of the New Zealand representative (C.F.A/C.1/SR.148) before the First Committee expressing support for the findings of the Atomic Energy Commission. He wished to know precisely in what respects the representatives of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR wished approval of the Atomic Energy Commission's report to be modified.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) rejected the Canadian draft resolution because it approved the Atomic Energy Commission's findings which were contrary to the General Assembly resolutions. He deplored the disparity between the Commission's findings and the Assembly's directives, its usurpation of competence, its postponement of the immediate task of prohibition of atomic weapons and weapons of mass destruction and its failure to restrict its control scheme to the control of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only and not for military and political pressure. Instead the Commission proposed a control organ with a monopoly of research in the field including military research, and further violated the Assembly's decision by proposing an organ outside the Security Council which would own all atomic facilities including mines. The USSR could not approve this. It proposed a prohibition of atomic weapons and effective and strict control within the limits necessary to ensure the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only.

Mr. MILES (United Kingdom) proposed to pass first upon that part of the Canadian draft approving the control proposals in the First and Second Reports of the Atomic Energy Commission, and then to deal separately with the conclusions of the Third Report concerning the consequences of the impasse in the Commission. The New Zealand proposal would be dealt with in that connexion.

Mr. COUVE de MURVILLE (France) agreed that the Sub-Committee should first consider the technical proposals. The USSR draft resolution merely restated the words of the General Assembly Resolution, while the Canadian resolution was clear and specific. The General Assembly must decide whether the Commission's reports could serve as a basis of future work or must be discarded.

/Mr. MANUILSKY

Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) found that the Canadian draft resolution and the reports of the Atomic Energy Commission ignored the basic question of prohibition. All that was offered was an allegedly scientific conclusion that the problem could be solved only by total United States control over the economies of other countries. The Canadian proposal was therefore unacceptable.

All experts stressed that atomic energy was being utilized for military purposes exclusively. That was precisely what it was proposed to prohibit. The Commission itself had stressed the primacy of the political aspect of the problem. Yet the attempt was made to divert attention to the technical aspect.

Approval of the Atomic Energy Commission reports and the Canadian resolution was not possible because the USSR draft resolution created a new situation by resolving the important past difference of opinion and thus rendered the Commission report outdated and the Canadian resolution fit only for the archives. The USSR offer should be made the basis for a new effort at solution acceptable to the whole Sub-Committee.

The CHAIRMAN, after objection by the United States, withdrew a tentative suggestion to substitute for paragraph 8 of the Canadian draft, paragraph 6 of the Indian draft resolution with the inclusion, after the word "accepts" of the words "to the extent that they carry out the resolutions of the General Assembly of 24 January and 14 December 1946".

Mr. de SOUZA GOMES (Brazil) reaffirmed the support of his delegation for the Atomic Energy Commission findings previously expressed in the meetings of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Mr. VITERI-LAFRONTÉ (Ecuador) while agreeing in principle with the Canadian draft resolution, preferred the language of the Indian draft resolution as not binding the Committee to every detail of the Commission's reports. He urged as imperative agreement upon a text clearly condemning the use of all atomic weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. COUVE de MURVILLE (France) agreed that reference must be made to the essential question of the prohibition of atomic weapons. He proposed to add at the end of the fourth line of paragraph 8 (document A/C.1/308) the words: "and for the elimination, from national armaments of atomic weapons".

/Mr. OSBORN

Mr. OSBORN (United States of America) observed that while there had been no omission from the speech of the USSR delegate which had often been made before, something had been added for the second time. The first addition referred to inspection, the second to simultaneous conclusion of the two treaties. The debate on the first change showed that it constituted no advance. The second change also made little difference in the position.

The United States delegation approved in toto the findings of the First and Second Reports of the Atomic Energy Commission, but not because they were American proposals. While the First Report followed the Baruch proposals, the recommendation in the Second Report that all atomic plants capable of producing on a dangerous scale should cease operating until effective control was established, and the provision that quotas should be provided for in the convention, both constituted drastic changes in the American proposals. Nevertheless, the United States accepted them as offering the greatest possible security with the least possible infringement upon the rights of nations.

Mr. MILLS (United Kingdom) urged that the Sub-Committee was bound to agree with the majority proposals and that there could be no compromise with the facts of atomic energy.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) criticized the Commission's report for ignoring the crucial question of prohibition and the problem of putting into effect simultaneously two conventions dealing with prohibition and control. The majority plan was American and even outdid the original Baruch proposal in its infringements of national sovereignty, a conclusion shared by others such as South Africa. No other answer than Mr. Gromyko's could have been given to the request for a USSR assurance on the question of a control convention.

The United States representative in the Commission, he added, had resisted agreement and remained silent despite the major USSR concessions. The USSR plan, unlike the majority plan, provided a purpose for control, namely, supervision of a convention on prohibition.

Mr. COUVE de MERVILLE (France) denied that the Canadian draft resolution did not refer to the prohibition of atomic weapons and recalled his proposed amendment to the Canadian draft resolution on this point. He read to the Committee passages from Part II (c) and Part III of the First Report affirming that the prohibition of atomic weapons was an essential part of a system of control. He therefore thought the difference between the majority and the minority an easily removed disagreement on the question whether to have one or two treaties.

/Mr. TSIANG

Mr. TSIANG (China) concurred with the French representative. The central point of disagreement in his view concerned international control and the functions of the control agency. The Commission, recognizing the reluctance of nations to limit their sovereignty, had reduced the control proposals to the absolute minimum necessary for security. He asked the representative of the USSR to specify the objectionable parts of the majority proposals for control.

General McNAUGHTON (Canada) viewed the majority proposals as inescapable and requiring approval because based on fact. Paragraph 2 explicitly and paragraph 8 by direct implication approved the prohibition of atomic weapons. The facts of atomic energy made it absolutely essential that prohibition and control should be linked in one document. After careful consideration the Commission had concluded that the USSR proposals for inspection would give no security. There was nothing inconsistent with the majority proposals in the precaution taken by the Union of South Africa of ensuring that ownership of ores containing fissionable materials was at all times vested in the State. General McNaughton accepted the French amendment to the Canadian draft resolution.

In reply to a question from Mr. Malik (USSR) as to whether the majority proposals provided for conventions on prohibition and control to be signed and entered into simultaneously, General McNaughton stated that the findings and recommendations in the First Report provided for the elimination of atomic weapons in an orderly manner along with the establishment of control. The prohibition would come into effect in its proper place and the word "simultaneous" did not apply.

Mr. MANUILSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said in reply to the representative of China that he did not think it possible to say which part of the majority proposals the minority accepted or rejected. The proposals would establish an international trust owning uranium and plutonium mines, factories, and empowered to issue licenses and establish quotas. Such powers exceeded those of the Security Council and of the United Nations. The USSR on the other hand proposed the establishment of a control agency within the framework of the Security Council with the right to inspect enterprises in order to determine the reserves of fissionable material and to study the application of atomic energy to peaceful uses. The minority could not accept the French proposal to establish a private trust under the guise of a control agency composed of private individuals with the right to allocate quotas and own mines and factories. There were no men at the present time who could rise above national interests. He could not see  
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/what part of

what part of its national sovereignty the United States would give up under proposals for control which began in uranium mines which the United States lacked.

A United States State Department pamphlet "Policy at the Crossroads" showed that the control plan could not prevent atomic warfare and was only a pretext to avoid co-operation. The minority members of the Commission were of course defending their own interests but were also fighting for the prohibition of atomic weapons in the interests of all humanity. For these reasons the minority rejected the majority plan.

The CHAIRMAN thought the area of disagreement on the question of prohibition of atomic weapons had been narrowed and suggested drafting an amendment before the next meeting to make explicit that the prohibition of atomic weapons was approved in the Canadian draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 18.05 hours.