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Chairman: Mr. Fernand VAN LANGENHOVE (Belgium) (*Vice-Chairman*).

Declaration on the removal of the threat of a new war and the strengthening of peace and security among the nations (*continued*)

[Item 69]*

GENERAL DISCUSSION (*continued*)

1. Mr. YOUNGER (United Kingdom) said that the principal characteristic of the USSR draft resolution (A/C.1/595) was that it produced once again, as if they were new, ideas on which the General Assembly had already voted several times after very full discussion in the appropriate organs of the United Nations, namely the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments. Yet the Soviet Union had certainly shown no anxiety in recent months to make progress there.

2. Whenever this question was debated in the General Assembly, Members were compelled to note that the Soviet Union had not pursued a policy in conformity with the fine words spoken by its representatives at preceding sessions. It therefore seemed that the object of the USSR was to submit every year a vague and unacceptable draft resolution, which would ensure that no effective action could be taken by the two Commissions, while the USSR was able to derive at least a certain propaganda advantage from its empty gesture.

3. The United Kingdom delegation was regretfully compelled to give this interpretation to the attitude of the USSR Government, which could indeed not be explained otherwise, considering the obstructive attitude of the USSR delegation toward any practical proposal, and the Soviet theory that disarmament was a form of diplomatic dissimulation exploited by governments which desired to conceal their true aims—a theory put forward in the official Soviet *History of Diplomacy* by Professor Potemkin.

4. At present it was the "Partisans of Peace" movement and the "Stockholm Appeal" which were being

utilized to exploit the universal desire for peace. Delegations and the peoples they represented would not be impressed by the hundreds of millions of signatures said to be appended to that appeal. In the first place, numbers of signatures had been withdrawn when those who had signed in all good faith had later discovered the hypocrisy of the appeal. Secondly, there was ample evidence of the pressure which had been brought to bear in the countries under Soviet Union domination with a view to obtaining the greatest possible number of signatures. Lastly, lists containing signatures all in the same handwriting were hardly convincing. It should also be remembered that large numbers of North Koreans were alleged to have signed the appeal at the very moment when they were engaged in a war of aggression.

5. No Stockholm Appeal was needed to know that all the peoples of the world desired nothing more ardently than the prohibition of the use of atomic energy for aggressive ends. Unfortunately, the USSR representative had merely repeated the proposals for the control of atomic energy which he had first made in 1946¹ and which had been found totally inadequate both at the time they were put forward and again more recently, since they did not provide the minimum security without which no control plan could be acceptable. Most delegations shared the view of ordinary men and women that atomic energy should be controlled by the United Nations, so that peace-loving States could accept the abolition of atomic weapons in the full confidence that other States were doing the same and that the United Nations would have the means of discovering whether any State was violating its obligations.

6. The question therefore turned on the kind of control needed to achieve this object. The USSR maintained that a system of periodic inspection and special investigations would be adequate, whereas the majority was convinced that the international agency must itself operate and manage plants which were producing dan-

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, First Session, Part II*, 42nd plenary meeting.

gerous quantities of atomic materials. It was absurd to suppose, for example, that an inspector who visited a plutonium plant from time to time would be able to satisfy himself effectively that the amount of plutonium observed in the pile corresponded with the amount declared by the management. Even a resident inspector in the factory would find it extremely difficult to keep an adequate check on production if the management wished to deceive him. Moreover, how would it be possible by inspection alone to be certain that there were no atomic factories in existence in remote areas which had never been declared by their governments? The only guarantee against this danger would be to give the international control agency the management and exploitation of atomic raw materials.

7. The Soviet representatives claimed that operation and management of atomic undertakings by the international control agency would be tantamount to interference in the economic life of States, and would limit the development of atomic energy for peaceful ends. It was surprisingly reactionary for a government proclaiming its international socialist origins to declare that the international control of atomic factories might restrict the development of atomic energy for peaceful ends. Moreover, if the use of the atomic bomb was indeed the most heinous international crime against humanity, it was all the more necessary to accept some revision of conventional ideas of national sovereignty, and to be prepared to make some sacrifices in order to save humanity from destruction. The other permanent members of the Atomic Energy Commission were prepared to accept the necessary innovations in this connexion; only the USSR rejected any solution not in accordance with the rigid and traditional conception of state sovereignty.

8. In fact, the scheme for the control of atomic energy contained in the USSR draft resolution was in reality no control, and merely repeated suggestions which gave no guarantee that an ill-disposed Power would be prevented if it chose to build up atomic armaments in defiance of its obligations.

9. Furthermore, while the USSR draft resolution condemned the use of the atomic bomb, it made no mention of aggressive war. Yet the USSR Government knew very well that entire populations could be annihilated by an aggressor even without resort to atomic bombs. It was tanks, not atom bombs, which the Nazis had used in perpetrating their aggressions; and similarly it was tanks which had come near to overwhelming the Republic of Korea. Could it be that it was because the Soviet Union at present possessed a force of 25,000 tanks that its draft resolution made no mention of this type of armaments?

10. It was precisely the one-sidedness of the Stockholm Appeal which had led a group of a hundred Norwegian authors to refuse to sign. This inadequacy, which was equally characteristic of the USSR draft resolution, could not fail to give rise not only to scepticism, but to distrust. The Foreign Minister of Israel had accurately defined the situation in his speech to the General Assembly (286th plenary meeting), when he had said that it was aggressive war which must be outlawed, since the use of atomic weapons was but one particularly heinous corollary of that basic evil.

11. In contrast to the incomplete USSR draft resolution, the draft resolution (A/C.1/597) submitted by

the Netherlands delegation (375th meeting) sincerely expressed the feelings of peace-loving peoples about aggression, and put the atomic problem in its proper perspective.

12. While the views expressed by the USSR representative on 23 October (372nd meeting) with regard to the policy of the Soviet Union and the Western democracies before the Second World War could not by any means be accepted, it must nevertheless be admitted that in the past errors had been committed on both sides. That was why Member States were determined to place all their strength behind the United Nations in the struggle against aggression, in order not to repeat the errors due to the feebleness and indecision of the League of Nations. Unfortunately, while the Western democracies were prepared to admit their errors and correct them, the Soviet Union, which had proclaimed itself the champion of collective security against the Nazis, now appeared to have taken a step backwards.

13. Clearly, not much weight could be attached to the USSR representative's case with regard to the non-aggression pacts signed by his country before the war, in view of the policy of the USSR in 1939 and 1940 with regard to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland—States which had nevertheless concluded such pacts with the USSR.

14. It was also curious to note that immediately after reaffirming his belief in the possibility of the peaceful co-existence of the Soviet system with that of the western countries, Mr. Vyshinsky had launched a violent attack against the Anglo-American bloc, and had accused it of preparing aggressive plans with a view to promoting United States ambitions for world mastery. Mr. Vyshinsky must certainly see the contradiction between those two propositions; how could he believe in the possibility of a *rapprochement* if at the same time he believed in what he called the imperialism of the Anglo-American bloc? In actual fact, Mr. Vyshinsky used an argument when it suited him and discarded it when it did not. He probably did not believe one-half of what he said about the United States and the United Kingdom. In any case it was wiser to judge the USSR Government by its acts than by the speeches of its representatives.

15. Mr. Vyshinsky, referring to speeches by Mr. Acheson and Mr. Bevin, had alleged that the policy of the Anglo-American bloc was based on force, and had quoted Mr. Bevin's statement that before any good could come of four-Power talks it was essential that the Western democracies should be strong.

16. But was it not true that since the war, the West had been faced with the Soviet Union's indirect use of the superiority of its forces for political ends? Under the protective influence of the Soviet Union's armies of occupation, the Communist parties had seized key positions in Czechoslovakia, Romania, and the Soviet Zone of Germany. Similarly, the Soviet Union had attempted to maintain its grip on Yugoslavia which it hoped to enslave, and it maintained constant pressure on Austria and Western Germany. It had over-reached itself in the case of the Berlin blockade and in the moral and material support it had given to aggression in Korea.

17. It was the anxiety that the proximity of preponderant forces and acts of hostility across borders had created in many parts of the world that had led the Western Powers to create a counter-balance to Soviet Union military power, not in a spirit of domination or intimidation, but in order to be prepared to fulfil their obligations under the Charter and in order that negotiations with the Soviet Union might not be paralysed by the disproportion of available forces.

18. The Soviet Union, which had at its disposal some 25,000 tanks and 150 active divisions and which had organized in Eastern Germany armed forces called "Bereitschaften", complained, through its representative on the First Committee (372nd meeting) about the existence, in Western Germany, of police provided with tanks and artillery and under the command of Nazi generals. But how could the organization in Western Germany of a mobile police force limited in size and in no way paramilitary in nature, and the desire of Western Europe to possess a force of sixty divisions justify the accusation of a desire for world mastery? In fact, in one case all the Soviet Union did was to repeat perfectly justified accusations against the "Bereitschaften", directing them without justification against the Western police. In the other case it ignored the present balance of forces by its hypocritical proposal of a uniform reduction of all armed forces, which was anything but a real contribution to the re-establishment of international confidence.

19. While the operative clauses of the Soviet Union draft resolution were mainly concerned with disarmament, its title and the reference in the preamble to the development of friendly relations professed broad sentiments that were unfortunately belied by the violent and mendacious attacks upon the United States, and what was much worse, by the whole of the foreign policy followed by the Soviet Union since the war.

20. The war had only aggravated the economic and social ills that had caused it. The poverty, the destruction, the ruin of the old social structure, demanded of the great Allies that they should take the lead in assisting the small nations and in international co-operation for reconstruction. From this point of view 1945 had been a year of hope. Would the socialists and above all the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics prove themselves worthy of the confidence of the masses?

21. Mr. Vyshinsky had assuredly affirmed his faith in concerted action for reconstruction, education and progress (371st meeting). But while the social contribution of the United Kingdom both at home and in Africa was open for all to see, no one was able to learn from Soviet experience. Furthermore, in the international sphere the Soviet Union had not participated in the efforts made on behalf of war victims and refugees nor in technical and medical assistance and the long-term projects of the World Health Organization, UNESCO and the International Labour Organisation. The technicians, the teachers, the equipment had come from the "imperialists" of the Anglo-American bloc and above all from the United States, while the Soviet Union not only had not joined any of the specialized agencies but had brought pressure on its neighbours to prevent their participating in the effort of European co-operation. Its contribution to the Economic Commission

for Europe was steadily diminishing, with a consequent adverse effect upon the compilation of the necessary information. And yet it was the Soviet Union itself, which in the case of the Berlin blockade had stooped to using hunger as a political weapon, that now affirmed its faith in a world where people would bend with a common will to concerted action for reconstruction, education and progress. This was not the way to demonstrate a spirit of the good neighbourliness and loyalty towards the United Nations. Nor was this being faithful to the ideal of socialism, whose traditions and international spirit were being flouted by the representative of the USSR.

22. The post-war fund of good-will towards the Russian comrades, built up in millions of hearts, was not exhausted; it remained for the Soviet Union to join wholeheartedly in the great international task; to apply a truly democratic and socialist policy and not to restrict itself to a draft resolution such as that which the Soviet Union delegation had seen fit to propose.

23. Sir Carl BERENDSEN (New Zealand) emphasized that the USSR draft resolution (A/C.1/595) was merely a new version of similar proposals submitted at previous sessions, although those proposals had been studied and rejected.

24. Judging simply by appearances, the draft resolution might at first sight seem worthy of consideration as some of its terms appeared unexceptionable. But if the actions of the USSR Government and the intentions of the authors of the draft resolution were borne in mind, it would be seen that the purpose of the draft was not to strengthen the United Nations but to serve selfish ends. It was not even possible to think that Mr. Vyshinsky had really believed that his proposal might be accepted. The only conclusion to be drawn, therefore, was that the proposal had been submitted solely for propaganda purposes.

25. Moreover, all the aims of the draft resolution were to be found either in the provisions of the Charter or in previous resolutions of the General Assembly, which had not been applied until now solely on account of the narrow nationalist policy of the USSR. The New Zealand delegation would therefore vote against the draft resolution of the Soviet Union.

26. To the limited extent that a draft resolution was useful at all, the New Zealand delegation preferred the joint proposal submitted by the six Powers (A/C.1/597), which clearly stressed that the international crime was aggression and not the use of this or that weapon.

27. The Bolivian draft resolution (A/C.1/596) was a sincere attempt to approach the question in another way. The six Powers and the Bolivian representative might perhaps consult one another and submit a joint text.

28. Mr. BOHEMAN (Sweden) fully supported the statement made by the Netherlands representative (375th meeting).

29. He wished to assure the members of the Committee that the Swedish Government and the overwhelming majority of the Swedish people deeply regretted that the name of their capital had been associated with the

Stockholm Appeal. The objective character of that name had been used to induce millions of dupes to sign.

30. The Swedish delegation would vote against the USSR draft resolution and would support the joint draft resolution submitted by the six Powers.

31. Mr. EL-KHOURI (Syria) recalled that the USSR draft resolution, which had already been discussed and criticized at length, included three essential points. The first paragraph of the operative part, concerning propaganda in favour of a new war, was acceptable and did not give rise to any new question. The prohibition of atomic weapons and the reduction of armaments, referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the operative part, gave rise to too many technical problems for the First Committee or the General Assembly to be able to discuss them intelligently. Special Commissions had been set up for that purpose, and it was surprising that no reference had been made to them in the USSR draft. The method to be used in regulating armaments consisted, in the first place, in determining the forces required by each State for its external security, the maintenance of public order and the fulfilment of obligations under Article 43 of the Charter, and only then in deciding upon reduction of the excess armaments.

32. Instead of deciding in advance upon an arbitrary reduction, the General Assembly should therefore address an urgent appeal to the Commission for Conventional Armaments and the Atomic Energy Commission, which had reached a deadlock, to resume their activities. The latter organ, in particular, had extensive documentation which should be put to good use. It was not enough to declare the prohibition of the use of atomic energy for military purposes; it was essential to establish international control, which only a specialized commission was in a position to organize.

33. In 1948,² the Syrian delegation had submitted a draft resolution calling upon the great Powers to continue their efforts in the two Commissions, but the reply had been that any new attempt would be useless. That state of mind had to be relinquished, in order to embark upon a new and whole-hearted effort.

34. The Syrian delegation was able to accept all the paragraphs of the Bolivian draft resolution (A/C.1/596); but was it enough to express a pious wish? The First Committee had to state how that wish could be fulfilled, and that was provided for neither in the Bolivian draft resolution nor in the six-Power draft resolution. The latter text, in particular, stated, in paragraph 1 of the operative part, that it was indispensable that "action be taken against aggression" and in paragraph 2 that every nation should "agree" to take certain

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Part I, First Committee, Annexes*, document A/C.1/318.

measures, but no definition was given of how that should be done.

35. Another point that had to be clarified was the definition of aggression. It was questionable whether "fomenting civil strife", which was referred to in the third preliminary paragraph of the six-Power proposal, constituted a case of aggression. The International Law Commission was in process of studying that question. There were many ways of fomenting civil war with many degrees of seriousness, and if that incontestably constituted a crime, there was no certainty that it indeed constituted the crime of aggression. Thus, a question which was still under study should not be prejudged, and it was preferable to omit the words "or by fomenting civil strife".

36. Generally speaking, the Syrian delegation considered that the three draft resolutions were so short that the General Assembly would not be fulfilling its duty if it confined itself to expressing wishes to which no effect could be given.

37. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, as had been announced at the 375th meeting, he would propose closing the list of speakers at the forthcoming meeting. He therefore called upon representatives who wished to participate in the debate to submit their names without delay.

38. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that it would be premature to close the list of speakers at the next meeting. Certain provisions in the draft resolutions of Bolivia (A/C.1/596) and of the six Powers (A/C.1/597) were sufficiently important to require careful study before they could be discussed seriously. With regard to the USSR draft resolution (A/C.1/595), the most useful contributions to the debate had consisted, not in attempting to interpret the motives of its authors, but in dealing with the substance of the question. The problem of the threat of a new war was of such great significance that, in the circumstances, reasons of limitation of time should not be allowed to prevail over the necessity of trying to find some common ground of agreement. Furthermore, certain delegations were still awaiting instructions.

39. The USSR delegation therefore requested the Chairman to postpone the closure of the general debate, in order that delegations might have an opportunity of submitting their suggestions and amendments.

40. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that he had merely recalled the wish expressed by the Chairman of the First Committee, and had not formally proposed the closure of the debate; it was for the First Committee to decide whether closure was desirable.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.