

**CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT**

ENDC/PV.208
18 August 1964
ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 18 August 1964, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS

(Canada)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. CORREA do LAGO

Mr. E. HOSANNAH

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV

Mr. G. GHELEV

Mr. T. DAMIANOV

Burma:

U SAIN BWA

U HTOON SHEIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS

Mr. S.F. RAE

Mr. R.M. TAIT

Mr. C.J. MARSHALL

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. KLUSAK

Mr. V. VAJNAR

Mr. A. MIKULIN

Ethiopia:

Lij Mikael IMRU

Ato S. TEFERRA

India:

Mr. R.K. NEHRU

Mr. K.P. LUKOSE

Mr. K. NARENDRANATH

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI

Mr. R. GUIDOTTI

Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO

Mr. M. TELLO

Mr. J. MERCADO

Nigeria:

Mr. L.C.N. OBI

Poland:

Mr. M. LOBODYCZ

Mr. E. STANIEWSKI

Mr. H. SOKALSKI

Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU

Mr. E. GLASER

Mr. V. CONSTANTINESCU

Mr. P. MATEESCU

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL

Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD

Mr. U. ERICSSON

Mr. B. VEGESACK

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. S.K. TSARAPKIN

Mr. L.I. MENDELYEVICH

Mr. S.A. BOGOMOLOV

Mr. I.M. PALENYKH

United Arab Republic:

Mr. A. OSMAN

Mr. S. EL FATATRY

Mr. M. KASSEM

United Kingdom:

Mr. J.G. TAHOURDIN

Mr. A.J. WILLIAMS

Mr. J.M. EDES

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

United States of America:

Mr. C.H. TIMBERLAKE
Mr. D.S. MACDONALD
Mr. R.A. MARTIN
Miss M.R. de GUNZBURG

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Canada): I declare open the 208th meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. LOBODYCZ (Poland): The discussion on a working group, which has continued for the past two months, has to our regret not yielded the results which might have been expected. Though all delegations have supported the Soviet Union's idea of establishing such a group, the basic differences concerning its principal duties continue to exist.

Consequently, it appears, a paradoxical situation has arisen. It is the more paradoxical since there seems to be a general concurrence of views that nuclear delivery vehicles must be eliminated in the process of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, and that an agreed and controlled number of those vehicles should remain until the end of disarmament. That fact, of course, should not be underestimated. It is a result of the Soviet Union's concessions (ENDC/2/Rev.1 and Add.1) in regard to its original plan (ENDC/2). However, of all the Soviet concessions the Western Powers accept only those which they can fit into the framework of their own disarmament plan (ENDC/30/and Corr.1 and Add.1,2,3); while on their part, as far as their disarmament plan is concerned, they do not admit any concessions. Certainly such an attitude has nothing in common with the "reciprocal basis" urged by the representative of the United Kingdom at the meeting of 11 August (ENDC/PV.206, p.17).

Thus it is here that lie the reasons for the situation about which I have just spoken, which have so far prevented the working out of an agreed basis as a guiding line for the working group. For the absence of such an agreed basis one cannot substitute a mere evasion of making a decision, as would be the acceptance of two or more concepts based on contradictory premises. Therefore I regret I cannot agree with the assertion of the representative of the United Kingdom that the present areas of agreement between the two sides "already seem quite sufficient to enable us to draft terms of reference for a working group." (ibid., p.15).

The setting up of unequivocally-formulated terms of reference is in our view an important requirement for the functioning of the group and a prerequisite to its success. To renounce the elaboration of an agreed basis for a discussion of problems related to the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles would contradict the very idea of a working group. After all, by its discussion of specific problems the

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group should assist the Committee in the elaboration of details indispensable for the implementation of the agreed concept. At this juncture it is worth recalling that the Western Powers themselves have proposed on many occasions a discussion of details pertaining to the "nuclear umbrella", or minimum deterrent.

As was rightly stressed by the representative of India on 30 June:

"The working group must, however, know what precisely we have in mind.

It must have a clear directive, or clear terms of reference.

Otherwise the course of discussion will follow the same general course as the discussion in the main Conference." (ENDC/PV.194, p.11)

The recognition of the need for a concrete formulation of the terms of reference of the working group has not only been contained in a number of interventions by representatives of socialist and non-aligned States, such as those made by the representative of Nigeria on 14 July (ENDC/PV.198, pp.31 et seq.), by the representative of Mexico on 7 July (ENDC/PV.196, p.6), and the representative of the United Arab Republic on 14 July (ENDC/PV.198, p.16); it was likewise accepted in the announcement unanimously adopted by the Committee on 7 July, which approved the co-Chairmen's recommendation to "work on the development of an agreed basis for the working group" (ENDC/PV.196, p.29). In such circumstances it is difficult for us to understand the approach of the United States representative expressed on 4 August (ENDC/PV.204, pp.18 et seq.) and that of the United Kingdom representative on 11 August (ENDC/PV.206, pp.15 et seq.) in regard to working out the terms of reference of the group in question.

Mr. Timberlake suggested that the terms of reference of the group should be worked out in such a manner as to allow for a discussion of various proposals within item 5b (ENDC/52) notwithstanding the principles on which they might be based, thus disregarding the requirement of an "agreed basis" stipulated in the co-Chairmen's announcement. At the same time the United States representative tried to present an interpretation of the position of the non-aligned States which implied that the latter shared the United States point of view.

It is not my intention to give a detailed analysis of the statements of the representatives of the non-aligned countries on the problem. With all due respect, however, I must say that Mr. Timberlake's interpretation seems to be of an arbitrary

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character. The United States representative concentrated on selecting at random single sentences out of their broad context and tried to interpret them against the very ideas of the individual statements. Thus he suggested that we should accept his own subjective interpretation.

Let me cite a few examples. Mr. Timberlake quoted, for instance, what had been said by the representative of Ethiopia, Lij Imru, on 30 June to the effect that the working group should "examine and appraise all proposals"; but he passed over in silence the preceding sentence, in which the representative of Ethiopia had unequivocally stated:

"... the working group is going to discuss, in all its aspects and implications, the concept of the minimum nuclear deterrent."

(ENDC/PV.194, p.28).

Here is another example. Mr. Timberlake stated that the representative of India "stipulated that the working group should not be confined to the proposals of only one side" (ENDC/PV.204, p.19). However, if we compare the quotation with the verbatim record of the meeting of 30 June, we find there, in addition to that sentence of Mr. Nehru, a general statement by him to the effect that the working group could examine specific issues arising from any proposal which may be made by any participating member --

"... with the aim ... of ensuring that at the earliest practicable stage of the disarmament process the existing stocks of each nuclear side are reduced to the minimum level of a specific nuclear deterrent, or a 'nuclear umbrella'..." (ENDC/PV.194, p.12).

To dispel any remaining doubts about what he had referred to, Mr. Nehru emphasized "that this is the crux of the matter, as it gives a clear directive to the working group..." (ibid.)

Therefore it is a matter of course that the possibility of discussing various proposals as understood by the non-aligned States is considered within the framework of an agreed common principle, common concept or basis of a minimum deterrent.

Mr. Timberlake stated clearly on 4 August that the United States delegation in fact does not believe "that any specific principle for reduction needs to be agreed on before the establishment of a working group." (ENDC/PV.204, p.20). Having heard that, we cannot refrain from asking the following -- and, I submit, quite justified -- question: how can the United States representative reconcile such a

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statement with his voluntary readiness, expressed in the co-Chairmen's announcement of 7 July (ENDC/PV.196, p.29), to work together with the Soviet co-Chairman on the development of "an agreed basis for the working group"?

My delegation believes that the terms of reference proposed by the United States provide neither a directive nor a guide-line for the working group. In fact their acceptance would be tantamount to our Committee's renouncing its important task and duty to work out an agreed concept of elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles. It would be an attempt to pass on to the working group the Committee's task defined by General Assembly resolution 1908 (XVIII) of 27 November last, which recommended the Committee --

"... to continue to encourage the widening of the areas of basic agreement or similarity in the principal parties' approaches to the fundamental issues of general and complete disarmament;" (A/RES/1908 (XVIII); ENDC/139).

The course of action suggested by the representative of the United States would permit passing over in silence the absence of an agreement on fundamental issues and transferring to the working group the task of coming to grips with problems which, unfortunately, the Committee has so far failed to solve. Detailed analysis and technical studies cannot be a substitute for an agreed basis. On the contrary, it might even happen that experts of each side, while trying to prove the validity of different, or even opposing, concepts with details brought to technical perfection, could but give rise to growing divergences. Hence it is only the agreed basis which can prevent such a situation.

In this connexion Professor Bernard T. Feld of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in his essay contained in the book entitled "Arms Control and Disarmament", quite rightly says:

"Clearly, the achievement of any significant form of arms control involves agreement on issues which are at the same time political, economic, strategic, military, social, historical and legal as well as technical". The role of an arms control "technician", according to Professor Feld, is significant "provided the political and other such constraints can be reasonably well defined".

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The problem of the terms of reference of the working group is by no means a procedural one; for there exists a fundamental divergence between two disparate concepts of how to eliminate nuclear delivery vehicles: the concept of the speediest possible elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles, except for a strictly limited number within the framework of a "nuclear umbrella", on the one hand, and the proposal for a percentage reduction of such vehicles on the other. The latter would result only in preserving the danger of an outbreak of a thermonuclear conflict.

Therefore it is beyond any doubt that the successful solution of the question of terms of reference of the working group depends upon a political decision, on selecting a definite concept. The socialist countries and the non-aligned States have already selected that of the speediest elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles while preserving a strictly limited number to safeguard the security of States during the disarmament process, as called for by the Western Powers.

A starting-point for this idea is an assumption rightly expressed by the representative of India on 30 June when he said, referring to nuclear armaments --

"The level has clearly passed the danger point and is very much above the minimum level needed for genuine security or for deterrence" (ENDC/PV.194, p.9). Thus what we have before us is a concept which, according to generally-used terms, is one of the so-called "minimum nuclear deterrent", "nuclear umbrella", or "nuclear shield".

I do not intend to draw a detailed comparison between the approaches to the problem as presented by the United States and by the non-aligned countries. I should like, however, to mention two important general elements which might stem from such a comparison.

First, there is a difference between the evaluation of the existing arms race made by the non-aligned countries and that made by the United States. Like the position expressed in the statement of Mr. Nehru which I have quoted, the position of the non-aligned States is based on the assumption that nuclear armaments have enormously exceeded the level which could be justified for purposes of defence, and that they constitute a source of danger to world peace. We fully share that view and deem it the leading principle of disarmament negotiations, one which points to the urgency of taking determined steps to remove that danger.

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However, for the representative of the United States that assumption by the non-aligned States is, as he put it on 21 July, merely a source of "confusion". He said:

"That assumption grossly oversimplifies the problems involved. Nuclear delivery vehicles form part of existing defence structures. Their elimination must be considered in relation to the other parts of those structures. They cannot be treated as if they existed in a vacuum."

(ENDC/PV.200, p.16)

That thesis of Mr. Timberlake's had been even more extensively dealt with at an earlier meeting, when he said:

"Under present conditions each State has made its own determination of its necessary deterrent. In the case of the United States that deterrent represents the minimum necessary for its security. The number of nuclear delivery vehicles may seem too high to some." (ENDC/PV.196, p.25)

The second element is a comparison of the approaches to the problem of the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles. As is known, the United States disarmament plan actually assumes that the present structure of armaments, including missile and nuclear armaments, will continue until an unidentified end of the third stage of disarmament. During recent meetings of this Committee the representatives of the United States have quite frequently stressed their determination to abide by that assumption in further disarmament negotiations. It is only too obvious that their position has nothing to do with that of the non-aligned States, which postulate the speediest elimination of the danger flowing from the existence of nuclear armaments.

The two comparisons I have just mentioned make it abundantly clear that any attempts to allege that the approach of the non-aligned States is identical with or even close to that of the United States do not stand up under criticism when confronted by facts. Two diametrically-different concepts, based on different philosophies of peace and disarmament, are incompatible.

It is also worth stressing that the United States delegation in this Committee advocates an approach which does not allow for concessions that even Western scientists,

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including United States scientists, have in fact recognized as acceptable. For instance, while the United States delegation is opposed to the idea of a minimum deterrent at an early stage of disarmament, many scientists in the West, despite certain reservations, approve of that idea in principle. I need mention only two examples.

Jerome Wiesner writes the following in his "Comprehensive Disarmament System Based Upon Stable Deterrent": "There are valid arguments for making the deterrent force as small as possible." Richard Leghorn comes to this conclusion in his work entitled "The Pursuit of Rational World Security Arrangements":

"Success in building rational world security arrangements depends heavily on the early control and stabilization of national deterrent arms at the lowest levels still adequate to deter resort to violence. This is an urgent problem."

Before concluding, I wish to state that we share the concern of the representative of the United Kingdom and other colleagues about the need for making progress on the question of the working group at this session of our Conference. But what we desire is true progress, which is possible only if here, in this Committee, we reach an accord on an agreed basis for the working group. So long as we are not able to agree on what is indispensable for the effective functioning of the working group, we cannot be satisfied with establishing it. To create such a body without an agreed basis for its activities would amount -- and indeed for a very short time -- to giving an illusion of progress; it would be an undertaking calculated, not to obtain real results, but, as the Latin saying goes, "ut aliquid fecisse videatur".

U. SAIN BWA (Burma): I wish to comment very briefly on the question of setting up a working group on the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles in the process of general and complete disarmament.

Our Committee's work at this session began in a very favourable international climate. On the very opening day of the session, 9 June, the then representative of the Soviet Union, Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin, stated that, if the Committee approved, the Soviet delegation was prepared to participate immediately in the

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consideration of the liquidation of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons within the framework of a programme of general and complete disarmament, in an appropriate working body and with the "nuclear umbrella" proposal as a basis (ENDC/PV.188, p.17). A week later -- that is, on 16 June -- the representative of the United States, Mr. Foster, responded to Mr. Zorin's suggestion and stated that the United States delegation agreed "to the establishment of a technical working group to deal with the problem of nuclear delivery vehicles." (ENDC/PV.190, p.48) Of course, both the United States and the Soviet Union attached certain conditions to the functioning of the working group.

Since that time we have been discussing this question every Tuesday, and a number of delegations have suggested formulas for the terms of reference of the proposed working group. The delegation of Burma has been following the debates with keen interest, in the hope that a solution may be found for establishing a working group on a mutually-agreed basis. Since the problem is complicated, we have not lost patience despite a lack of progress, although we were disappointed at the announcement made by the co-Chairmen on 4 August. That announcement was the following:

"In accordance with the last report of the co-Chairmen and the instructions of the Committee, the co-Chairmen have continued their discussions during the past two weeks on the development of an agreed basis for the working group, the question of the creation of which arose in connexion with the current discussion in plenary meetings of the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles in the process of general and complete disarmament. They have not yet reached agreement. They are continuing their discussions."

(ENDC/PV.204, p.5)

I have said that we were disappointed at that announcement. However, we have not despaired, because the co-Chairmen are continuing their discussions. We are glad that the co-Chairmen, at the same time as they made their announcement, gave a summary of their views on the proposals made in the Committee. In assessing the proposals put forward by the non-aligned countries, the representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Tsarapkin, said:

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"Although ... not everything in these suggestions can be accepted and certain points in them require ... further study, at the same time we can say that the suggestions of the non-aligned States are on the whole in the right, constructive direction; they contain a number of valuable ideas ..."

(ENDC/PV.204, pp.10, 11)

On the other hand, the representative of the United States, Mr. Timberlake, said:

"If the non-aligned States have not succeeded in finding a middle road between the Soviet and United States approaches to the working group, it is because the two approaches are qualitatively different..." (ibid.. p.20)

However, each of the co-Chairmen struck an optimistic note towards the end of his statement. Mr. Timberlake said:

"We hope that it will yet be possible to find a basis for establishing a working group before the end of this session." (ibid.. p.21)

Mr. Tsarapkin concluded his statement with the following words:

"The Soviet delegation appeals to all members of the Committee to exert the utmost efforts to achieve positive results in our negotiations before the end of the present session of the Committee." (ibid.. p.12)

Taking into consideration those optimistic remarks by our two co-Chairmen, the delegation of Burma feels that it would be in the interests of the Committee that the two co-Chairmen should continue their discussions, and it is hoped that their perseverance will bring fruitful results. The delegation of Burma wishes to emphasize the importance of the question before us; we do not want our Committee to lose track of it by switching over to another subject.

Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) (translation from French): I note with regret that, despite the goodwill of delegations, our Tuesday meetings continue to be somewhat unconstructive. Today the Polish representative has spoken again about the working group and has re-emphasized the need for agreed terms of reference. We share his view. But Mr. Lobodycz repeated the well-known demands of the Eastern delegations with respect to these terms of reference: that they should exclude the study of the United States proposals and be restricted to the study of the Soviet proposals. Mr. Lobodycz also gave us his own interpretation of the position of certain delegations of non-aligned countries; that is his own affair.

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I personally believe that the delegations of the non-aligned countries want nuclear delivery vehicles to be reduced as soon as possible and the nuclear threat to be effectively limited and diminished. My impression is that, to achieve that aim, the delegations of the non-aligned countries will accept any means or method, any system whatever of reduction, provided that it is sound and feasible. This is a realistic and constructive attitude, which does not exclude any proposals but brings them all within the scope of a common study directed towards a common aim. The delegations of the non-aligned countries are certainly anxious that our work should not continue to be impeded by procedural discussions, and that we should move on to matters of substance as soon as possible.

The Burmese representative has made his contribution this morning to the consideration of the problem of the working group. I listened to his statement with great interest and shall study it again in the verbatim record. I do not, however, think that at this juncture his wise comments are likely to extricate our negotiations from the present deadlock and enable us to make progress.

In its statement on 28 July my delegation pointed out (ENDC/PV.202, pp. 26, 27) that all the efforts made by the Western delegations for the past two and a half months to set up a working group on nuclear delivery vehicles had proved fruitless because of the attitude of the Eastern delegations. At the same meeting my delegation reverted to an idea previously put forward by the Canadian delegation (ibid., pp. 21 to 23) and proposed that the Committee, while not finally renouncing the idea of setting up a working group on delivery vehicles, should move on to other agenda items relating to general and complete disarmament.

That suggestion did not seem acceptable to the Soviet delegation, for Mr. Tsarapkin immediately made the following assertion in reply to my statement and that of Mr. Burns:

"... the existence of these difficulties ... cannot be a justification or pretext for postponing examination of the question of eliminating nuclear weapon delivery vehicles ..." (ibid., p. 27).

Mr. Tsarapkin said that the ideas put forward by the Swedish delegation at the meeting of 28 July needed "more careful study", and added:

"The Soviet delegation feels that all the possibilities have not yet been exhausted, nor have all the ways been explored." (ibid., p. 28)

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At first sight these remarks seemed interesting and somewhat encouraging. Their tone appeared to indicate that the Soviet delegation might be moving towards acceptance at least of the substance of the Swedish proposals (ibid., pp. 5 et seq.) or, in general, towards an attitude of greater co-operation and readiness to consider the Western point of view.

These assumptions proved groundless. At our meeting of 4 August the Soviet delegation, after following its usual procedure of interpreting in its own way and pro domo sua the proposals of the non-aligned delegations, said that those proposals were, despite this preliminary work, unacceptable in substance. According to Mr. Tsarapkin, these proposals seem "not entirely successful or, at least, insufficiently clear from the point of view of the main criterion ..." (ENDC/PV.204, p. 9). Mr. Tsarapkin also dealt severely with the Swedish proposal, for he noted with obvious disapproval that it "admits the possibility of applying the percentage principle to the elimination of nuclear weapon delivery vehicles ..." (ibid.), which is quite unacceptable to Mr. Tsarapkin.

The Soviet and other Eastern delegations subsequently reaffirmed their position without showing the slightest comprehension of, or receptivity to, the observations of the Western delegations. Mr. Lukanov, the Bulgarian representative, spoke in this vein at the meeting of 11 August and, incidentally, was guilty of a number of contradictions. He said that "the Committee must continue its discussion of this issue" (ENDC/PV.206, p. 8), while recognizing that "As our discussion shows, we lack precisely this agreed basis ..." (ibid., p. 9). I should like to ask Mr. Lukanov how he thinks it will be possible to carry on a fruitful discussion without an agreed basis. The Polish representative spoke today on this same theme of the lack of an agreed basis.

Mr. Lukanov also tried to show that he has an open mind. He asserted that "nobody in the Eighteen-Nation Committee has said that the working group should consider a single and sole proposal" (ibid., p. 13). But he immediately added that of course "the principle put forward in the Gromyko proposal should be taken as the basis for the activities of the working group". (ibid.) That reminds me of the car dealer who had no variety in stock and told his customer that he could choose any colour he liked so

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long as it was black. I shall study the verbatim record of the statement made today by the Polish representative, but, as I have already indicated, I do not think it contains anything very new.

In my view, the Committee can do no more at this stage of our discussion than sum up the points of agreement regarding the working group, as I said at our meeting of 28 July (ENDC/PV.202, p.25). First, we all agree that the problem of step-by-step elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles merits special study within the framework of general and complete disarmament and in the light of the Agreed Principles. Second, we agree that the problem of step-by-step elimination of nuclear weapon delivery vehicles should be studied on the technical level in a working group. Those two points of agreement are by no means unimportant and should be stressed in our report to the United Nations. They will constitute our starting point when we resume our work. Thus we all agree that the establishment of a working group is absolutely essential if we want, as indeed we do, to draw up on the technical level measures to bring about the step-by-step elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles.

It appears that, for the time being, it is unfortunately impossible to come to an agreement on the terms of reference of the working group. In these circumstances my delegation cannot disregard the fact that our time is precious and that other problems remain to be studied during this session, at least on a preliminary basis. The study of these problems could contribute, directly or indirectly, to the solution of the problem with which we have concerned ourselves throughout this session.

I should like, however, to make one final point. If the Soviet delegation, in proposing the establishment of a working group, intended to give us further information about the Gromyko plan, it should not be prevented from doing so by procedural issues. The Soviet delegation could very well resume, in the Conference and in plenary, the substantive examination of the question of the step-by-step reduction of nuclear delivery vehicles by setting out the technical details of its proposals, which we have so often wished to know and have so often requested. We, for our part, are willing to study them side by side with our own proposals.

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

We had in the past a Committee of the Whole which at a certain point transferred its functions to the plenary Conference. This constitutes a precedent. A proper working group would, of course, be preferable; but, since it is not possible to set one up at the moment, we should not let a procedural matter prevent us from studying the substance of the question. So far as the substance is concerned, we are always willing to listen in the Conference to the useful, indeed necessary, explanations of the Soviet proposals, and to clarify our own proposals.

There are thus two ways out of the impasse. Since we cannot at present agree on the terms of reference of the working group, we could pass on to the examination of other items. If the Soviet delegation has further information to give us about its proposals, we could also resume in plenary the examination of the question of nuclear delivery vehicles --- if need be, with the participation of experts --- through technical discussions bearing on the proposals of all delegations. But what we must do, above all, is to end these completely unproductive Tuesday meetings which are a waste of time and do the Committee no credit.

The CHAIRMAN (Canada): As there are no other speakers, I should like to make a few short remarks on behalf of the Canadian delegation.

We have listened with particular attention to the statements which have been made today by the representatives of Poland, Burma and Italy. We find ourselves very much in agreement with what has just been said by the representative of Italy. His position is essentially that which we exposed to the Committee at a previous meeting (ENDC/PV.202, pp. 20 et seq.). The Canadian delegation would have very much liked to see a working group set up which could have gone into the details of how the nuclear weapon vehicles, admittedly a large and growing species of armaments which create a danger to the peace of the world, could be reduced and eventually eliminated. But we find that at the twenty meetings since we reassembled, ten of which have been devoted to this particular subject, very little progress -- in fact, no progress -- towards agreement on how this working group can be set up has been registered.

(The Chairman, Canada)

In the view of the Canadian delegation, we are really in the same position as we were before the current session opened: that is, we were told by the Soviet representative that the explanations of what was implied by the Gromyko plan for a "nuclear umbrella" would not be given unless that plan was accepted in principle. I submit that the statement by the representative of Poland today and the statements by representatives from the Eastern European group at previous meetings express essentially the same position: the principle of the "nuclear umbrella", as set forth in the Soviet draft treaty as amended by Mr. Gromyko's two statements at the General Assembly (ENDC/2/Rev.1 and Add.1) must be accepted before there can be any detailed discussion or explanation of what it means.

We respect very much the viewpoint put forward by the representative of Burma today and by other representatives of the non-aligned States that it is essential that some means be found to deal with the crucial problem of disarmament, the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapon vehicles; but we feel, with the representative of Italy, that we are not making progress in continuing to discuss this matter in plenary session on Tuesdays. We think that, unless the co-Chairmen can by themselves now come to some agreement on the terms of reference, having before them the views which have been put forward by all the delegations here at this series of ten meetings, it is not going to be useful for us to continue discussing the subject in plenary meetings.

We hope that, while continuing to seek ways of coming to agreement on this point, the co-Chairmen will also be able to agree to recommend to this Committee some other subjects which we can discuss with more hope of progress at our Tuesday meetings. Finally, we hope that somehow or other they will come to such an agreement between themselves as will permit us to revert to the subject of the elimination of nuclear weapon vehicles in a more hopeful framework for discussion.

Mr. NEHRU (India): I should like to say a few words, because we have heard some very interesting statements today.

The very interesting statements we have heard from the representatives of Poland and Italy, your own statement, Mr. Chairman, and also the statement made by our Burmese colleague, on the question of the formation of a working group, seem to show that there is a difference of opinion concerning whether or not we should continue this discussion.

(Mr. Nehru, India)

The position as we see it is as follows. To start with, a certain measure of agreement was reached with regard to the formation of a working group. Then the non-aligned countries made some proposals which were welcomed -- like the proverbial curate's egg -- in parts by our Western and Eastern colleagues. Our Western colleagues liked some parts of the proposals, and our Eastern colleagues liked other parts. I venture to suggest that the proposals made by the non-aligned countries are not specific proposals. They are in a sense the rudiments of a more specific proposal. They are ideas and suggestions which we have offered and which should be considered as a whole.

Our Polish colleague expressed his appreciation of the fact that we have emphasized the need for defining the purpose of the inquiry. Obviously it is essential, if a working group is set up, that the purpose for which it is set up, the purpose of the inquiry, should be clearly defined. Our Western colleagues, I believe, like those parts of our proposals which refer to the equally great importance of every proposal being considered. The proposals we have put forward, the ideas we have thrown out, include both those concepts: that all proposals be considered, with a view to attaining a certain objective.

I find from the statements made by the Polish representative that our colleagues from the East do not like the idea of a percentage method of reduction. It is not at all clear to me why the same results should not be achieved by a percentage method of reduction as by some other method. In any case, if the percentage method of reduction is not likely to lead to the results we desire, surely the group of experts will reject it or point out the limitations of that method. Similarly, as far as the purpose of the inquiry is concerned, we have all emphasized that, although our proposals are slightly different, the basic feature of all our proposals is that the inquiry must be made with a view to ensuring that the existing stocks of nuclear weapon vehicles are reduced to the lowest possible level at the earliest possible time.

The point that I wanted to make was this. Our Italian colleague and you, Mr. Chairman, have suggested both today and at previous meetings that, since we cannot reach agreement on this question, which seems to my delegation to be a fairly simple question, we should pass on to some other items. We have no objection to discussion of other matters.

(Mr. Nehru, India)

However, Mr. Cavalletti said, if I understood correctly, that if we were to continue discussing the question of the formation of the working group it would detract from the prestige of this Conference. If we were to pass to some other item, would it enhance our prestige? If, after discussing this question for nearly six months, we suddenly come to the conclusion that no useful purpose would be served by continuing to discuss it, what guarantee is there that the discussion of some other subject would lead to any results?

A practical and concrete suggestion was made a few weeks ago by our Soviet colleague, Mr. Tsarapkin, to the effect that, since the two co-Chairmen could not agree on the formulation of the terms of reference of the working group, they might seek the assistance, informally or in some other way, of countries which had made certain proposals, parts of which had been welcomed by our Eastern and Western colleagues. We have had no answer from either side on the progress made with regard to that concrete suggestion. Is there any serious objection to inviting other members of the Committee to help the two co-Chairmen, informally, in formulating the terms of reference? Unless we try some other method of overcoming this difficulty, it seems to my delegation premature to think in terms of passing on to some other item. As I have said, the Indian delegation has no objection to discussion of other subjects; but the specific suggestion made by Mr. Tsarapkin should, I think, receive the consideration of the two co-Chairmen.

Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) (translation from French): I listened with great attention to the statement just made by Mr. Nehru, the Indian representative. We have always noted with keen interest the contribution of the non-aligned delegations to the study of the question of creating a working group. But I fear that the continuation of this sterile discussion in plenary is a waste of time which does no credit to our Committee.

I understand the wish of the Indian delegation, as also that expressed this morning by the Burmese delegation, that the Committee should continue to study the question of creating a working group. I must therefore say that we have never contemplated abandoning this study altogether, but merely leaving an interval for reflection so as to see whether an agreement can be reached on this subject later. To achieve a step-by-step reduction

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

and, after that, the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles, we consider that certain technical studies are inevitable. That is why we welcomed with satisfaction the proposal put forward at one stage by the Soviet delegation.

Personally I believe that the failure of the two co-Chairmen to achieve any concrete results in their discussions so far should not prevent them from continuing their exchanges of views on this subject. If their talks bring concrete results and fresh proposals, they should communicate them to the Conference, and we can resume to good purpose, on a more favourable basis, our discussions on the creation of a working group. In the meantime the Eighteen-Nation Committee, which at its last few meetings has undeniably been of little material assistance to the co-Chairmen, could profitably pass on to the examination of other matters until the co-Chairmen apprise us of the results of their labour

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 208th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador E.L.M. Burns, representative of Canada.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Poland, Burma, Italy, Canada and India.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 20 August 1964, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.