

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

ENDC/PV.252
29 March 1966

ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 29 March 1966, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. A. A. ROSHCIN

(Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. CORREA do LAGO
Mr. G. de CARVALHO SILOS
Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MOTA

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV
Mr. D. POPOV
Mr. T. DAMIANOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

Canada:

Mr. E. L. M. BURNS
Mr. S. F. RAE
Mr. C. J. MARSHALL
Mr. P. D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. T. LAHODA
Mr. V. VAJNAR
Mr. V. CEBIS

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ABERRA
Mr. A. ZELLEKE

India:

Mr. V. C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K. P. LUKOSE
Mr. K. P. JAIN
Mr. S. V. PURUSHOTTAM

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. G. P. TOZZOLI
Mr. S. AVETTA
vMr. F. SORO

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO
Mr. M. TELLO MACIAS

Nigeria:

Mr. G. O. IJEWERE
Mr. O. O. ADESOLA

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (cont'd)

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN
Mr. E. STANIEWSKI
Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU
Mr. N. ECOBESCU
Mr. C. UNGUREANU
Mr. A. COROIANU

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL
Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD
Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. A. A. ROSHCHIN
Mr. O.A. GRINEVSKY
Mr. V. V. SHUSTOV
Mr. G. K. EFIMOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. H. KHALLAF
Mr. A. OSMAN
Mr. M. KASSEM
Mr. A. A. SALAM

United Kingdom:

Sir Harold BEELEY
Miss E. J. M. RICHARDSON

United States of America:

Mr. A. S. FISHER
Mr. C. H. TIMBERLAKE
Mr. L. D. WEILER
Mr. D. S. MACDONALD

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): I declare open the two hundred and fifty-second plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

There is so far only one speaker on today's list -- the Soviet Union -- and I shall now take the floor in my capacity as representative of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet delegation attaches very great importance to the consideration in our Committee of the problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We note, therefore, with satisfaction that the proposal to commence an article-by-article discussion of the treaty on non-proliferation has been adopted by the delegations, and that such a discussion has taken place at the Committee's present session (ENDC/PV.235, p.20).

Although all delegations in the Committee declare that it is urgently necessary to adopt measures to halt the dangerous process of nuclear weapon proliferation, no actual progress towards the accomplishment of this task can be recorded. As we have repeatedly stated both in and outside this Committee, the main obstacle to the fulfilment of this task is the Western Powers' attempts to achieve the conclusion of such a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as would leave them with the possibility of creating multilateral forces under NATO and of "sharing nuclear responsibility" -- as the Western delegates now call it -- within this military alliance.

It was precisely to this circumstance that Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, drew attention in her statement on 24 February last, when she referred to -- "The presently most controversial issue, that of the multilateral nuclear force or the Atlantic nuclear force or nuclear sharing within NATO..." (ENDC/PV.243, p.9), and added that --

"... it acts as an obstacle to truly responsible negotiations..." (ibid.)

We are forced regretfully to conclude that, while here in the Committee negotiations are proceeding on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, within NATO itself negotiations are proceeding on "nuclear integration plans" with the object of giving the Federal Republic of Germany access in one form or another to nuclear weapons.

Since we know what the difficulties are which impede the success of our work, it would be perfectly reasonable and logical if we concentrated our main attention

on just those difficulties. This would allow us to exert our efforts in the requisite and useful direction and would at the same time provide us with a general and reliable criterion for evaluating the various drafts and proposals on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In our opinion, such a criterion might be the requirement that all proposals put forward here should in the highest degree be conducive to overcoming the main obstacle to the conclusion of an effective agreement which would close all doors and all loop-holes leading to direct and indirect proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is the criterion by which we should now like to analyse the amendments submitted by the United States delegation on 21 March last (ENDC/152/Add.1) to the United States draft treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons of 17 August 1965 (ENDC/152).

One of the principal changes in the new version of the first article of the United States draft is an addition whereby it is forbidden to "transfer nuclear weapons" not only into the "national control" of non-nuclear Powers, but also "into the control of any association" of such States. It can legitimately be asked whether this addition disposes of the fundamental objections to the previous United States draft which have been expressed by the Soviet delegation and a number of others. The main point of these objections was, as you all know, that the United States draft, while closing some doors to the spread of nuclear weapons, leaves open quite a number of possibilities -- that is, loop-holes -- for the spread of such weapons to take place.

That this is so was shown very convincingly in statements made in this Committee by the delegations of the socialist countries and by the representatives of several non-aligned States, including the United Arab Republic (ENDC/PV.245, pp.8,9) and Burma (ENDC/PV.250, p.30). Unfortunately, a careful and objective analysis of the contents of the first article of the United States draft obliges us to answer this question in the negative, and we are forced to the conclusion that the additions made by the United States delegation do not correct the basic defects of the original draft.

We note first of all that the new version of article I of the United States draft, while prohibiting the transfer of nuclear weapons into the "national control" of a non-nuclear State or group of States, nevertheless does not in the slightest degree impede the transfer of nuclear weapons in any form into the possession or

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disposal of States through the intermediary of military blocs. Thus the United States draft, now as before, does not prohibit the granting of the right to participate in the ownership, control or use of nuclear weapons to States belonging to military alliances with nuclear Powers.

Furthermore, in the amended article I of the United States draft there is a paragraph 3 which says that States parties to the treaty undertake --

"Not to take any other action which would cause an increase in the total number of States and associations of States having control of nuclear weapons". (ENDC/152/Add.1)

This paragraph 3 contains a provision which is clearly unsatisfactory and at the same time highly ambiguous. It says that the nuclear Powers which are parties to the treaty may not increase the total number of nuclear Powers and associations of States possessing nuclear weapons; but it allows, for instance, the place of one nuclear Power to be taken by an association of States which will possess nuclear weapons. But a nuclear State and an association of nuclear States are not one and the same thing. A State is one Power or country, while an association of nuclear States means two or more Powers or countries.

If, therefore, we permit the transformation of a nuclear Power into an association of nuclear States, we automatically permit the spread of nuclear weapons to those States which, before joining a nuclear association, did not themselves have nuclear weapons at their disposal. The number of States possessing nuclear weapons, as a nuclear Power becomes transformed into a nuclear association, will obviously change. But this is of capital importance from the point of view of solving the non-proliferation problem. Instead of, say, five nuclear Powers, there will be four nuclear Powers and one nuclear association comprising, for example, fifteen States belonging to that association. There will thus be, not five, but nineteen States having access, to a greater or lesser extent, to nuclear weapons.

It follows quite clearly that the United States is proposing that the Committee should approve a provision which openly envisages the spread of nuclear weapons through alliances and associations of States. It is obviously impossible to agree to such a provision, since this is both contrary to the interests of international security and incompatible with the provisions of General Assembly resolution A/RES/2028(XX), with which we are all familiar, on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (ENDC/161).

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Thus, according to the United States proposals both the old and the new, such forms of the spread of nuclear weapons as the joint ownership and control of such weapons within the framework of military alliances would remain outside the prohibition, or, in other words, would become legalized. If a treaty were to be concluded on the terms proposed by the United States, then multilateral nuclear forces could be freely established in any military and political grouping such as NATO, or other plans could be carried out whereby non-nuclear States would gain access to nuclear weapons. This shows that the new version of the United States draft retains all those loop-holes for the spread of nuclear weapons which existed in the former version, and which must be closed in accordance with the requirements of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth session (A/RES/2028(XX)), and with the demands of the majority of the members of this Committee.

This conclusion is borne out by article IV of the United States draft, which contains definitions of a number of terms used in that document. In that article, the word "control" is defined as "right or ability to fire nuclear weapons". This formula means that the United States does not at all intend to prohibit such forms of the disposal of nuclear weapons as the collective ownership, control and use of nuclear weapons within the framework of military alliances; and this, as we have demonstrated more than once, is the foundation, the central principle, of the multilateral nuclear forces of NATO, or of any other plan for "sharing nuclear responsibility" within that alliance.

I should like to point out to representatives that article IV of the United States draft, the "definitions" article, casts additional light on the wide possibilities for the spread of nuclear weapons which the document submitted by the United States allows to persist. Take, for example, subparagraphs (a) and (b) of that article, which define a "nuclear weapon State" and a "non-nuclear weapon State" respectively as a State which controls and a State which does not control nuclear weapons, "control" being interpreted -- as we have mentioned before -- by the United States to mean only "right or ability to fire" those weapons. It is perfectly obvious from this that States which physically and legally possess nuclear weapons but do not have the right to use them independently are not considered to be nuclear-weapon States. Consequently it can be concluded that the United States draft treaty permits

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legal and physical possession of nuclear weapons by those States which do not at present possess such weapons. It is obviously impossible to agree with that.

The amended text of article I of the United States draft omits another important provision which is essential to a treaty on non-proliferation. There is not a word in that article on the necessity of prohibiting the granting of nuclear weapons and of control over those weapons and their distribution to units or individual members of the armed forces of non-nuclear States, even if they are under the command of military alliances.

We do not intend in this statement to analyse in detail the new version of article II of the United States draft, which concerns the obligations of non-nuclear Powers. We are compelled to note, however, that that article also suffers from the same shortcomings as article I, and that its content is completely subordinate to the desire of the United States to retain in a treaty on non-proliferation the possibility of carrying out plans for giving non-nuclear Powers control over nuclear weapons, and for the "sharing of nuclear responsibility" within the framework of NATO. It is for precisely this reason that the article makes no provision, for instance, for the important undertaking whereby non-nuclear States would refrain from receiving nuclear weapons into their ownership or control in any form whatsoever -- directly or indirectly, through third States or groupings of States -- and from participating in the ownership, control or use of such weapons.

Having carefully studied the amended version of the principal articles of the United States draft, the Soviet delegation has come to the firm and irrefutable conviction that this draft, like the earlier one, leaves open gaping loop-holes -- we should even be justified in saying a yawning gap -- for the spread of nuclear weapons. The United States proposals do not remove that principal obstacle to agreement on non-proliferation which consists in the attempts of the Western Powers to create multilateral NATO forces or to introduce the "sharing of nuclear responsibility" in NATO in one form or another. What is more, as was very rightly pointed out in the statement by Ambassador Bluzstajn, the Polish representative --

"... the Western Powers view a non-proliferation treaty as an element of their NATO policy, and as being subject to the present needs of the alliance". (ENDC/PV.237, p.28)

(The Chairman, USSR)

The Soviet delegation feels bound to declare categorically that the United States draft in its revised form cannot be accepted as a basis for the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons upon which we are working. We should like in this connexion to express our full agreement with the statement of the representative of Poland in which he evaluated the positions of the Western Powers on the problem of non-proliferation:

"It would be very unwise to assume that a non-proliferation treaty could be negotiated on terms which would leave the door open for new 'nuclear arrangements' under NATO". (ibid.)

In his statement on 22 March Ambassador Fisher, the representative of the United States, developed very thoroughly the idea that the "veto" which the United States will possess in the making of decisions within NATO on questions relating to the use of nuclear weapons will constitute a guarantee against the spread of nuclear weapons (ENDC/PV.250, pp. 6,10). In this connexion the Soviet delegation considers it necessary to remark that all arguments about a "veto" by means of which the United States would supposedly be able to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear Powers associated within alliances with nuclear Powers, seem to us quite unconvincing. Neither the Soviet Union nor, I presume, many other States, whether members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee or not, can base their security on the United States right to enter a "veto" when decisions are taken in NATO on questions relating to the use of nuclear weapons.

The security of States -- of the Soviet Union and the other socialist States and also of the non-aligned States -- cannot be based on any kind of agreements which exist or could exist within the framework of NATO. We cannot overlook the fact that NATO itself is an organization wholly directed against the socialist and some other countries. Moreover, any agreements which have been or may be concluded within the framework of NATO will be modified in directions corresponding to the interests of the leading Powers within NATO; and, of course, in matters relating to the use of the "veto" and in other agreements within the framework of NATO, the United States will be guided by its own interests and not by the interests

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of the security of other States-- the Soviet Union or its allies-- nor by the interests of the security of the non-aligned countries.

We have attentively studied the statements made by our Western colleagues, not only in order to understand the basic positions adopted by the Western Powers on the problem of non-proliferation, but also to find out what objections there are on the part of the representatives of those States to the Soviet proposals. After thorough consideration, and after analysis of the arguments put forward by the Western representatives, we have found that in actual fact they have no observations or reproaches to address to us which suggest that the Soviet draft treaty is inadequate from the point of view of effectively preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Not a single one of the representatives of the Western Powers who have spoken here has said that the Soviet draft treaty does not provide a solution of the problem of non-proliferation or obstructs the efforts to find a solution. And I believe that this is because the Soviet draft agreement actually does close all channels through which nuclear weapons might fall into the hands of non-nuclear States.

The only argument used by the representatives of the Western States in their discussions with us can be reduced to the assertion that, in advancing a concrete proposal (ENDC/164) fully appropriate to the task in hand on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union is trying to "weaken" or even "wreck" the NATO alliance.

Thus the Soviet draft treaty provides for a complete solution of the problem of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; and, as I have said before, not a single Western representative has proved the contrary. As for the argument of the Western Powers' representatives regarding NATO, it must be stated categorically that we are not concerned here in this Committee with the "wrecking" of NATO, and are considering the question of military alliances only to the extent to which it is essential to do so for the solution of the problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. As the whole course of the discussion on non-proliferation shows, we are under an absolute necessity to do this, for the attitude of the Western Powers is such that it is actually through NATO that they are trying to leave a loop-hole for giving access to nuclear weapons to non-nuclear Powers, and in the first place to the Federal Republic of Germany.

In this connexion I should like to quote the very exact description of the Western Powers' plans given by Ambassador Cernik, the representative of Czechoslovakia, who said that --

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" ... the gist and true meaning of these plans is the indirect proliferation of nuclear weapons as a means by which some non-nuclear Powers -- in particular the Federal Republic of Germany -- would be given access in one form or another to nuclear weapons within the framework of NATO. These States would thus be afforded the possibility of participating in the control of nuclear weapons and in taking decisions concerning these weapons which are at present under the control of the nuclear Powers members of NATO, and in particular the United States and the United Kingdom".

(ENDC/PV.242, p.31)

All this also applies fully to the new United States draft, which does not really solve the problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, since it does not exclude the possibility of spreading nuclear weapons by indirect means, including military alliances. It is precisely because of this that we insist that the treaty on non-proliferation should not leave room for the possibility of carrying out projects similar to the plan for multilateral nuclear forces under NATO. What we say to the Western representatives is this: if you intend to sign a treaty on non-proliferation, then let us agree that nothing should be done anywhere in the world which would be contrary to the very idea of such a treaty. This is what we insist on.

The Soviet delegation does not approach the problem of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in a narrowly selfish spirit. We consider that non-proliferation is a problem that causes anxiety to all States and nations of the world and that its solution would be a universal boon. At the same time, the lack of a solution to this problem increases the threat of a nuclear conflict on all continents and not only in Central Europe. In preparing our draft treaty we were guided by just this consideration; and if today we speak of the danger of creating multilateral nuclear forces under NATO, we are perfectly aware of the fact that the military blocs which the nuclear Powers -- the United States and the United Kingdom -- have created, and of which they are members, exist not only in Central Europe but also in Asia and Oceania -- I am thinking of SEATO, ANZUS and others. It follows quite clearly that the Soviet Union's insistence on the necessity of banning the spread of nuclear weapons through military blocs has a direct and immediate relevance both to Central Europe and to other parts of the world.

The approach of the United States and the United Kingdom to the question of non-proliferation is that a treaty on this problem should in effect concern only those States which do not belong to NATO and other military associations and alliances of the Western

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Powers. For States belonging to these alliances definite exceptions are being made and obvious loop-holes are being created to place nuclear weapons within their reach or provide them with access thereto in contravention of the General Assembly's recommendations.

In conclusion, we should like to touch upon certain questions raised in this Committee by individual delegations in connexion with the problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Thus Mr. Khallaf, the representative of the United Arab Republic, having pointed out in his interesting statement the shortcomings of the United States draft, raised the question whether the treaty on non-proliferation should be supplemented with such provisions as would prevent the spread of nuclear weapons through individuals and organizations, or as the result of an accident (ENDC/PV.245, pp.7, 8). This comment by Mr. Khallaf is directed towards closing all gaps and loop-holes for the spread of nuclear weapons. We consider that this proposal of the representative of the United Arab Republic deserves serious consideration.

I should like to remark that in the view of the Soviet delegation it is essential at the present time to concentrate our main efforts on overcoming the obstacles to agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We cannot go slow in dealing with this problem. Today the possibility of solving it still exists. If we miss this opportunity, the consequences for the cause of peace and for the security of the nations of the world may be very serious indeed.

That is all the Soviet delegation has to say for the moment; but it proposes at subsequent meetings to continue the statement of its views on the problem under discussion.

Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) (translation from French): Mr. Chairman, you have been good enough to make certain observations to the Committee on the amendments (ENDC/152/Add.1) submitted by the United States delegation to its draft treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Those observations, although expressed in a tone I appreciated, are unfortunately negative. The Soviet delegation does not seem to have found anything constructive in the effort made by the United States delegation and the other Western delegations.

The Soviet delegation's observations on sharing nuclear responsibilities within the framework of an alliance correspond to neither the intentions nor the letter of the Western proposals, since in the West such a division is visualized as existing solely and specifically within the limits allowed by non-dissemination.

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

The remarks made by the delegation of the Soviet Union on the amendments to the United States draft treaty are detailed, and of course deserve thorough study with a view to an appropriate reply. But the unfortunate fact remains that the Soviet delegation has grasped neither the meaning nor the aim of the draft United States treaty as it now stands after submission of the amendments. The Soviet delegation has again tried to change, to distort, the meaning of non-dissemination and to attribute aims to this collateral measure very different from those connected with the urgent need to restrict the number of Powers entitled to possess nuclear weapons.

Despite the consistently negative attitude of the Soviet Union, my delegation believes that our work must be pursued with patience and determination, because we continue to hope that eventually, by our efforts, our goodwill, our wish to avoid fruitless controversy and our genuine desire to reach agreement, we shall arrive at an understanding. You yourself, Mr. Chairman, reminded us that the Committee had decided to undertake a detailed consideration, article by article, of the draft treaties submitted by the Soviet Union (ENDC/164) and the United States of America (ENDC/152 and Add.1) respectively.

Now that the United States draft treaty has been supplemented and clarified by amendments, the time has come to undertake a thorough comparison of the two texts in the hope, as far as we are concerned, that this will throw light on the subject, advance our work and encourage the Soviet delegation to submit amendments to its draft treaty in turn and thus share in the efforts made by the Western Powers to reach a compromise. It will be useful if we can seek certain details and explanations concerning the Soviet text during this process of clarification, and I trust the Soviet delegation will allow me to put some questions to it.

To take the preamble first, the differences between the two texts are not very large. From a general point of view, of course, the Soviet text appears inspired by principles which are open to criticism. The emphasis seems to be purely on nuclear disarmament, whereas we already know that, within the framework of general and complete disarmament, nuclear disarmament must go hand in hand with conventional disarmament.

The Soviet text also calls for a prohibition of nuclear weapons, which in itself is a measure entirely devoid of safeguards and not susceptible of control.

Both the United States and the Soviet texts refer to resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. The United States text specifically mentions resolution 1665 (XVI), and, since the Soviet text was submitted after it, one wonders why there is no mention of resolution 1665 (XVI) by the Soviet Union.

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

The sixth paragraph of the United States preamble reaffirms the determination "to achieve agreement on general and complete disarmament" (ENDC/152), whereas the corresponding paragraph of the Soviet draft talks of "facilitating the conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament" (ENDC/164, p.4). There is a certain difference in emphasis and weight between the terms "achieve" and "facilitate". Has the Soviet Union any special reason for saying "facilitate" rather than "achieve"?

Other differences exist between the two preambles, of course, but I think that if the Soviet delegation were willing to relinquish certain references to debatable concepts which in any case do not directly concern non-proliferation, a formula might be agreed on without too much difficulty. I recommend that this should be done, even though the preamble is not the most important part of the treaty. The existence of an agreed preamble would be an encouragement, and, since it also lays down certain general principles and common hopes, the task is not without practical value and significance.

When we come to examine articles I and II of the respective drafts, we find that the wording begins to differ considerably. Since these are essential articles of the treaty, a comparative examination of the two texts is essential if we are to realize clearly the extent to which the respective positions differ.

I note that in the Soviet text the words "ownership" and "control" are sometimes employed alone and sometimes with the word "use". First, it is prohibited to transfer ownership and control to non-nuclear countries; and then it is prohibited to give those countries the right to participate in the ownership, control and use of nuclear weapons. Is there a special reason for this difference, and if so, what is it?

"Control" and "use" are also used to denote different abilities. Do "control" and "use" mean two different things to the Soviet delegation? It is possible to imagine a right of control without a right of use, and vice versa. The United States text, however, defines "control" specifically as right or ability to fire nuclear weapons. Is this definition acceptable to the Soviet delegation? If not, what is the Soviet Union's definition of the words "control" and "use"?

These questions are not asked out of mere curiosity but because the two draft treaties may prove to be closer than they seem at first sight. If the words "control" and "use" are in fact synonymous and if the Soviet delegation can consider accepting our definition of "control", the difference between the two texts mainly turns on the word "ownership".

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

It also seems to me that in its statements the Soviet delegation has departed from the wording of the treaty and interpreted it restrictively. In our discussions the Soviet delegation seems to have been opposed even to forms of consultative nuclear co-operation between allies. But a close scrutiny of articles I and II of the Soviet draft reveals no apparent prohibition on nuclear consultations, which, as we have always maintained, accord with the very nature of any alliance and form part of those responsibilities which should be shared. That is another point requiring clarification. The Soviet delegation should tell us clearly whether, where and to what extent its draft treaty prohibits nuclear consultations.

Article III of the Soviet draft seems to repeat in less precise terms what is stated in the preceding articles. I should be glad of some further explanation about this article. What is its aim? Does it concern countries which might decide not to accept the treaty?

Article III of the United States draft finds no reflection in the Soviet text. Does this silence mean that the Soviet Union is opposed to any form of safeguard? Does the Soviet Union, in the context of a non-proliferation treaty, reject control of both the nuclear activities of non-nuclear weapon countries and the peaceful nuclear activities of nuclear-weapon countries? That is a point of some importance.

Article III of the United States draft treaty envisages controls without discrimination or exception. All countries would have to co-operate in applying safeguards, on the understanding that there would inevitably be more extensive control over non-nuclear countries.

Article IV of the Soviet draft treaty seems to me to correspond to some extent with article VI paragraph 2 of the United States text. Has the Soviet delegation any major objections to the formula proposed by the United States for reviewing the treaty? The United States formula seems far more practical and effective than the one proposed by the Soviet Government.

In regard to article V, there is a difference in scope between the two texts. For the treaty to take effect, the Soviet draft requires it to be ratified by all parties possessing nuclear weapons, whereas the United States text stipulates ratification by a certain number of States, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. In the present international situation, and since China's accession seems unlikely, the adoption of the Soviet text would make all our present efforts useless. Even if we agreed, the treaty would never come into force.

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

One may also ask whether the Soviet Union attaches no importance to ratification by non-nuclear States, since there is no provision for it in connexion with the entry into force of the treaty. We, on the other hand, consider that ratification by non-nuclear States, or at least some of them, is extremely important. One may well ask what the value of a treaty accepted by the nuclear States would be if it were rejected by countries approaching nuclear weapon status. As we have stressed on other occasions, these, though not possessing nuclear weapons, are developed countries from the nuclear point of view and are of particular importance in the context of non-dissemination.

In article VI of the two draft treaties we find another discrepancy. Whereas the United States draft provides a procedure for withdrawing from the treaty, in the Soviet text a unilateral decision is sufficient without any special procedure, time-limit or length of notice. Does the Soviet delegation imagine that the Security Council could remain completely indifferent to such a serious action, with its repercussions on world stability? Does it not also think that a suspensive period would increase the security of the signatories to the treaty? An examination of the Soviet draft treaty as a whole -- at least in its present form -- shows that it offers very limited guarantees. Since it provides no safeguards, a non-nuclear country would have no assurance that another non-nuclear country, a neighbour for example, might not secretly be preparing its nuclear weapons although it has signed the treaty. Under the terms of the Soviet draft treaty it could suddenly on some pretext declare itself immediately absolved from its treaty obligations. It would thus have its nuclear arsenal ready for immediate aggression.

Such are the few considerations I wished to lay before the Committee, and particularly the Soviet delegation, to which I apologize for the many questions I have asked it. Some of these considerations concern important matters regarding which a process of clarification seems especially necessary and urgent, because they may present areas of uncertainty and ambiguity which could be eliminated. Others relate to relatively minor points; but I was nevertheless anxious to raise them, because if we could make a start on clearing some of these lesser obstacles from our path, we should be doing useful work; and if we succeeded in drafting some form of initial agreed text, even if only partially, we should have achieved valuable progress. We should thus be, as it were, in good training for the solution of the major difficulties which separate us, and we should have created a framework into which agreements on these major questions could be inserted.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I listened with great attention to the remarks you made in your capacity as the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. I also listened with interest and equal attention to the constructive statement made by Mr. Cavalletti, the representative of Italy. I shall, Mr. Chairman, carefully study in the verbatim record the statement you made today as the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The tone of your statement was serious, and we should like to make a studied reply to it.

However, as I listened to your statement, I could not help feeling that somehow it missed seeing the forest because of the trees. It concentrated on possible NATO nuclear arrangements which would not involve proliferation, while it ignored the much larger and more pressing world-wide problem of non-proliferation. It is my fervent hope that at this stage in our negotiations the Soviet delegation and the Soviet Government will take a new look at the common path we seek to travel. It is my hope that they can raise their vision to the wider perspective -- that is, the reality of both the danger and the promise of the future.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 252nd plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador A. A. Roshchin, representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"Statements were made by the representatives of the Soviet Union, Italy and the United States.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 31 March 1966, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.