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FIRST COMMITTEE: SUB-COMMITTEE A III

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING

Held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris on

Tuesday, 12 October 1948, at 10.30 a.m.

CONTENTS:

Continuation of the discussion on the draft resolutions concerning atomic energy

Chairman: Mr. B.N. RAU

India

Rapporteur: Mr. R. SANDLER

Sweden

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CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING
ATOMIC ENERGY

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Sub-Committee's terms of reference required it to study the Canadian, USSR and Indian proposals, on none of which was there unanimous agreement. The best that could be done in such circumstances, was to decide on which resolution it would be possible to get the greatest amount of agreement. The Australian and Syrian amendments which, broadly speaking, resembled the Indian proposal, would be considered at the same time as that proposal. All three draft resolutions proposed that the Atomic Energy Commission should resume its work, but they differed as to the manner in which that should be done. The USSR resolution laid down the smallest number of conditions by suggesting that the Commission should resume its work in accordance with the General Assembly resolutions of 1946. The Indian resolution added a further condition to the effect that the work should be taken up again on the basis of the Commission's previous work. The Canadian resolution contained one further condition, namely, that the work should be taken up again as soon as the six permanent members of the Commission had decided that there existed a basis of agreement. It therefore seemed advisable to adopt the following method of voting: the three proposals would be put to the vote simultaneously, each representative being given the opportunity to vote for the one he considered best.

The Indian delegation maintained its proposal so as to prove that it had made every effort to conciliate the divergent points of view.

Before putting the proposals to the vote, he wished to ask their respective authors to submit them in a revised and final form in the light of the suggestions which had been made during the Committee's debates.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he agreed with the procedure proposed by the Chairman but, before passing to the vote, he wanted the USSR proposal to be studied and discussed in the same way as that adopted for the Canadian and Indian proposals.

Furthermore, it was necessary that the Sub-Committee's report should show why no proposal had been unanimously approved. The divergence of views did not arise merely from the different stipulations made in the various proposals for the resumption of the Commission's work, but arose primarily from the fact that the United States delegation and other delegations sharing its point of view, did not want to sign a convention for the prohibition of atomic weapons and refused to agree to the suggestion, embodied in the USSR proposal, for the simultaneous adoption of two

/conventions

conventions providing for the prohibition of atomic weapons and the control of atomic energy respectively.

The CHAIRMAN informed the USSR representative that he would be given an opportunity to express his point of view before his proposal was put to the vote.

After an exchange of views, in which Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the CHAIRMAN, Mr. COUVE DE MURVILLE (France), Mr. VITERI-LAFRONTIE (Ecuador) and Mr. WEI (China) took part, the CHAIRMAN stated that the voting procedure suggested by him was adopted. The three principal proposals would be put to the vote after they had been revised and submitted in their final form.

Mr. McNAUGHTON (Canada) said that the revised text of his proposal would appear as document A/AC.1/A III/1 Rev. 3. In accordance with the French representative's suggestion, the first seven paragraphs of the preamble of the original proposal (A/C.1/308) had been replaced by a single unnumbered paragraph. The first paragraph of the operative part was similar to paragraph 8 of the original proposal; paragraph 2 was the same as paragraph 9 of the revised proposal (A/C.1/A III/1 Rev. 2), while paragraph 3 was similar to paragraph 10 of the latter document and embodied the Ecuadorian representative's suggestion for a description of the Atomic Energy Commission's work, for the benefit of the public.

Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that there were so many amendments to the Canadian resolution that it would be preferable to adjourn the discussion until it had been submitted in its final form.

In his opinion, the difficulty with which that proposal had been evolved arose from the fact that the Canadian representative found himself in an embarrassing dilemma. He really wanted to avoid any reference to the prohibition of atomic weapons and to the simultaneous adoption of two conventions and yet he could not ignore the universal desire for peace which found expression in the support of those two principles. The object of the Canadian proposal, consequently, was to allow the production of atomic weapons to continue while giving the impression that something should be done towards their prohibition.

Furthermore, in connexion with paragraph 8 of the Canadian proposal, he wondered why it seemed desirable to subordinate the questions of the

/use of atomic

use of atomic energy for peaceful ends and the elimination of atomic weapons, which were matters of a permanent nature, to the terms of reference of a temporary Atomic Energy Commission. Would it not be wiser to refer to the resolutions of the General Assembly than to the work of the Atomic Energy Commission?

Mr. WEI (China) proposed that paragraph 3 of the Canadian proposal should be amended to include a reference to the possible conclusion of several conventions, so as to bring it into line with the provisions of the General Assembly resolution of 14 December 1946, and remove the suspicion that the majority favoured the conclusion of only one convention.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the meeting should be suspended to allow the Secretariat to prepare the final texts of the three proposals.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.