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FIRST COMMITTEE
VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIRST MEETING
Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 24 October 1957, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. de BARROS (Vice-President) (Brazil)
Later: Mr. ABDON (Iran)

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion of an international Convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction [24] (continued)

Statements were made in the general debate on the item by:

Mr. Ahmed (Pakistan)
Mr. Nunez-Portuondo (Cuba)
Mr. Shaha (Nepal)
Mr. Garin (Portugal)
Mr. de Freitas Valle (Brazil)
Mr. Tarabanov (Bulgaria)

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AGENDA ITEM 24

REGULATION, LIMITATION AND BALANCED REDUCTION OF ALL ARMED FORCES AND ALL ARMAMENTS; CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (TREATY) ON THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS AND THE PROHIBITION OF ATOMIC, HYDROGEN AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION
- (b) EXPANSION OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION AND OF ITS SUB-COMMITTEE
- (c) COLLECTIVE ACTION TO INFORM AND ENLIGHTEN THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD AS TO THE DANGERS OF THE ARMAMENTS RACE, AND PARTICULARLY AS TO THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF MODERN WEAPONS
- (d) DISCONTINUANCE UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF TESTS OF ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN WEAPONS

Mr. AHMED (Pakistan): Mr. Vice-Chairman, as this is the first occasion on which I am speaking in the First Committee, may I have your permission to strike a personal note.

Ambassador Abdoh's unanimous election to the by no means easy office of Chairman of this Committee is a matter of special gratification to the Pakistan delegation. His country and mine are neighbours whose present relations rest on political and cultural associations that go a long way back in history, reinforced in recent times by an alliance which reflects our common ideals. We are confident that Ambassador Abdoh's wisdom and experience will exercise a harmonizing influence on the discussions in this Committee of the issues which today unhappily divide and rend the world.

May I also offer the congratulations of my delegation to you, sir, on your election as Vice-Chairman of the Committee, and to your distinguished colleague who has been elected Rapporteur.

My delegation has listened with close attention to the statements of the representatives of the five Powers that are the members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission. Their speeches have brought into sharp focus the points of convergence and disagreement in the complex disarmament negotiations which were held in London this year. Likewise, the statements of the other delegations which have taken part in this debate have contributed to a clearer understanding of the grave implications for the world, of the continuance of the race in nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

One note common to the speeches that have been heard is the desperate urgency of halting the armaments race. My delegation cannot but share this universal feeling. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, in his recent address to the General Assembly, especially emphasized the importance of the time element in seeking a solution of the problem which has baffled the world for many years and which, if not resolved soon, may destroy the world. My Foreign Minister gave pointed expression to a widely shared apprehension when he asked: "Is it that through frittering away precious time in mutual suspicion and distrust, we have been carried beyond the point of no return?"

Nevertheless, most of us -- indeed, I am convinced, all of us -- present here sincerely hope that there is yet time to save the world from the prospect of total destruction through an all-out nuclear war. We hope that the nuclear Powers which confront each other in a posture of conflict will yet yield their adamant positions and will move towards carrying into effect at least such measures of disarmament as, on their own admission, are immediately feasible, without waiting for a complete agreement on all aspects of disarmament.

Pakistan is not a nuclear Power. Indeed, we are but a small nation, newly independent, and among the less privileged countries of the world. Nevertheless, our interest in disarmament is not less than that of the great Powers and the nuclear colossi, which hold in their hands the power of life and death over us all. It is this equal stake in the outcome of the disarmament negotiations that impels us to make our voice heard in this debate. We speak not to find fault or to condemn, but with a sense of objectivity and, I hope, in a constructive spirit.

We note that the Western Powers as well as the Soviet Union feel that total disarmament, including the complete prohibition of the use and the elimination of stocks of nuclear weapons and the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments under international control to levels needed strictly for internal security, must await the establishment of full mutual confidence amongst the major Powers in particular, and generally among all nations of the world. We note that both sides consider that such comprehensive disarmament is not practicable at this stage because, amongst other things, a scientific

barrier precludes the institution of an effective control system to detect the carrying out of nuclear tests or the existence of such stocks of nuclear weapons as may be concealed. In these circumstances, therefore, it can only be that disarmament negotiations, in order to be fruitful, should concentrate on a plan of partial disarmament. There is evidence of a general identity of views on the need to limit current efforts to reaching agreement on what has been called the first-stage disarmament plan.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

But, while some satisfaction may be derived from the substantial reconciliation of positions which has taken place between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union on some of the specific measures enumerated by the representative of the United States, disagreement on other highly important issues remains, unfortunately, as wide as before. This is particularly so in the field of nuclear disarmament -- that is, the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, the renunciation of their use, and the cessation of the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes. In this field, the two sides have moved but little towards each other. Even on the question of the suspension of nuclear tests, despite the expressed willingness to stop such tests -- which I think is known to all sides -- there is no agreement because of opposed views on the linking of the issue to the cut-off of fissionable materials for weapons purposes.

Even in regard to the other components of the partial disarmament plan, my delegation is disappointed to note that, despite an expressed similarity of views among the great Powers on the question of the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons, the full implementation of these measures has been made contingent on compliance with other conditions of a political and military character prescribed by one Power or another.

Here, I should like to mention that there is an impression among some delegations that the existing disarmament negotiating machinery is inadequate. Suggestions have been made that the membership of the Sub-Committee and the Disarmament Commission should be enlarged by the inclusion of States outside the military blocs or on the basis of wider geographical representation. In the opinion of the Pakistan delegation, the divergences which separate the nuclear Powers on the Sub-Committee are a manifestation of more fundamental differences than can be resolved through procedural devices. Agreement on disarmament measures must, in the final analysis, depend primarily on the great Powers. It was a recognition of this reality that led the General Assembly to set up the Sub-Committee with a membership restricted to those who, by virtue of their military and political importance, could authoritatively take and accept decisions. The other Powers can advise, encourage and warn. They cannot impose their views. As for the Disarmament Commission, we consider that it is adequately representative

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

of the principal geographical areas, while the General Assembly provides a world forum for all eighty-two Member States to express themselves on all issues and on the stands taken by the great Powers in disarmament negotiations.

While, therefore, we do not find fault with the machinery, we do not imply that we are satisfied with the use that has been made of it. The Disarmament Commission, we feel, has played a less active role than was expected of it and has reduced itself to a mere agency for transmitting the records of the Sub-Committee to the General Assembly. We hope that the Commission will not remain so inert in the future, but will actively assist the Sub-Committee by providing it with a greater measure of guidance than has so far been the case.

The present debate has disclosed the closest agreement on the view that the first and most important step towards disarmament is to suspend nuclear tests. Disagreement between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union on this issue arises, as we all know, over the question of the prohibition of further production of fissionable material for purposes of war and the question of the adequacy of the machinery of supervision and control. It seems to my delegation that, however commendable, in idealistic terms, a simple ban on nuclear tests, unaccompanied by other conditions, may appear to be, it would be imprudent to ignore the hard realities of the situation in which the world finds itself today. Nuclear tests must stop; the use of nuclear weapons must be banned. But, at the same time, is there any reason at all why the production of fissile material for war purposes should continue, or why an effective control system should not be devised to ensure enforcement of prohibitions? Surely, there should be no objection from any quarter to the acceptance of conditions which are of equal applicability to all, particularly when the proposed conditions do not frustrate, but should in fact reinforce, the common objective. Here, I am reminded of a Persian saying that "Those who keep a clean account, why need they be afraid of an audit?".

Apart from nuclear armament, it seems to us that substantial progress is possible in the matter of the reduction of levels of armed forces and conventional weapons, if rigid positions on prior compliance with certain political and military conditions are relaxed. The Pakistan delegation would urge the

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

immediate conclusion of an agreement to reduce armed forces substantially below the existing levels, to exchange lists of weapons to be set aside under international control, and to set up depots under international supervision for the storage of specific quantities of designated types of armaments to be mutually agreed upon. We would urge the Soviet Union to accept the Western proposal for storage depots as a practical means of placing conventional weapons under proper control. Similarly, taking note of the Soviet contention that the first stage of a reduction of armed forces to 2.5 million and 750,000 would mean no reduction from the existing levels of the forces, we would appeal to the Western Powers to agree to proceed to the second stage of their proposal -- namely, to reduce armed forces to 2.1 million and 750,000, without either side's attaching conditions to the acceptance of these lower figures.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

We feel that if an agreement is reached over the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons, and is implemented without waiting for a reconciliation of the opposing viewpoints on the other measures of partial disarmament set forth in the twenty-four Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179), the disarmament negotiations would be retrieved from the existing stalemate and the way would be opened to mutual accommodation on the other measures.

My delegation, along with some other delegations, had urged agreement on, and implementation of, disarmament in this field during the tenth session of the General Assembly in 1955. We had been encouraged to make this specific suggestion by the agreement which had been achieved by the two sides on the ceilings of the strength of their respective armed forces on the basis of the Anglo-French memorandum of 11 June 1954, its restatement on 8 March 1955, the subsequent modifications of Western proposals and the Soviet proposals of 10 May 1955. We had also been led to believe that the resolution 914 (X) adopted by the General Assembly at the tenth session on 16 December 1955 laid upon the Disarmament Sub-Committee the responsibility, as an initial step, to give priority to early agreement and implementation of all feasible measures of adequately safeguarded disarmament; in other words, the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons.

We note with some disappointment that the Sub-Committee has not given the attention to this matter that it deserved in view of the special responsibility placed upon it by the General Assembly. Instead we find that in the Western proposals of 29 August 1957 the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons was interlinked with other measures of a first stage or partial disarmament plan, agreement on which has so far proved impossible of attainment.

In the view of my delegation, this interlinking was unnecessary. My delegation has listened carefully to the statements made in this debate, but we have not heard any convincing reasons why a separate agreement in regard to reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons under international control should not be concluded and implemented.

In the debate which took place during the tenth session of the General Assembly, it was felt that the separate implementation of conventional

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

disarmament would fulfil, and would not militate against, the essential principles laid down for disarmament, namely:

- (i) no disarmament without control, no control without disarmament; and
- (ii) maximum disarmament that can be controlled.

Furthermore, such implementation would be consistent with the two further propositions, namely:

- (iii) each stage of disarmament must increase the security of all the parties and not the security of one of the parties at the expense of the others, and
- (iv) it should avoid a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security.

We are, of course, aware that much remains to be agreed upon, particularly in respect of inspection and control measures needed to ensure safeguarded reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons. Practical details of the control system will have to be worked out, but it seems to us that this problem may prove less intractable than the far more complex problem of control over nuclear armament.

The Pakistan delegation listened carefully to the remarkable intervention of the representative of the Netherlands in this debate last Friday. He stated that an equilibrium has been attained between the great Powers, and since a balance had been struck gradual disarmament on a basis of reciprocity would leave the balance intact. If this be so, then we would at last have reached a real starting point. May we not then begin with disarmament in the conventional field?

I need refer only briefly to the proposals to guard against the possibility of surprise attack. Although there has been no agreement on any of them, there is sufficient reason to warrant some hope of reaching agreement on aerial and ground inspection over a limited zone in Europe. The value of aerial inspection has been questioned by the Soviet Union. It is not considered to be a measure of disarmament. My delegation has no doubt that aerial and ground inspection will go a long way towards preventing war by eliminating the possibility of surprise attack. We consider this to be an important confidence-building measure, which if implemented, cannot but afford greater assurance of security from sudden nuclear attack.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

Here again, my delegation considers that the linking of the proposal to guard against surprise attack with the other components of the first stage disarmament plan would be a reversal of the General Assembly resolution 914 (X) and would prejudice the successful outcome of negotiations in the Sub-Committee on even those measures of disarmament which lie within the realm of immediate possibilities.

Before I turn to the other aspects of the question under discussion in this Committee, I must comment on an observation made in the Soviet statement before the Sub-Committee on 5 September (document DC/SC.1/73). It is stated in that document that the Soviet Union objects to the exclusion from aerial inspection of the United States, NATO, the Baghdad Pact and SEATO bases in, among other countries, Pakistan. When a similar Soviet suggestion first came to notice, my Government felt it necessary to issue a public refutation. My delegation hopes that no Member of the United Nations is under the impression that any foreign bases exist in my country. I would like to repeat categorically that neither the United States nor any other member country of NATO, the Baghdad Pact or SEATO has any military bases in Pakistan.

Apart from the reservations that I have expressed, my delegation finds itself in agreement with the other provisions of the twenty-four Power draft resolution for reasons so ably put forward by the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and France. We are convinced that the cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapon purposes, the exclusive devotion of their future production to peaceful uses under effective international control and the reduction of stocks of nuclear weapons through a transfer programme alone can halt the nuclear armament race. Mere unilateral declarations of intention to prohibit or renounce the use of nuclear weapons, whether on a temporary or a permanent basis, can in the present state of mistrust and lack of confidence give little assurance of security.

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

In regard to the health aspect of nuclear explosions, we have taken note of the different viewpoints expressed in this debate. We are informed that the radiation released from nuclear explosions forms but a small percentage of the total natural background radiation in the world and that the additional radioactivity created by explosions is less than the variation in the amount of background radiation at sea-level and an altitude of 6,000 feet.

But in the summary-analysis of the hearings of experts before the Joint Committee of the Congress of the United States on Atomic Energy, we find this statement on page 3, paragraph 5: "But it was not agreed on how this information should be interpreted." Furthermore, forecasts of future amounts of radiation at ground level resulting from more testing -- or even past testing -- depend upon an assumption of uniformity. It is stated at page 10 of this document that there is need for review of evidence presented to indicate that in no part of the atmosphere is the fall-out uniformly distributed and that, therefore, the effects of fall-out on the world's population need not necessarily be uniform.

In regard to genetic effects of radioactivity resulting from fall-out, we find at page 12 of the report that there exists no safe "threshold" below which the dose produces no damage, and that damage occurs from any irradiation of the genetic cells, no matter how small the dose. Furthermore, there is as yet no answer to the question whether there is also a "safe" minimum level of radiation below which there is no increase in the incidence of such conditions as leukemia, or bone cancer, or no decrease in life expectancy.

My delegation has cited this opinion because we are not entirely reassured about the unlikelihood of damage to human health as a result of past test explosions and future tests. We can, therefore, well understand and appreciate the reasons which have prompted the Japanese delegation to put forward its special proposal for the suspension of tests. At present, however, owing to the absence of decisive scientific opinion, we are unable to come to a definite conclusion one way or the other. We therefore look forward to the report of the United Nations Radiation Committee to throw further light on the subject.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

The penetration of outer space by the inter-continental ballistic missile and the earth satellite has added a new dimension to the problem of disarmament. The Western proposal for a joint study with the Soviet Union of means to ensure that the sending of objects through the outer space will be exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes has not come a moment too soon. My delegation welcomes the undertaking given by the representative of the United States that the Western Powers are prepared to consider this study separately from the other proposals in order that a control system may be agreed upon and implemented while it is yet not too late.

Today, nuclear energy eludes control. Should this situation continue despite the efforts of the United Nations, push-button warfare will no longer be a fiction but a fact. Neither ideologies nor systems will survive because man will have passed from the face of the earth.

Mr. NUNEZ-PORTUONDO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): The Cuban delegation wishes to congratulate the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur on their well-merited elections to office. We trust that they will all be most successful as the work of the Committee proceeds.

Because of its importance and of what it means to the independence and security of States, we believe that the disarmament question must be examined from a practical point of view in keeping with the facts. Otherwise, all the speeches will be nothing but repetition ad infinitum of the same arguments, resulting in confusion worse confounded.

The first thing is to consider the whole matter sincerely and frankly. It is neither right nor legal to maintain here that one is representing a neutral State, and then, when international problems are discussed, constantly to agree with one side against the other. This has happened so often, as can be seen from the verbatim records of our meetings. We have observed that some of those States which call themselves neutral and impartial have invariably in the end defended the point of view of the Soviet Union. Therefore, Cuba wishes to state quite clearly that it is not neutral.

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A/C.1/PV.881
18-20

(Mr. Nunez-Portuondo, Cuba)

For many years Cuba has had mutual defence and collective defence treaties with other countries on this continent, including the United States of America. We have taken an active part in the two World Wars and we would take part again in any war in which any nation in America might be attacked by a State from another continent. That is why we feel that the security of the United States of America, which is the Power on this continent with the greatest military force, is our own security.

We also wish to state that we are not at all impressed by the propaganda campaign conducted by the Soviet Union and its followers -- either overt or covert -- in regard to this question of disarmament. This is a very well known procedure. It has been used so often that we have grown accustomed to it, and it has been used in order to force the West to disarm and then, later, to conquer and dominate other States, as the Soviet Union has done with weak and unarmed countries which believed the promises of friendship on the part of the Soviet Union.

(Mr. Nuñez-Portuondo, Cuba)

Suffice it to give as an example of the absurdity of these propaganda manoeuvres two facts which are most revealing. First, with more than normal emphasis, considering the low price attached to human life by these countries, they stress the importance of taking into account the damages that may be caused to human life by atomic tests; yet they carry out these atomic experiments. The Soviet Union does. Therefore, we are led to ask one question: Is the Soviet Union, in full knowledge of all the facts, trying to destroy the health of its own people?

The other proof of the lack of sincerity can be found in the way in which this very problem is being discussed. We all recall quite clearly how day after day during the last few years the Soviet Union and its public and secret friends -- because there all types of friends of the Soviet Union -- have contended that these atomic tests because of radioactivity damage human beings. That is why they asked that these tests be suspended. When the Government in Washington announced that it was ready to produce clean bombs -- and when they call them "clean bombs", it is obvious that they are referring to the fact that the radioactivity does not damage health because it is considerably diminished -- the Soviet Union immediately changed its tactics so as to surprise the gullible. It then spoke no longer of the health of peoples, but said that anyway, be it a clean or an unclean bomb, if it were used in war it would nevertheless cause tremendous material damage. This is something that had nothing whatever to do with the original argument that the Soviet Union used. In other words, the question of disarmament has never been discussed honestly by the Soviet Union or its henchmen.

We have held and we continue to hold that this problem of disarmament is fundamentally one of mutual guarantees since confidence does not exist, nor can it exist. It may be true, as has been stated during this debate, that nothing practical can be achieved if a great majority of the General Assembly sets the directives of how disarmament is to be brought about if the Soviet Union and a minority is unwilling to accept the recommendation of the most important body of the United Nations. But we should like to ask: Does this mean that the majority of the General Assembly has to abdicate its viewpoint and quietly and with bated breath, not only with bated breath but with irresponsibility, accept the measures proposed by the Soviet Union? The arguments used seem to be contrary to all principles of logic and equity.

(Mr. Nuñez-Portuondo, Cuba)

When the Western Powers make known their lack of confidence in the Soviet Government, they are not gratuitously offending a State that has been characterized in history by its strict fulfilment of its international obligations. This is not the case, for example, with respect to a country that is not a Member of the United Nations. If the other party in this discussion was Switzerland, we could not use this argument since Switzerland has distinguished itself in the course of centuries for fulfilling its treaties and all the rules of international law.

We have in our offices -- and we are not including it in this speech because we do not want to make our statement interminable -- a list of international treaties that the Soviet Union has violated in its mere forty years of existence. There are hundreds of these international instruments. The Soviet Union solemnly committed itself in these documents and then spurned them without compunction. The recent and tragic case of Hungary is an example of how the Moscow Government accepts and bows to the resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations and how it violates its international treaties. Hundreds of solemn international commitments have been violated by the Soviet Union. This is one fact that can in no way create confidence for such a country when discussing this type of problem.

When we speak of peaceful purposes, when we hear great emphasis laid on words but little sincerity in the heart; when we are told that the Soviet Union has no intention of conquest and when we add up the thousands of square kilometres and the millions of inhabitants of the countries that have been conquered by the Soviet Union in the last forty years, there can be no doubt that lack of confidence and mistrust must grow. Let us compare the attitude of the Western Powers who have freed millions and millions of human beings with the action of the Soviet Union in enslaving an equal or greater number. Then we will see why our people are so chary and so unwilling to accept the proposals of disarmament of a Government that at no moment has changed its purpose of conquering the world.

We should like to ask: If the United States of America did not have atomic weapons and as the Western world is much weaker in other military aspects compared to the Soviet Union, would we still be able to consider ourselves free and independent people? I do not believe that even the most optimistic persons would be able to give an affirmative answer to this question.

(Mr. Nuñez-Portuondo, Cuba)

We declare in full knowledge of the responsibility that a renunciation of atomic weapons under the present circumstances -- we have said this before and we repeat it now -- without absolute and complete guarantees would be a foolhardy action that cannot be asked of the Governments of the Western Powers. There is not one guarantee requested by the Soviet Union that was denied by the other great Powers. But the hierarchs of the Kremlin deny the guarantees asked for by the Western Powers. These hierarchs are the ones who must be most mistrusted because of their past and present behaviour.

Among many other Member nations, Cuba is a co-sponsor of a draft resolution which we feel is appropriate to set the groundwork for some agreement. We believe that it contains no provision that might in any way jeopardize or damage the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union. That is why, when we note the way in which this proposal is being fought, our mistrust grows, and we ask again: Are we being asked to put ourselves in such a position of inferiority that even legitimate self-defence will be impossible?

So far as the technical aspects of our proposal are concerned, they have been very carefully explained in great detail by the preceding speakers. Furthermore, we have a sense of proportion and we believe that we cannot be called upon to give opinions on the technical aspects of problems such as have a military nature and affect world security which must naturally lie on the shoulders of the great Powers.

(Mr. Nuñez-Portuondo, Cuba)

However, we wished to make known our point of view because, if any error is committed, it would be a tragic error, and we would be the victims and then we could no longer be a free, independent and sovereign State. Since it must be understood that trust and mistrust are psychological and can be achieved by all countries, regardless of their military power, we reiterate our opinion that, whilst there are no complete and absolute guarantees that when the Western Powers have disarmed aggression will not be unleashed, we cannot go farther ahead in this problem than we obviously must. To this we must add that the guarantees must be qualified by us, the Governments and peoples interested in them, and they cannot merely be gauged by the Moscow Government and its friends. We recognize, in full acknowledgement of reciprocity and mutuality, that the Soviet Union has the right to ask for complete guarantees, but guarantees must not be confused with permitting us to place ourselves voluntarily in a position where we have no defences whatsoever.

Mr. SHAHA (Nepal): Mr. Chairman, since this is my first intervention in the Committee, may I take this opportunity of congratulating you, along with the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur, on your election to your respective offices.

It was not on account of a lack of interest in the subject of disarmament that my delegation did not intervene earlier in the debate. Conscious as we were of the limited role we could play in the solution of this question, we wanted to listen to the speeches of the representatives of other Powers, especially the great Powers, before expressing our own views on the subject.

It would be mere repetition to point out that another war might mean the complete destruction of the world in which we live and the civilization of which we are so proud. Rightly did my colleague from India pose the problem of disarmament as the problem of human survival. It was really appropriate and fitting that the First Committee unanimously decided to give priority to this question.

I speak for a country which has, as a matter of fact, nothing to disarm and also nothing with which to threaten the peace of its neighbours or the other nations of the world. However, the experience of the last two wars has made us realize that, in spite of our seeming isolation, our destiny is closely bound up

with that of the rest of mankind in the event of another global war. In spite of our best efforts, we could not keep ourselves completely out of the last two world wars, because of the exigencies of the prevailing international situation. And we realize that it will be all the more difficult for us to remain unaffected in the event of another global conflagration. The finest flowers of our youth and manhood were decimated in the two world wars, and members can very well realize the sense of horror that haunts the minds of our people at the very mention of war, minds that are so heavily loaded with the very bitter memory of the loss of their sons, brothers and husbands. Although my country is happily ensconced in the Himalayan fastnesses, the fact remains that we are no less vulnerable to the deadly effects of nuclear war. It is the sincere desire for peace in the hearts of the 9 million of my countrymen that has prompted me to take part in this debate.

Small countries like mine from all over the world have joined the United Nations in the hope that it might be able to free the world from the scourge of war and that it will be able to help the development of these small countries in various spheres through international co-operation. How rudely the hope of the simple peoples of countries like mine is shaken when they are told that the expenditure on projects for the development of under-developed countries is nothing when compared to the amount spent on the production of armaments in the world. Countries like mine can only hope and wish that the great Powers will reduce the burden of expenditure on armaments and divert a goodly portion of the savings thus effected to humanitarian projects, projects intended to raise the standards of living among people everywhere in the world. We must hope for this because, in the world in which we live, prosperity, like peace, is becoming more and more indivisible. Such was the concept of positive disarmament as presented in the past by the distinguished statesman of France, Mr. Faure, and I feel that this is the concept of disarmament that has the greatest appeal to countries like mine.

When the Disarmament Sub-Committee met in London during the past summer, fresh hopes were aroused in the minds of people all over the world about the possibility of an agreement, at least on some initial stages of partial disarmament.

However, these hopes were dashed to the ground when the great Powers in their wisdom deemed it fit to refer the matter to the present session of the General Assembly. It is unfortunate that the report of the Disarmament Commission has once again failed to record any agreement among the big Powers on any plan or scheme of disarmament. It is also a little discouraging that the mutual understanding and trust shown by the Western and Soviet Powers in the initial stages of the discussions in London could not be brought to bear any fruit.

There had already been considerable narrowing of differences on some of the basic issues relating to the question of disarmament. For example, the Soviet Union had at one stage approved of President Eisenhower's "open sky" plan, and the Western Powers in their turn had agreed to Marshal Bulganin's scheme for ground inspection posts for the prevention of surprise attacks. Thus, in effect, the Soviet Union had agreed to the principle of international inspection. There had also been an agreement on the initial stages of the reduction of armed forces to 2.5 million for the United States, the USSR and the People's Republic of China, and to 750,000 for France and the United Kingdom. The Disarmament Sub-Committee can, however, be said to have made some progress by recording a kind of agreement and understanding on, for example, partial disarmament as a first step; on the nature of the reductions in manpower and conventional armaments that might be effected; on the possibility of the suspension of nuclear tests under international control; and on the principle of aerial and ground inspection posts against surprise attack.

In my delegation's opinion, the removal of mutual fear and distrust between the great Powers is most needed for any agreement on disarmament as such. In the present conditions of the world it will be too much to expect that there will be any agreement on this question unless both sides -- the Western Powers and the Soviet Union -- are prepared to show a spirit of healthy realism and take into full account the true nature of the world situation.

On the question of nuclear disarmament, it was increasingly realized by both sides that the purposes of such disarmament should be to protect the health and well-being of present and unborn generations against the effects of fall-out from atomic radiation. Further, there was agreement on the harnessing of

NR/mz

A/C.1/PV.881
29-30

(Mr. Shaha, Nepal)

fissionable materials primarily to peaceful purposes, which seemed to promise an era of hitherto unknown prosperity in the world. But, in spite of the narrowing of differences on all these issues, the fact remains that there has been no agreement between the Powers principally involved on this problem of disarmament, which has been causing so much anxiety to the people of the world.

(Mr. Shaha, Nepal)

My delegation regards international inspection as a concomitant of disarmament, because, as things stand, we cannot expect the great Powers to take risks with regard to their own security. As I said in my intervention in the general debate, talks about disarmament without an attempt to reach some sort of understanding on a system of international inspection do not sound realistic in the conditions of the present-day world. Unilateral undertakings of promises of good behaviour on the part of nations can inspire little or no confidence in such vital matters as those of national security, and especially in view of the existing dissensions and fear of the cold war. In our opinion, it is the subsequent agreement on a system of international inspection and controls that can eventually build up the mutual confidence which has been lacking on the part of the Powers principally involved.

Ominous doubts have been expressed about the omission of the word "prohibition" in the twenty-four Power draft resolution. It has been asked with apprehension and dismay whether this omission signifies departure on the part of the Western Powers from the ultimate objective of prohibition of atomic weapons which they have earlier set before them. My delegation believes that this omission does not indicate anything of that sort, but that the present draft resolution merely suggests in a realistic manner the lines along which negotiations should be conducted with a view to realizing what is immediately possible in the field of disarmament. My delegation feels that the twenty-four Power draft resolution can very well provide the working basis for negotiations on disarmament.

The assurances of the Foreign Minister of Canada that the attitude and the position of the Powers co-sponsoring the twenty-four Power draft resolution will not be inflexible and rigid, and that they will in no way regard the present draft resolution as the final word on the subject, is most welcome to my delegation. We also share his views that progress in the field of disarmament and progress in the solution of the outstanding international questions which we have inherited as sequels to the Second World War are interconnected and interrelated.

What torments and troubles the conscience of a small nation like mine is that the exchange of arguments and views between great Powers on this vital question, in the kind of public debates that we are having now, serves no more useful purpose than that of a competitive propaganda warfare that might at times even have the effect of misleading ignorant and innocent people of the world; because science and technology have placed at the hands of great Powers the means with which to influence and mold public opinion in the world on a scale heretofore unknown.

Under these circumstances, all that a small nation can do is to appeal to the great Powers to reach an agreement on this important question, and to hope and expect that under the pressure of our earnest solicitations, after having heard all that we have to say, they will resume their negotiations and try to reach an agreement mutually acceptable, as soon as possible, thereby relieving the trembling humanity of fear and anxiety on this account.

I do not think it will be out of place for me to refer to the harmful effects of atomic radiation at this stage. In view of the formidable evidence furnished to us by the representative of India, Mr. Krishna Menon, on the basis of opinions of leading scientists from the different countries of the world, I have nothing more to add on this subject. Although the scientists might disagree on the extent of the actual harm caused by radioactive fallout, they seem to agree on the fact that there is, after all, some harm done. Let us not wait for the publication of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the subject, if it is possible for us meanwhile to do something to mitigate the evil effects of atomic radiation. The effects of atomic radiation know no national frontiers, as pointed out by the representative of Japan. In our humble submission, the representatives here have a responsibility towards the unborn future generations also, in dealing with this problem.

We very much wish that a step should be taken to enlighten the peoples of the world about the dangers of the armaments race, and particularly about the destructive effects of modern weapons. The race for armaments not only increases the burden of taxation for the people, but it is also likely to lead to war. We are all aware that the activities of the so-called "merchants of war"

have led to the outbreak of hostilities among nations in the past. Today, we live on the brink of war, as it were, since we have two antagonistic military blocs armed to the teeth with the latest weapons of mass destruction, facing each other across a trembling world. The slightest error of calculation and judgement on either side would be enough to plunge the rest of the world into a total holocaust.

Before I conclude, I wish to refer briefly to the suggestions for the suspension of nuclear tests, which have aroused a good deal of controversy in the debate. My delegation fully realizes that the question of the suspension of nuclear tests is ultimately related to the control of the production of fissionable materials. We feel that the temporary suspension of tests on a trial basis, however, might stimulate and facilitate agreement on other aspects of disarmament, including the control of the production of fissionable materials for war purposes. It is in this light that the proposals for the suspension of tests require most sympathetic consideration by this Committee. Furthermore, in regard to this matter we must also take into account the growing anxiety and concern felt by the people all the world over for the horrors of atomic radiation.

We all know that the failure of the Hague Conference led to the First World War, and that the failure of the 1932 Disarmament Conference resulted in the Second World War. If we are to learn from our experience and history, we must be determined to achieve an agreement on disarmament at this time, at all costs, before it is too late. We can only hope and expect that the great Powers will prove themselves capable of new adjustments in their thinking, necessitated by the realities of this new era of intercontinental ballistic missiles and outer space satellites.

I have tried to set forth the views of my delegation on this important question of disarmament as briefly and as frankly as I could. My delegation will be guided by these considerations in voting on the draft resolutions that are before the Committee, and it reserves its right to intervene in the debate at a later stage, should we find it necessary.

Mr. GARIN (Portugal): May my first words be of warmest congratulations on the unanimous election of our Chairman to the important office for which he is so highly qualified.

Like many other delegations which have addressed the Committee on the subject we are discussing, my delegation enters this debate not without some serious misgivings. Such are the magnitude and complexity of the problems confronting us today under the item "Disarmament". Indeed, apart from the traditional aspects of this twentieth century problem -- that is, its moral, political, strategic and economic aspects -- disarmament in our days reaches a much graver plane of human concern, which can be summarized, grimly, in one single word: survival.

The fact that this ultimate definition of the problem is now tacitly accepted throughout the world signifies that mankind has come to its most fateful crossroads, from whence one of the paths may lead to complete destruction.

(Mr. Garin, Portugal)

This predicament which we all face, regardless of our will to avert it, demonstrates clearly that men have been slower in their moral growth than in their technical achievements, that they have failed to maintain a steady balance between their creative genius and their capacity to control the most dangerous of man-made devices, that this is perhaps the last opportunity afforded us to elect between the path of self-destruction and the road to survival. Therefore, it is only natural that at this juncture many should approach this debate with hesitation and with a great deal of apprehension.

Yet it is the extreme seriousness of the problem which renders the present debate imperative. Our first duty in this Organization is to face the problem confronting us with courage and faith, faith to build confidence. The world expects from us a sense of reality and a firm will to help humanity, our generation and the generations to come. Thus fundamental consideration determines that our responsibility in this matter can be honoured only by maintaining a sense of reality at all times in our discussions and by making a concrete contribution to the progress of negotiations of the Sub-Committee, in whose endeavours lie the best hope of workable disarmament. It is in this spirit and aware of practical limitations that my delegation enters this debate.

A hopeful if cautious note seems appropriate to any approach to this question, first because it is in keeping with reality, even though to a limited extent, and secondly for its own psychological value at a time when the world is becoming increasingly restless with the idea that war is again a possibility, despite all the efforts of the free world to avoid it.

Let us take first things first. No one studying with attention the history of the Sub-Committee can deny that some progress has been achieved recently. This Committee has already had the opportunity to hear statements to that effect by some of the main parties involved in the discussions. Truly these small advancements were not attained until after many years of fruitless discussions, painful experiences and often betrayed hopes. But this should not be entirely surprising, for patience and perseverance are the basis of negotiation, while negotiation is the heart of diplomacy. Fruitless discussions, painful experiences and betrayed hopes have been present in the course of some of the most successful

(Mr. Garin, Portugal)

international negotiations of the past and of the present. It is, understandingly, the anxiety caused by the failure of the big Powers to achieve complete and rapid results allied to the legitimate concern of the peoples of the world for this universal problem, that lead to overlooking whatever positive has resulted from the previous discussions. In fact, some grounds of agreement have been reached between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union, and there is at least the beginning of some understanding on others, as Ambassador Lodge summarized in his opening statement on 10 October.

Furthermore, any cautious but hopeful note in approaching this question may have the beneficial effect of creating a better climate for the discussions to be resumed in the Sub-Committee, and it may also exert some good influence on those to whom it is addressed, representing, as it would, the common feeling of all peoples of the world.

For this reason, my delegation feels that in this case, the cause of peace and, therefore, the aspirations of humanity, will be better served by a hopeful note on the reality of the situation rather than by a threatening gloom.

This in no way means that the Assembly should present a rosy picture which is far from reality, or that it should refrain from pointing to the apocalyptic dangers ahead, if questions of national prestige and propaganda are allowed to continue to interfere with the momentous negotiations which must deal solely with world security and freedom from fear. That would not be in keeping with reality and would indeed be a very unwise line to take, which, incidentally, would gravely reflect on the prestige of the Organization. In the present state of world tension, it becomes imperative that the United Nations recognize that a first-stage workable agreement on disarmament is indispensable to build that confidence which, we should hope, would eventually show the way to the solution of some major political issues of our times.

As disarmament is in our nuclear age an essential condition for peace and security, it is appropriate that I should point out certain views of my delegation. We take it as axiomatic that in the present atmosphere of mistrust which unfortunately prevails in the world, no programme of disarmament, however limited, can be brought about by mere promises, declarations on paper or agreements without

(Mr. Garin, Portugal)

guarantees of enforcement. Those who deplore the Western position on this point should consult their conscience; they would then find enough evidence to blame themselves for their own contributions to this state of affairs.

As matters now stand, any practical disarmament undertaking could be pursued only if it were accompanied by a system of real safeguards, that is to say a system of control and inspection. Any attempt to think or work on other terms is equivalent to closing one's eyes to reality. For unpleasant and distressing as it might be, no progress in the field of disarmament can be achieved until there is a mutual willingness on the part of the Powers mainly responsible for the preservation of peace and security to accept that simple truth. It is indeed a fact that the Soviet Union has been notably reluctant to come to grips with the question of control and inspection -- if I may quote the words of the Foreign Minister of Canada -- which, in the opinion of my delegation, has been and remains the stumbling block to any kind of disarmament, partial or otherwise.

At a certain stage of the recent talks in London we were led to believe for a few days that the Soviet attitude on controls was about to undergo a significant change, and this expectation brought forth throughout the whole world the highest hopes for an early if only partial disarmament agreement -- a relief and hope which were particularly intense in the Western countries. Is this simple factor not a true measure of the sincerity with which the Western countries are seeking an agreement on disarmament? Such hopes were, unfortunately, deflated by the negative attitude assumed by the Soviet representatives at a later stage of the talks.

Therefore, the fundamental problem remains the same -- how to obtain a further evolution of the viewpoints of the Soviet leaders so that they may recognize and accept that which all the countries represented in the Sub-Committee, with the exception of the USSR, consider an inescapable condition for disarmament. It would seem to us that at this juncture no question of principle should stand in the way of the Soviet leaders. As we all know, the USSR and other countries of the Soviet bloc have signed and ratified without any reservations the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which provides for a system of control, and inspection in those projects carried out under the auspices of the Agency.

Unfortunately, the USSR appears to hold the self-taught conception that inspection and control would mainly signify spying. May I, by way of example, remind the Committee of Mr. Gromyko's words a few days ago when he was referring to the question of aerial photography. He said that the people over whose territory "foreign aircraft" would fly could not have any feeling of calm and security, and that "flights of foreign aircraft over the territories of a country can merely increase" the "feeling of suspicion and distrust".

(A/C.1/FV.867, page 27).

We believe that Mr. Gromyko is wrong in his assertions. First, we doubt that the aircraft to be used for such a purpose could be described so simply as "foreign aircraft". To the extent that we can interpret the ideas of the Western Powers on this question -- and we stand to be corrected if our interpretation is inaccurate -- the aircraft in question would be carrying out their mission under the auspices of the United Nations; they would be part of

an international control organization, which would be established within the framework of the Security Council. Thus, it would not be correct to describe such flights simply as "flights of foreign aircraft", with the implication of spying operations to be drawn. Second, contrary to the belief of Mr. Gromyko, we believe it to be obvious that the very knowledge by the populations concerned that such flights were taking place in an atmosphere of mutual trust between Governments would greatly increase, rather than decrease, their feeling of relief and security.

My delegation is of the considered opinion that the twenty-four Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179 and Add.1 and Corr.1) is a well-balanced proposal for the negotiation of a first-stage disarmament agreement covering both conventional and nuclear weapons. It is a proposal which is in keeping with reality because it would bring about disarmament with the indispensable control. The drafting of the first disarmament agreement therein foreseen should not present insurmountable difficulties. There would remain, of course, the technical labours which would have to accompany a diplomatic instrument of such over-riding importance. With reference to the system of control, we hold the conviction that it would prove simpler than expected, at least in the first stages of the agreement. Upon the agreement's entering into force a flow of badly needed benefits, some of them immediate, would come to the afflicted world. It is pertinent to recapitulate them briefly.

The suspension of nuclear weapons testing would be immediate, thus tranquillizing the special fears of the countries or peoples closer to the testing areas. Nuclear production for peace would increase by great strides -- a matter, by the way, in which my country is particularly interested, as shown by our recent offer of a sizable quantity of uranium to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Nuclear and conventional weapons and troop-levels would be reduced. The difficult problem of preventing surprise attacks would begin to be dealt with. And last, but not least, the outer-space missiles and other objects which represent the latest challenge and the most formidable predicament hovering over humanity would be subject, practically from their inception, to a system of control.

The agreement in itself would not mean peace or security; but were it to be concluded it would lay the first solid foundation from which statesmanship could find a way out of the impasse in which we seem to be trapped at present.

Might I, before concluding, say a word on the Belgian proposal (A/3630/Corr.1). We believe that it would be a most important contribution to enlighten the peoples of the world with regard to the real significance of the nuclear age and with regard to the pressing need in which their Governments find themselves to seek solutions for the crucial problem of disarmament.

In subscribing to the request that the Disarmament Commission should soon reconvene its Sub-Committee to deal with the whole question of disarmament, I should like to join the appeals already made by previous speakers to the effect that the Great Powers should seize the opportunity provided by the twenty-four Power proposal -- which we hope will receive massive support from this Committee -- to agree on first positive steps in disarmament, if only on the grounds of self-interest, since failure to do so may mean, for them as well as for all of us, nothing short of destruction.

Mr. de FREITAS-VALLE (Brazil): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I should like very much to congratulate you and also my friend, Mr. Abdoh, and the Rapporteur, Mr. Matsch, on the action of the Committee in electing the three of you to your high posts. I cannot conceal from the Committee my special pleasure in seeing the Vice-Chairman presiding so graciously over our deliberations today.

Disarmament is a question that we do not face with pleasure in our debates. As has been pointed out, it is a matter where there is much to be done and little usefully to be said.

For over ten years, the United Nations has been striving to establish a system for the regulation of armaments, aiming at a goal proclaimed by the Charter itself. Meetings have been held, proposals advanced, procedures devised; technical data have been collected, documents issued, positions stated and restated. Meanwhile, armaments have increased in quantity and become more and more deadly and destructive, far beyond yesterday's wildest dreams.

Technological progress has brought about an imposing array of new weapons, and mankind can only imagine what new horrors lie in store for it, should a world conflict bring into opposition the Powers that now control the media of mass destruction. We do not even know for certain how the accumulated effect of peacetime thermonuclear tests will affect human life generations hence.

The contrast between the inadequacy of our accomplishments and the magnitude of the armaments race has not failed to impress public opinion deeply and has been cited here by many delegations. This is indeed a matter of tremendous concern for all, even if the solution depends on just a few. We all feel that it is a shame that our children must be taught that destructive forces may be pitilessly unleashed in sudden unwarranted attacks, that biological contamination and global destruction are within the realm of possibility. That is, unfortunately, what we must teach instead of telling them, as our fathers told us, that the sacred duty of a man is to be valiant, to defend his rights and his people and to assist even his enemy. From our annual discussions, past and present, one thing emerges clear as the purest water: no one in his heart can approve of our way of life during these years of terror, with scientific and technical advances leading to increased insecurity and the cold war ruining every hope of a better world.

(Mr. de Freitas-Valle, Brazil)

Disarmament of the spirit, mutual confidence, are accepted as prerequisites to any practical measure of disarmament. But, unhappily, this disarmament of the spirit is very far from reality and we are all following a course rather suggestive of suicide. No alternative being offered, we simply proceed, every human being actually becoming a victim. Certainly, it is not to be seriously contended that only the vanity of strength and the desire eventually to impose their will have led some countries to spend huge quantities of money on armaments. The Powers to which I am referring are as afraid as we are of the world they are helping to shape, but they do not want to take any risk of being defenseless.

Emotional feelings aside, let us look at things with a clear mind. Why are we facing today these dreadful prospects? Why have armaments accumulated, why do we have new bombs, rockets and missiles? After a very short interlude of confidence closely following the end of World War II, a new threat from the East cast an ominous shadow over many free lands. The free world was left no choice but to arm in defense against impending aggression.

In the case of the American Republics, for instance, why have they been translating their traditional continental solidarity into concrete measures of defense planning and preparation? They know that they must organize their collective self-defense, much as they would prefer inter-American co-operation to be concentrated in other fields, where so much can and must be done, and is indeed being done, to improve the living conditions of their peoples.

Disarmament is devoutly to be wished. It would lift from mankind the fear of dreadful devastation and suffering; it would allow man to apply his efforts in the pursuit of more fruitful tasks. But disarmament, like peace, is not an isolated thing, a good apart, to be had at any price. Peace must be linked with security, and so must disarmament.

Disarmament, therefore, desirable as it is, should not be detrimental to security. In the first place, it must be genuine, not fictitious. In the second place, it must be a balanced, well-considered reduction, so as not to give potential aggressors a substantial advantage. These conditions are met, I submit, by the proposals of the Western Powers in the Disarmament Sub-Committee. They

(Mr. de Freitas-Valle, Brazil)

are aimed, as Mr. Moch so clearly put it, at bringing about progressively all the disarmament currently controllable. In striving for a solution, the Western Powers made important concessions, trying to accept as largely as possible the ideas presented by the USSR. The Soviet Union, however, allowed hopes of agreement to be aroused only to make its final refusal more sadly disappointing. The crux of the matter, alas, seems to be the Soviet Union's ill-concealed opposition to control clauses of any significance in a disarmament agreement. If the Western Powers have been consistent in rejecting disarmament without control, the Soviet Union, on its part, at times gives the impression that it is ready to accept any and all disarmament measures, provided effective control is excluded.

We are sure that most, if not all, of the draft resolutions submitted to our Committee are aimed at worthy goals and inspired by noble purposes. Especially to be welcomed is the Belgian proposal that collective action be considered to inform the peoples of the world as to the dangers of the armaments race and particularly as to the dreadful effects of nuclear weapons. In co-sponsoring the 24-Power proposal, so ably presented by Mr. Noble, the Brazilian delegation wished to stress its preference for the text which seemed to offer the more comprehensive formula for the General Assembly, at this stage, to express its opinion on the question of disarmament as a whole. I emphasize the words "at this stage" to make it clear that no undue importance, even less a vicious purpose, should be attributed to the fact that no reference is made in the 24-Power draft to the prohibition of thermonuclear weapons, a long-accepted goal of the United Nations, asserted and reasserted by several resolutions of the General Assembly. At this stage we do not forget our final objective, but we aim at more immediate practical steps, which could be taken without delay. It has been suggested here that the 24-Power draft resolution will do nothing but perpetuate the deadlock. I must voice my complete disagreement with this altogether pessimistic view. It must be borne in mind that the text in document A/C.1/L.179 outlines some, but not all, of the proposals presented by the Western Powers in the Disarmament Sub-Committee. Careful consideration was given to the viewpoints expressed by the Soviet Union during the London discussions, and I would venture to say that the proposals for which the approval of the General Assembly is now sought do indeed reflect a desire for agreement and offer a practical basis for further progress.

(Mr. de Freitas-Valle, Brazil)

My country is by no means neutral in the ideological and political struggle now being fought on a worldwide scale. We are members of the Western family of nations, committed by defense pacts to our neighbours of the Western Hemisphere, including the United States of America, which we trust as the powerful guarantor of the survival of our democratic way of life. We feel sure that the United States and Canada do not arm for selfish motives. Ours is a continent of peace, where there is no room for evil designs or deceitful schemes. We are sincere in our desire for a less armed peace, and so are the great nations with which we have freely chosen to throw in our lot.

I would appeal to the Soviet Union to believe in the sincerity of our approach to the problems we are considering. Her change of mind, her change of heart, would be received with unbounded gratification by all the peoples of the world. It would contribute more than anything else to restoring the minimum of international confidence that is essential if we are to live together in a better world. The present leaders of the Soviet Union have been trying almost desperately to convince the world that the USSR is a socialistic, peace-loving State, ready to abide by the rules of pacific coexistence. They have an exceedingly appropriate opportunity to show us by concrete deeds, not mere words, their true sense of responsibility.

I reserve the right of my delegation to speak again.

Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): I should like to take this opportunity to join in the congratulations which have been extended by other delegations to Mr. Abdoh on his election as Chairman of this Committee. I also wish to congratulate the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur.

During the general debate in the Assembly and during the present discussion in this Committee, it has been universally recognized that mankind has never had to face a problem so acute as that of disarmament -- a problem on whose solution depends the fate of hundreds of millions of human beings throughout the world. It has also been unanimously recognized that a solution to the problem will brook no further delay and that this question is not only the most important but also the most urgent one confronting humanity and the United Nations. This unanimity about the urgent need for disarmament, about the urgent need of arriving at an agreement calling for practical, concrete measures towards disarmament, is surely an expression of the aspirations and wishes of peoples throughout the world.

The popular masses in all countries are fully alive to the fact that the armaments race must not be allowed to continue any longer. They realize that, if the production of nuclear, thermonuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is not halted, if agreement is not reached on a reduction of conventional armaments, mankind will face a new catastrophe much worse than the preceding one, a catastrophe which would cost hundreds of millions of human lives and cause frightful and unheard-of destruction for mankind and its civilization.

The Bulgarian people, engaged in the construction of its socialist economy and in the liquidation of its sad heritage from previous regimes, ardently desires, like other peoples throughout the world, that the armaments race should be stopped, that concrete measures to disarm should urgently be taken, so that deeds may take the place of mere words. This ardent desire of our people was expressed by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Anton Yougov, in a

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

statement to foreign newspapermen. He said:

"We wish to believe that wisdom will prevail as regards so important a question of our times" --

he was referring to peaceful coexistence and disarmament --

"and, in order that wisdom should prevail, everyone must give up hopes for world domination. There must be an abandonment of policies of intervening in the internal affairs of other countries. Priority must be given to everything that brings people closer together. That is the unanimous desire of the Bulgarian people."

It follows that the Bulgarian delegation shares the views of those who think that the present session of the General Assembly must take unanimous and concrete decisions on the disarmament problem. It must take decisions which will remove the negotiations from the impasse in which they are now floundering. No one has denied that this impasse exists. Decisions of the General Assembly in this field should give the impetus for a complete solution of the problem. That is all the more necessary since, after seventy-one meetings, the Disarmament Sub-Committee concluded its proceedings without registering agreement.

It is a sad fact, which all the champions of peace must view with sincere regret, that, despite the impasse reached by the Disarmament Sub-Committee, despite the Sub-Committee's obvious lack of success, there has been a tendency in some statements made here to depict matters as if there had been progress in the disarmament negotiations. That tendency is designed to pacify the legitimate anxiety and alarm felt by the popular masses at the evident lack of progress in so urgent a matter. This tendency to soothe public opinion by speaking in terms of some sort of progress, some sort of common ground, some sort of rapprochement reached during the work of the Sub-Committee is unjustified; in fact, it is harmful.

A number of delegations have brought out the point that so far no reductions of armed forces have occurred, no cannons or shells have been destroyed, and -- worse yet -- the testing of weapons of mass destruction and the production and development of more and more of these weapons are continuing apace. Any reductions of armed forces and armaments which have

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

taken place have been instituted unilaterally by the Soviet Union and the countries of the people's democracy. These countries wished to give an example to the countries of NATO, to urge the latter to carry out reciprocal reductions of armed forces. But there has been no reciprocity. Quite the contrary: in certain countries, the armaments race is being pressed forward at an accelerated, a vertiginous rate.

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

In these circumstances, is it proper for the General Assembly to study the record of the disarmament negotiations and then say that some success has been achieved? Some delegations represent as success the efforts and unilateral concessions repeatedly made by the Soviet Union in an effort to bring its positions closer to those of the Western Powers, so that an agreement on disarmament can finally be achieved. The statements made by the United States and other Western delegations in the course of the general debate in the General Assembly and here in our Committee have all called for more Soviet concessions, without, however, suggesting that the NATO members would make any concessions at all. The most responsible spokesmen of the Western Alliance emphasized in their statements that if the Soviet Union did not accept their proposals on disarmament, they, for their part, would continue the armaments race and proceed to a further expansion of their military alliances.

At the same time, an attempt has been made to demonstrate that the Western Powers had made substantial concessions in an effort to bring the points of view closer together, but what does the record show? There is no doubt that results can be achieved in the disarmament negotiations only if there is an equal amount of good-will on both sides to achieve compromises and mutual concessions. However, time and again when the Soviet Union has tried to bring its positions closer to those of the Western Powers by accepting their proposals wholesale, the Western Powers have gone back on their own proposals and entrenched themselves behind the ramparts of unacceptable positions.

Let me recall a number of facts from the record in this connexion. In its statement of 10 May 1955, the Soviet Union accepted the armed forces ceilings for the great Powers proposed by the Western delegations. No sooner had the Soviet Union done that than the United Kingdom and France went back on their proposal. In June 1956, the Soviet Union made another compromise by accepting the United States proposal for a ceiling of 2.5 million men for the armed forces of the United States and the Soviet Union and 750,000 men for the United Kingdom and France. At the same time, the Soviet Union added that its proposal for the complete prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons should enter into force when the reduction of conventional armaments by 75 per cent had been achieved. This,

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

incidentally, was quite in line with the chronology and the dovetailing of the Anglo-French Plan. The Soviet Union, therefore, made a number of concessions in its eagerness to reach agreement with the Western Powers in the field of the prohibition of nuclear weapons as well as in other fields.

A number of resolutions have been adopted unanimously by the General Assembly, including resolution 808 (IX) and all of them demanded the complete prohibition of the use and production of thermonuclear and atomic weapons and of all other weapons of mass destruction. In the latest proposals of the Western Powers and in the draft resolution presented by them to this Committee, any mention of the prohibition of the use of thermonuclear weapons is studiously avoided. It is quite evident, therefore, that these States are now opposed to the prohibition of the use of thermonuclear weapons.

We will not dwell on the many other concessions made by the Soviet Union during the disarmament negotiations, all the more so as some other delegations have already listed them. However, we owe our congratulations to the Soviet Union for having done its best in its eagerness to bring the positions closer together, and in doing so going so far as to endorse a number of Western proposals in their entirety. However, surely a similar obligation rests upon the other side, but the other side, unfortunately, as we have found, has refused to display an equal good-will by making any kind of concession. The other side did not express any understanding of the Soviet proposals, but even went so far as to give up their own proposals whenever these proposals were accepted by the Soviet Union. Of course, no positive results will ever be achieved if this path is followed. It must be admitted that the Soviet Union's spirit of conciliation must have certain limits and that it cannot be expected to make concessions which, far from consolidating peace, would actually harm the cause of peace and produce a collapse of the negotiations.

The world looks for concrete decisions from the General Assembly at this session. The first practical steps towards disarmament must be taken. The final objective towards which the United Nations and the States concerned must orientate themselves is a radical solution of the problem and the negotiation of a disarmament agreement on a comprehensive and total basis. However, after eleven years of fruitless negotiations it has become clear that this objective cannot

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

be attained from one day to the next. The obdurate position of the Western countries must be overcome since there is strong opposition to any sort of disarmament. Therefore, disarmament must proceed by stages. Decisions must be taken which would constitute the first steps towards the cessation of the armaments race and the elimination of mistrust. As an initial step, therefore, it is necessary to reach an agreement at any rate on some of the more urgent problems and aspects of disarmament, and that is the task which should now occupy the attention of this Committee.

The crucial question which confronts mankind is this: shall there be disarmament and lasting peace or an armaments race and atomic war? This imposes a grave responsibility on the United Nations. The history of the negotiations on disarmament since 1946, and especially since 1953, when the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission was set up, makes it clear that throughout these negotiations the parties confronting each other have based their proposals on two totally divergent, in fact, two diametrically opposed conceptions of the meaning of disarmament and of what is meant by safeguarding and maintaining the peace and security of peoples.

On the one side, there is the conception of the Western Powers which is reducible to this: in order that peace should be consolidated, the Western Powers must be granted military supremacy which should not be jeopardized in any shape or manner by any disarmament measures that may be agreed to. If we examine more closely the proposals and the positions of the Western Powers on disarmament, we are bound to note that all of them are guided by this basic conception.

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

Under the illusion that the atomic weapon secures military supremacy for them, the United States and its western allies obdurately refuse to accept what ordinary common sense regards as completely normal and logical, namely, that nuclear weapons should be prohibited. Speaking in this Committee, the representative of the United Kingdom went so far as to say that world security is based today on the efforts and weapons of the nuclear bloc. I submit that this is not even one step forward from the position first taken by Sir Winston Churchill in 1946 in his speech at Fulton, Missouri. After having expressed the conviction that the monopoly of the atomic death weapon was held by the Western Powers, he declared:

"Now we can breathe easily and start to put our own house in order before we have to confront the danger that will be possible once the communists get the atomic weapon. If we make all necessary efforts, our production will be so great that we shall be able to impose an effective brake on its use, or the threat of its use, by others."

A few days ago, on 12 October, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom stated:

"There exists today a particularly vital aspect of our defence with regard to which the United States and the United Kingdom are in full agreement; and that is the atomic weapon. No one will deny that it is the West's possession of that bomb which has hampered and continues to inhibit the Soviet Union."

The representative of the United States reiterated the same views here in the following words:

"...We cannot carry out the responsibility which has fallen upon us if we are less strong than the potential attacker. That is the basic reason for all of our military defence activities, all of them, including that involving the tests of nuclear weapons." (A/C.1/PV.866, page 8)

There is no need to dwell on the dozens of other statements which confirm the fact that the Western Powers are stubbornly committed to this conception, namely, that they must at all costs retain supremacy in armaments, nuclear armaments in particular.

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

In studying the positions of the Western Powers all through the course of the disarmament negotiations since 1946, any unbiased person is bound to conclude that all the objections, all the arguments put forward by the United States, the United Kingdom and France in their consistent opposition to the proposals of the Soviet Union, are based on this fundamental conception of their own necessary military supremacy. When faced with such a conception, one may well wonder what progress can be expected along the path towards disarmament and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Small wonder that, given these assumptions and preconceptions, they have been consistent in refusing any prohibition of the use of nuclear and hydrogen weapons. Hence their categorical and repeated "noes" addressed to the Soviet Union whenever the latter made its proposals on disarmament.

With this stand of the Western Powers, one might contrast the stand of the Soviet Union. What is its position? First of all, there is no question of military supremacy. The Soviet Union proposed the prohibition of the nuclear weapon even at a time when the Soviet Union did not itself possess it. The Soviet Union proposed its prohibition after it had started producing nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union proposes the same today when it is no longer a secret that the Western Powers, especially the United States, fear that they have been surpassed by the Soviet Union in certain fields of science which are surely relevant to the production of modern weapons.

For a long time the Western Powers accused the Soviet Union of wishing to have supremacy in conventional armaments and armed forces. Proceeding from this erroneous premise, they refused to accept Soviet Union proposals for the reduction of armed forces by one-third. They proposed the institution of numerical ceilings for the armed forces of the great Powers. The Soviet Union accepted the Western proposals. No sooner had the Soviet Union done this than the Western Powers went back on their proposals and found themselves in the embarrassing position of opposing their own proposals.

This and other instances make it clear that the Soviet Union does not seek to grasp military supremacy as the Western Powers do, but that its policy is one of disarmament, a policy which seeks to ensure peaceful coexistence of all peoples, regardless of the differences in their economic and social systems.

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

The Soviet Union's policy seeks the achievement of peace through disarmament and peaceful coexistence; in fact, the very core of the whole policy of the socialist countries may be thus expressed. This consistent policy has found itself embodied in the fact that it was the Soviet Union which took the initiative of apprising the United Nations of the disarmament problem and urging its speedy consideration by making a number of concrete proposals under that heading. For a number of years the Western Powers continued to reject out of hand the Soviet proposals one after the other, without presenting any constructive or concrete counter-proposals. Having gradually become aware, however, that this negative position could not be persevered in to the end, and giving in to the pressure of world public opinion, the Western Powers found themselves constrained to present some plans of their own.

What is the principal hall-mark of these plans? It is that they are full of conditions and stipulations which are perfectly well known to be unacceptable to the other side. First of all, for example, the control and production of atomic weapons as proposed rejects the prohibition of the nuclear weapon, even though it is perfectly clear that control will be justified only if nuclear weapons are prohibited. Whenever the Western Powers make proposals, they attach a number of conditions to them, thus making them pointless and ineffective and impossible of acceptance.

The same thing goes for attempts to tie in the reduction of armaments and armed forces with the solution of political problems.

The Charter of the United Nations is clear and unambiguous as to the obligation of States to solve their international disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations. Consequently, the existence of outstanding international political problems cannot and must not serve as a pretext for the maintenance of vast armed forces by the States; nor does it justify a continued armaments race and the production of weapons of mass destruction. The fact that they continue to do so proves that they are determined to seek solutions of international disputes by force of arms.

(Mr. Tanabanov, Bulgaria)

Of course, international disputes and controversies exist; they will always exist. How much easier their solution will be if there are no mass armaments production programmes, if these strings of bases in foreign territories do not exist.

Lately, units specially trained in the handling and launching of nuclear weapons and rockets have been stationed abroad and this, of course, gives rise to mistrust and alarm on the part of peoples and countries which find themselves surrounded by these bases; for that matter, distrust is also rampant in the countries where these bases are located. There is no question that disarmament, and particularly the prohibition of the atomic weapon, will facilitate the solution of international disputes. Only progress in the field of disarmament will contribute to the restoration of confidence and foster the solution of other international problems.

The formula proclaimed by the League of Nations -- security first and disarmament next -- has proved to be a fallacy and has occasioned great suffering to all mankind. Similarly, the thesis of balance of power, of the deterrent effect of atomic weapons, of the priority of the solution of controversial international problems as against steps towards disarmament -- all these are so many attempts designed to denigrate the very idea of disarmament and to rule out the notion of the prohibition of the nuclear weapon.

All of these are attempts to convince the public that atomic war is inevitable. The elimination of the danger of war, especially of atomic war, depends first of all on the conclusion of an agreement between the great Powers. But it is no less true that the peoples of all countries large and small alike are equally interested in the conclusion of an agreement that would call for concrete and swift measures for disarmament. In the absence of such measures no country and no people will feel safe from the ghastly threat of atomic warfare.

In the resolutions on disarmament adopted heretofore by the General Assembly, particular emphasis was given -- no doubt intentionally -- to the notion that the prohibition of nuclear weapons and their elimination from the arsenals of States must be a primary objective of any disarmament debate. A number of delegations have had the opportunity to emphasize this consistent trait which is common to all the disarmament resolutions of the United Nations. In 1954, at its ninth session, the General Assembly had already recommended the total prohibition of the use and production of nuclear weapons and other types of weapons adaptable to mass destruction, as well as the reconversion of existing stocks of nuclear weapons and materials to peaceful uses. We feel that there is a possibility at the present session not only to reaffirm this categorical directive once anew, but also to transform it into a concrete decision which would immediately be put into effect.

The proposal of the Soviet Union calling for the undertaking of a formal obligation by the great Powers to the effect that they renounce the use of nuclear weapons, if only for a temporary period of five years, is a first step toward the complete prohibition of these weapons. This proposal is clear and unambiguous. Instead of an armaments race, instead of a nuclear and thermonuclear balance of power, this proposal points to a way out of the vicious circle in which the disarmament negotiations have been floundering especially as regards the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. By refusing obstinately to accept this proposal, the Western Powers find themselves in a position of offering nothing in exchange because the Western proposals presented in this Committee make it clear that they accept the prospect of atomic warfare and that they in fact seek to legitimize the supplying of atomic weapons to other States, thus disseminating the possession and use of nuclear weapons. The twenty-four Power

draft resolution of the Western countries studiously omits any mention of elimination or prohibition of these weapons, which is surely a long step backward from the 1954 resolution of the General Assembly even though that resolution, as we know, was only one of principle.

Those who are genuinely interested in the restoration of confidence between the States and in the reduction of international tension must accept the Soviet proposal that the nuclear weapon be renounced if only for a limited period of time. Here we would take a decisive step forward in the right direction. For its part, my delegation is profoundly convinced that this opinion is shared by a considerable number of other delegations. Adoption of a decision of this nature by the General Assembly would mark a great event, a practical step which, even though partial, would have tremendous impact on the international situation and, ipso facto, would facilitate future negotiations for the complete prohibition of the production of nuclear weapons with the appropriate and corresponding measures of control to ensure observance of this prohibition.

There is one aspect of the disarmament problem, however, in which public opinion throughout the world is particularly interested -- that is, the halting of atomic and thermonuclear test explosions. Frequently, when it is desired to frustrate the adoption of Soviet proposals on disarmament, unacceptable control conditions are invoked. But here is one field, the stopping of nuclear and hydrogen weapons tests, where control is either unnecessary or, if necessary, is easy to set up, under the pressure of world public opinion. The Western countries should accept the cessation of test explosions of nuclear weapons. They found it impossible to reject the Soviet proposal on the mere ground that no adequate control measures were offered because they were offered. That is why the Western Powers have arbitrarily and artificially linked this problem to the one of the cut-off in the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. It would, in our opinion, be difficult to find a more striking instance of a lack of desire to achieve any agreement whatever on disarmament.

We have been told that the disarmament problems are complex in the extreme and hence the need for partial or initial measures. But when a partial measure comes within the realm of possibility every effort is made to render it more complicated and to set it at naught.

Any attempt to distract the attention of the peoples from the danger posed by nuclear test explosions is a crime against the present generation and especially against coming generations. We have unfortunately heard speeches in the General Assembly and in this Committee which again attempt to deny the dangers inherent in nuclear test explosions. Doubts are cast on the suitability or usefulness of a halt of test explosions as a step toward the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. Some even try to convince us that serious scientific disputes existed on this point. But the scientific disputes, if they ever existed, have come to an end. Scientists in all countries are at one in their conclusion that the continuation of test explosions of nuclear and hydrogen weapons creates a serious hazard and, more than that, an irreparable hazard for human life, safety and health. This finding was made by eighteen prominent scientists of the Federal German Republic, whose Government is preparing to supply its armed forces with nuclear weapons; by scientists in Japan, the country whose people were the first to feel the dreadful effects of the atomic weapon; by 2,200 American scholars and scientists who, contrary to the official statements of the Government of that country, make it quite clear that the continuation of test explosions is fraught with frightful dangers; and by hundreds of British and French scientists who did so because they did not want the European continent to be transformed into a desert and a field of ruins. Similar statements were made by hundreds of thousands of Soviet and other scientists who expressed solidarity with their foreign colleagues and who resolutely support the campaigns waged by their Governments for the prohibition of nuclear and hydrogen weapons and the cessation of test explosions.

This is one more question on which the present session of the General Assembly must take clear decisions if it wishes to heed the urgent appeals of scientists throughout the world and the anguished appeals of all mankind. Here again is a serious step towards the partial solution of the disarmament problem, a step which might in the near future be added to by other practical measures.

The argument to the effect that the continuation of tests of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons is essential to ensure the military supremacy of the Western Powers has been developed at length here by a number of delegations, especially by the delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom. But is it certain that this supremacy in the development of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons is secure or will ever be maintained? Has just the reverse not occurred in a different but related field of science? Thanks to the persevering efforts of Soviet scientists, the Soviet Union has successfully launched and set orbiting the first artificial earth satellite, the famous Sputnik, and we avail ourselves of this opportunity to congratulate the Soviet Union and its scientists on a great victory in the realm of the conquest of interplanetary space.

Under the circumstances, confronted with the continued armaments race pressed by the countries of the North Atlantic bloc, the Soviet Union is constrained to continue the development of its own weapons, and who can reliably assure the countries of NATO that the Soviet Union will not overtake them in this field as well? Certainly nobody has any doubt as to the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union and its policy of peace. On this point surely they entertain no doubt whatever. However, in the atmosphere of an armaments race and the enormous accumulation of nuclear weapons, one false move, one poorly calculated step in the risky "brink of war" policy to which the imperialist circles are committed -- things like mass concentrations of troops along certain frontiers so as to exert pressure -- could unleash a crisis from which all the peoples would suffer, despite the dreadful danger of war.

Certain quarters, especially armaments-producing monopolies, seek to push the peoples of the world even further along the slippery plane of the armaments race because this secures for their benefit enormous profits which they are unwilling to renounce. The continuation of tests of nuclear weapons and the

further perfecting and development and mass production of these weapons brings in tremendous profits to these monopolies, whereas a renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons would find these gentry out of a job, which, of course, is a prospect of which they take a dim view.

We must do everything in our power to put an end to this awful state of affairs. Agreement must be achieved on at least some aspects of the disarmament problem. It is monstrous even to think that the fate of millions of human beings who are obliged to live in privation, and who tomorrow will fall victims to a dreadful atomic war, depends on an insignificant minority of persons interested in the vast profits which the armaments race brings to them. One of the chief obstacles -- perhaps the chief obstacle -- to the achievement of any progress in the disarmament field is the great monopolies which produce weapons, especially those engaged in the production of weapons of mass destruction. We are fully alive to the difficulties encountered by certain Governments and statesmen who must face such powerful opposition to any sincere intention they have of arriving at any genuine disarmament agreement. But there is no doubt that they would be all the more greatly esteemed if they were in a position to satisfy the aspirations and wishes of the great majority of peoples by breaking the resistance to disarmament on the part of the armaments-producing monopolies.

We are convinced that the present session of the General Assembly will not allow itself to be forced to accept a spurious relationship between various unrelated disarmament fields. Were it to accept even partial measures, such as a solemn unconditional renunciation for a two-year period of atomic tests by the Powers which possess thermonuclear weapons, or a solemn renunciation by States of the use of atomic or thermonuclear weapons for a five-year period -- were it to bring this about, the present session would have impelled mankind far along the path towards disarmament and then it could say that it had truly worked for peace.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We shall meet again at 10.30 a.m. tomorrow in Conference Room 2.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.