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Chairman: Mr. Finn MOE (Norway).

**Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943, A/C.1/667, A/C.1/668, A/C.1/669 and A/C.1/670) (continued)**

[Item 66]\*

**International control of atomic energy : report of the Committee of Twelve (A/1922) (continued)**

[Item 16]\*

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. JESSUP (United States) observed that each member of the Committee could make his own comparisons, both in terms of substance and spirit, between the statements made by Mr. Acheson and Mr. Vyshinsky. He recalled that Mr. Acheson had expressed the hope that all could follow the broad, clear path toward peace and co-operation, which the United States, France and Great Britain wished to do, rather than turn aside into the dark and noisome alleys of propaganda and bickering. In listening to Mr. Vyshinsky his delegation had inevitably felt that it was experiencing once again a rebuff of the effort made in all sincerity to move toward the peaceful path of negotiation.

2. Referring to the suggestions put forward at the previous meeting, calling for meetings in sub-committee of the delegations of the three sponsors of the joint draft resolution and of the USSR, under the chairmanship of the President of the General Assembly, to seek to frame proposals to be submitted to the Committee, he pointed out that in essence the same proposal had been urged upon the USSR representative in Paris for some fourteen weeks in the spring of 1951. It had then been proposed that the four foreign ministers should discuss subjects which would reduce tension and that the agenda of such a meeting should include the same item as that under discussion, namely,

the existing level of armaments and armed forces and measures to be proposed jointly by the four Powers for the international control and reduction of armaments and armed forces. The representatives of France, the United Kingdom and the United States had then suggested that such measures might be proposed in joint statements to the General Assembly, or, if it seemed appropriate and in accordance with the desire of the United Nations, to a broad international conference. The invitation had not been accepted, and the Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States had therefore devoted their efforts to preparing forward looking and sound proposals which could be submitted to the General Assembly. The result was the joint draft resolution (A/C.1/667) before the Committee.

3. If it was in accordance with the wish of the Committee, the three Powers were perfectly ready to discuss the proposals with the representatives of the Soviet Union. However, one point should be noted. Suggestions had been made to the effect that it would be futile for the Committee to consider the adoption of any resolution if there were no preliminary agreement among the four Powers on the exact proposals for a disarmament commission and its work. While recognizing the very great progress which would be made if the four Powers were in agreement upon such proposals, Mr. Jessup stated that his delegation felt that even in the absence of full agreement the Committee should not abandon its efforts to make progress in that field.

4. He had hoped that it would be borne in mind that the sponsors of the three-Power draft resolution wished to leave no stone unturned in an effort to press forward to an agreement. One should not be deterred by any momentary difficulty.

5. The three Governments would give the most careful study to the questions submitted by the USSR delegation and would give categorical answers to those questions at an appropriate moment. He wished, however, to reply with a categorical "no" to Mr. Vyshinsky's rhetorical question as to whether the United States Government did not bear the responsibility for the heat of the political atmosphere. The Soviet Union bore that responsibility.

\* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

misunderstanding or misrepresentation of Acheson's statement could obscure the fact that the United States and other Powers were building their defences in the interests of peace. In that connexion, he cited figures illustrating the different policies with regard to demobilization followed by the western Powers and the USSR after the Second World War.

7. By 1946, the United States had reduced its forces to 2 million from the 12 million under arms at the close of the war. At that time, France and the United Kingdom together had some two and one half million men. In 1946, reliable estimates placed Soviet Union forces stationed inside the USSR borders at over three million men. The United States, France and the United Kingdom had continued their rapid demobilization to such a point that by 1950 the United States had only one and one half million men and the United Kingdom and France together had fewer than 1,400,000 men. But in 1950 the Soviet Union had regular armed forces estimated at some four million, together with another million men in security forces, plus reformed and secret police—5 million in all. In addition, the Soviet Union controlled another million men in its eastern European satellites, a total of 6 million men at that time.

8. It was in the face of those facts and the policies of the Soviet Union, especially in support of aggression in Korea, that the United States and others were making the necessary efforts to restore a balance. The fact that that was being done had brought a sense of comfort and of hope to millions throughout the world.

9. Turning to another point in Mr. Vyshinsky's statement, Mr. Jessup stated that his Government would reply to the note of the USSR Government on the Mutual Security Act of 1951 and would also reply to the charges of the Soviet Union in the appropriate body of the General Assembly. He noted that the item had been submitted to the General Assembly without waiting for a reply to be received from the United States Government.

10. The USSR representative had asked why the problem of concurrent political settlement had not been incorporated in the draft resolution submitted by France, the United Kingdom and the United States since it had been referred to in the statements made by the representatives of those countries. The answer was that the so-called preliminary conditions regarding political settlement had nothing to do with the establishment of the disarmament commission by the General Assembly nor with work on the proposed draft convention, which matters were the objectives of the draft resolution. As Mr. Acheson had pointed out, however, political factors were clearly relevant to the actual implementation of any disarmament plan. Thus, with regard to Korea there would be perhaps, no practical difficulty since all hoped that the fighting would be over much sooner than the difficult questions before the disarmament commission could be worked out. In that connexion he pointed out that the question of exchange of prisoners of war, far from being a new preliminary condition as represented by Mr. Vyshinsky, had formed part of the agenda accepted on 26 July 1951 by both sides in the armistice discussion.

11. Reiterating that the United States had consistently been ready to examine all existing problems and to attempt to reach appropriate solutions, he pointed out that paragraph 6 of the operative part of the joint draft resolution of France, the United Kingdom and the United States made it clear that the settlement of the great political issues was to be concurrent with the coming into effect of the proposed disarmament programme. As several repre-

sentatives had said, the question of peace was essentially a matter of mutual trust, and that was why the three Powers had suggested that the technical aspects of disarmament and the broad question of political settlement should be approached at the same time. The very existence of a disarmament commission working with the co-operation of all would inevitably contribute to a reduction of tension.

12. The Committee had again heard a repetition of the old Soviet Union position calling for simultaneous prohibition of atomic weapons and establishment of international control first raised in 1948. From the discussion in the Atomic Energy Commission, it had appeared that that USSR proposal would involve simultaneous preparation of a plan rather than establishment of effective control simultaneously with prohibiting atomic weapons. A paper prohibition was only an idea which, as Mr. Vyshinsky had noted, could not be controlled, and would remain such until an international system for control of the production of fissionable materials was in operation.

13. Mr. Jessup wondered what members of the Committee would think if a government said it had 6 million men under arms, so many tanks, airplanes and atomic bombs. It promised to use all these only for peaceful purposes, and in exchange for that promise asked other States to give full confidence and stop looking to their defenses, so that tension would vanish.

14. Mr. Jessup said that memory of treaties such as the Briand-Kellogg Pact for the renunciation of war as an instrument of international policy, and the experience with similar agreements, such as might be recalled by the peoples of Poland and Czechoslovakia or the United States at Pearl Harbor, might lead the peoples of the world to question whether they could feel perfectly safe if a great military Power gave such assurances.

15. The USSR proposal provided that the atomic bomb should be prohibited and the use of already manufactured atomic bombs should be exclusively for civilian purposes. The three-Power proposal was that atomic bombs not only should be prohibited, but that existing bombs should be destroyed. Emphasizing that the United Nations plan said in effect that no government should be allowed to remain in possession of the atomic bomb and that fissionable materials under international control should be used only for peaceful purposes, he observed that the Soviet position appeared to be that national governments should be left in possession of that weapon, and that other governments should merely rely on their promise not to use it.

16. It was clear that the USSR plan, according to the Soviet Union amendments to the tripartite proposal, involved progress in stages, but the sequence of events and the inter-relationship of the various bodies was by no means clear. In view of the delays involved, first in convening a conference, then in discussion and in ratification, the plan would obviously go into effect only after a considerable period of time following the declaration against the use of the atomic bomb. What was to happen if, in the meanwhile, atomic material were to be given by a Member State to a government which did not recognize the authority of the United Nations or did not consider itself bound by the ban?

17. There were points of similarity between the position of the sponsors of the three-Power draft resolution and the USSR position which could be noted with satisfaction, but those points were comparatively minor ones. It appeared that both agreed that there should be a single commission for the purpose envisaged and that they differed only as to

the name to be given to that body. He understood also that the USSR agreed to a definition of armed forces which would include para-military and armed security and police forces. The third item on which there appeared to be agreement was that at some point it would be necessary to submit the disarmament plan to a general conference of all States.

18. Mr. Jessup paid tribute to the fact that those advances had been made and regretted that there were not more, of a more substantial nature. It still seemed that on most of the main points, the USSR had only restated its old proposals which had often been explored and rejected in the General Assembly and elsewhere.

19. Ato Abbebe RETTA (Ethiopia) wished to make two points in connexion with the problems envisaged in the joint draft resolution submitted by France, the United Kingdom and the United States. His delegation believed that it would be highly desirable to achieve the aim of regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all types of armaments to levels adequate for defence, but not for aggression.

20. Mussolini's régime had attempted to justify the fascist invasion of Ethiopia—an invasion which must be disassociated from the present Italian Government and the Italian people with whom his country entertained normal and friendly relations—on the grounds that the Ethiopians intended to invade the Italian colonies; pictures of peasants with spears and swords had been adduced in support of that contention. Had there been any criteria as to what armaments were defensive, that argument would not have been possible. Nor would it have been possible for the fascist régime to carry out its aggression had there been any regulation of armaments.

21. The second point that he wished to mention was the effective control of atomic energy and the prohibition of atomic weapons. It was impossible not to support the abolition of all weapons of terror and mass destruction, of which atomic weapons were only a part. He wondered whether the words "all armaments" would not be preferable to the single class of atomic weapons. Noting that it had been said that retaliation would prove a deterrent to the use of atomic weapons, in which connexion the Egyptian representative had cited poison gas, he pointed out that other weapons of similar effect, against which retaliation had been certain, had not remained unused. In fact, poison gas had been used in Ethiopia, where it had been clear that there would be no retaliation. Nevertheless, failure to use it elsewhere might be ascribed to other considerations.

22. Stating that the three-Power draft resolution had not, perhaps, indicated in full the ways of limiting armaments in a universally acceptable manner and noting that all and not some of the conditions of peace were desired, the representative of Ethiopia declared that it was to be hoped that different approaches would lead to one generally accepted effective method of disarmament.

23. Mr. COOPER (Liberia) stated that disarmament was a question which concerned all nations, even those with no armed forces, since in the modern world there could be no such thing as real neutrality and no nation could escape the effects of a general war. However, there could be no effective system which did not include all the great Powers, and their objective could not be reached while some nations spoke of peace and based their policies on power.

24. In the three-Power proposal the crux was the provision for disclosure and verification. Such a provision would be required in the initial stages of any plan including the reduction of all armaments and armed forces by one-third. A further important provision was that disarmament should proceed by stages, beginning in the simpler areas. That proposal had been attacked but it was clear that a beginning had to be made somewhere.

25. Although the creation of a single commission to replace two existing ones would not solve all the problems of disarmament, it was to be hoped that the existing differences could be resolved. The various objections which had been raised by the representative of the Soviet Union—such as the question of western military bases—could be dealt with as a part of the over-all plan. Those differences of opinion might in fact prevent any results from being achieved by a disarmament conference which lacked preparation.

26. Even after disarmament, the small nations would continue to be in a vulnerable position. A straight reduction of one-third would do no more than maintain the *status quo* and the great Powers would still be able to subjugate their small neighbours. It was all very well to refer to the system of collective security provided by the Charter, of the United Nations, but that had not yet proved effective against any great Power. Moreover, as was shown in the case of Korea, assistance only came to a small nation after it had suffered great destruction.

27. Unfortunately, promises of respect for territorial integrity of States could not be believed and even after disarmament, small nations would have to continue to align themselves with some great Power. The representative of Liberia said that the real hope of the world lay in the development of the brotherhood of man and the elimination of national and racial labels. Such a hope was no more utopian than the hope of effective disarmament.

28. Mr. JOOSTE (Union of South Africa) said that disarmament was primarily the responsibility of the great Powers for three main reasons. First, only the great Powers could possess and produce large stocks of arms. Secondly, only the great Powers had such world-wide interests that their differences could develop into a threat to world peace and security. Thirdly, only the great Powers could decide the form of disarmament that would be effective.

29. No great Power could afford to be defenceless when others were strong. Indeed, a single great Power, if it alone were strong and had imperialistic designs, represented a greater threat than a number of armed Powers. The responsibility of the great Powers in regard to disarmament had always been recognized. Again they had presented a series of proposals in a spirit of restraint and realism. The proposals were no more than a basis for another attempt at disarmament. However, they offered an opportunity to those nations which had hitherto withheld their co-operation to join in promoting the interests of the whole world.

30. The response of the representative of the Soviet Union to the three-Power proposals could only cause regret. His charge that Western rearmament was aggressive and directed against the Soviet Union and that regional arrangements constituted a threat to the peace could not be accepted.

31. South Africa was enlarging its armed forces and intended to participate in the proposed Middle East Command. However, South Africa had no aggressive designs and could not afford to squander its resources in



support of the designs of others. It was following those policies because it could only pursue its national development if a system of collective security existed. The democratic nations had turned to co-operative measures because events suggested that a threat existed.

32. Such co-operative action was not contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and other speakers had already referred to Article 51. Perhaps there was some truth in the allegation that it constituted a threat to the peace because any enlargement of forces increased world tension. However, it was suicidal at the present time to be defenceless.

33. The representative of the Soviet Union had objected to alleged preliminary conditions. The only condition in fact was that a basis for a co-operative effort should be adopted. However, there were conditions which would have to be realized before any plan went into effect. For example, it would be unrealistic to expect that disarmament could precede the end of the conflict in Korea. Korea, indeed, was one of the main reasons for nations combining to defend themselves against aggression.

34. The Soviet Union had submitted amendments which seemed largely to alter the essence of the three-Power proposal. They evidently sought to maintain the existing disparity of strength. The delegation of the Union of South Africa regarded the three-Power proposal as offering a realistic approach to a system of satisfactory verification and control, which could lead to disarmament accompanied by the relaxation of international tension. It was unfortunately true that no proposal could rest on merely formal guarantees. It must be made clear to nations by actions that their confidence in any system was not misplaced.

35. Small Powers such as the Union of South Africa were obliged to participate in the scheme of collective security and regional arrangements, although they needed all their resources for national development. The Union of South Africa could not, also, surrender its freedom of action with regard to the continued exploitation of, for instance, its minerals upon which its national economy so largely depended. Small Powers therefore had a profound interest in peace and security. While the same might be true of the great Powers, the latter had larger resources and could recover more easily from their losses. Small nations also had little freedom in their external relations, since they were often forced by geographic contiguity or proximity to align themselves with a great Power for fear that they might be trampled underfoot. That often had an impact upon the conduct of their internal affairs also. Only in an atmosphere of absolute security could they count upon real freedom of action.

36. Small Powers should not forget that they could contribute to the deterioration of international relations by pursuing their grievances to the point where they could be exploited by other Powers. Moreover, their conflicts could lead to an aggravation of the situation not only by attracting the direct action of another nation but by affording the opportunity for subversive activities. It should also be recalled that a small Power could serve as the instrument of aggression for a great Power. Moreover, a small Power could act as a source of armaments for a senior partner.

37. The representative of the Union of South Africa felt that all nations would have to take part fully in any effective scheme of disarmament. It was to be hoped that all would realize that their only salvation lay in peace.

The meeting rose at 5.5 p.m.