

On May 10 the Soviet Delegation tabled a 22-page document dealing with disarmament and "the elimination of the threat of a new war". These proposals imposed a rigid timetable whereby the whole disarmament programme would be fully implemented by the end of 1957; they embodied the Anglo-French proposals on phasing and on the level of armed forces but they do not meet adequately the essentially related condition regarding control. Furthermore, the Soviet proposals agreed with the Western suggestion that nuclear weapons should not be used except in defence against aggression but specify that the use of these weapons should be permitted "when a decision to this effect is taken by the Security Council". These Soviet proposals represented an advance on earlier positions but they were not clear on the essential question of an effective control system. The Soviet plan also contained a number of new features calling, for instance, for the dismantling of all military bases in foreign territories, the immediate withdrawal of occupation troops from Germany, the condemnation of war propaganda, the removal of every form of discrimination in the field of trade, etc.

As some of the Soviet proposals went beyond the terms of reference of the Sub-committee and in view of the forthcoming discussions of the Four Powers at Geneva, the meetings of the Sub-committee were adjourned on May 18.

At the Geneva Conference, (the one held last July) disarmament was one of the main topics of discussion; it will be recalled that one of the most spectacular developments at that meeting was President Eisenhower's suggestion that the United States and the U.S.S.R. should give each other a complete blueprint of their military establishments from one end of their countries to the other and that each country should provide unlimited facilities for aerial photography of its territory by the other country. As President Eisenhower said: "We, to provide you with the facilities within our country, ample facilities, for aerial reconnaissance where you can make all the pictures you choose and take them to your own country to study; you, to provide exactly the same facilities for us and we to make these examinations".

With this suggestion, the discussions on disarmament were to take a new turn. In presenting his proposals, the President was elaborating on the suggestion contained in his opening statement that the future discussions on the vital issue of inspection might be oriented towards the establishment of "an alarm system". The new approach was prompted by the consideration which is recognized by the Soviet Government that the most thorough system of inspection might provide for adequate control of future atomic and non-atomic activities from the time of its establishment but it could not in the present state of scientific knowledge ensure the complete identification and elimination of stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The President confirmed this development specifically in his July 21 speech when he said: "We have not yet been able to discover any scientific or other inspection method which would make certain the elimination of nuclear weapons. So far as we are aware, no other nation has made such a discovery. Our study of this problem is continuing". The reports of the Sub-Committee, particularly of the meetings that began on August 29, revealed continued acknowledgement of this fact.