

This does not mean that reduction of armaments is impossible. It does mean that it can be achieved only if we can create independent international bodies for the continuing inspection and verification of each government's action to ensure the treaties signed will be honoured, and that any breaches can be quickly detected. Such international control and inspection organs can be so devised and established that governments, no matter how much they suspect each other, can have confidence in this machinery. To say that such agencies will be the instrument of this or that power or group of powers, or of "American monopolists", is merely a somewhat crude attempt to prevent their consideration and establishment. To say that they will "snoop" and "spy" is to refuse to accept any effective inspection or international control, because the whole basis of such inspection and control is "snooping" applied to all countries without exception and without favour.

The essential test of whether a government is or is not sincere in making a proposal of the kind which we have before us is whether it will accept adequate international controls with limitations on its sovereign power to make sure that the proposal agreed on is carried out. In any such controls the United Nations agency applying them must be given complete authority and facilities to move about the territory of any state, to inspect where and when it will.

That seems to me to be the very heart of the question of inspection and control - and if we cannot agree on it, we are not going to get agreement on any effective limitation of armaments or indeed on the prohibition of any armaments. Only by the establishment of such agencies for continuous and effective international control, with the most precise powers, can the circle of fear be cut through. We must begin by putting our trust, not in each other, because that for the time being is impossible, but in the United Nations agencies which we hope to set up. That is why this question of effective control and fool-proof safeguards is far more than a technical detail in a disarmament discussion. All other questions, such as the timing of the various stages of armament reduction can be worked out without too much difficulty if this fundamental question of international inspection and control is settled. To refuse to accept such inspection and control, independently administered and impartially applied to all countries, on the ground that it is an unjustified interference with national sovereignty is to make any form of limitation of armaments and also the prohibition of the use of atomic energy for war-like purposes quite impossible. No amount of violent argument or forensic skill can obscure that fact.

Nor is it to any purpose to argue that the proposal in the resolution before us for proceeding by stages nullifies its value on the ground that as these stages are from the less to the more important, the latter will never be reached because the proposal is not put forward in good faith or will it be carried out by the U.N. agency in good faith. The whole purpose of international control, applied fairly to all countries, is to ensure that there can be no bad faith on anybody's part, and that therefore we can proceed smoothly and steadily from the easiest to the most difficult stages, step by step with a minimum of delay.

Progress by stages is essential, and for two reasons. In the first place, it would be a physical impossibility to implement any effective disarmament agreement