

The private discussions in the Sub-Committee started in London on February 25th and lasted until May 18, 1955.

On March 8th, the Western powers introduced the Anglo-French proposals in the form of a draft resolution. The resolution called for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons except in defence against aggression. It also called for the negotiation of a disarmament treaty which would involve, in accordance with prior United Nations resolutions, the total prohibition of the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction of every type, together with the conversion of existing stocks of nuclear weapons for peaceful purposes; the resolution called for major reductions in all armed forces and conventional armaments as well as for the establishment of a control organ with rights, powers and functions adequate to guarantee the effective observance of the agreed prohibitions and reductions. I feel that in discussing this matter we should recall the history of the problem in the last twelve months so that we will have a proper perspective as we are confronted with it.

The program was to be completed in three stages. Initially, armed forces and military expenditures, both atomic and non-atomic, were to be frozen at levels of December 31, 1954 or such other date as might be agreed on at a proposed world disarmament conference. Then one half of the reductions foreseen for conventional armaments and armed forces would be effected. Once these reductions had been completed, the manufacture of nuclear weapons was to cease. In the last stage, the second half of the agreed reductions of conventional armaments and armed forces would be carried out and the total prohibition of nuclear weapons would go into force.

Within each stage, the measures envisaged were only to take place when the control organ reported that it was able effectively to enforce them.

This was the original position of the Western delegations. I have outlined it in some detail because this position was to provide the basis for further discussions and negotiations. It will be noted in particular that these Western proposals envisaged a comprehensive disarmament programme on the understanding that a control organ would effectively guarantee its implementation. This basic Western position remains unaltered to this day.

In the course of the discussions, the United Kingdom and the French Delegations made additional proposals. They suggested that the forces of the Great Powers should be reduced to specified levels and that the complete prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons should go into force upon the completion of the third quarter (i.e., 75 per cent) of the reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces. This concession was made contingent upon agreement being reached, among other things, on the institution of an effective system of control, which would operate throughout the whole disarmament programme. As will be noted, the condition of effective control is essential to Western proposals. One can't underline that too strongly. Any proposals advanced by the West have extended to but not beyond the limits allowed by the possibilities of effective control.