

(Mr. Israelyan, USSR)

And finally, the author draws the following conclusion:

"To prevent a new arms race in space, the United States must shift course. It must suspend testing of anti-satellite weapons and start negotiations to halt the further development of them, and give up the costly, futile and dangerous pursuit of 'Star Wars' missile defences".

[Speaking in Russian] I share the views of the author of this article, and should like to point out that whether Ambassador Fields wished it or not, today he has been drawn into a discussion of the draft Soviet treaty on the non-use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. This is merely an illustration of the fact that both the Soviet draft and the issue itself are of crucial topicality, and that the draft may be the basis of negotiations.

I should like to point out here that many other delegations have publicly, at the meetings of the Conference, and in talks with us put forward their remarks, observations and even amendments concerning the Soviet draft. Surely all this indicates that the time has come for negotiation: tomorrow may be too late.

Finally, I cannot pass over in silence something to which I have heard references too often: I mean the so-called "free press". I read this "free press", which every day throws mud at my country, my Motherland, my people; the "free press", in which a good word is rarely found for the Soviet Union. No one should wait for the day when Izvestiya would publish articles criticizing the position of the Soviet Government on the issue that outer space should be peaceful. That will not happen. The Soviet people wants outer space to be peaceful, and only articles to that effect appear in Izvestiya. But to have a correct perception of the Soviet press, I would strongly urge you, including my colleague from the United States, to read that press better. If you did so, you would know that it contains a considerable amount of critical material concerning various aspects of the life and activities of the Soviet people. The Soviet people is a self-critical people; and our press is self-critical. But to publish articles and reports which run counter to the spirit of the people, which has suffered from war, which abhors war, to publish articles which are at variance with the feelings of other peoples; which also call for a peaceful outer space, for a freeze, for a moratorium -- demands shared by the American people and by all the peoples of the earth -- that is something the Soviet press will not do.

I apologise, Mr. President, for having had to dwell on this question. It is one often raised in this Conference. As you know, the Soviet delegation endeavours not to involve in the Conference's work issues which are not concerned with disarmament. I believe, however, that my colleagues will understand me. From time to time unjustified and gratuitous reproaches have been addressed to the Soviet people and its press at this Conference. I considered it my duty to reply to them.