

absence of effective inspection and control these substances could readily be diverted clandestinely from peaceful to military use by a nation secretly preparing atomic war. Once the fissionable material is available the fabrication of a bomb is a simple operation requiring little time and only ordinary machine facilities.

The majority of the Commission were therefore forced to the conclusion, despite every wish to find a basis of agreement, that they must reject the Soviet proposals as "completely ignoring the existing technical knowledge of the problem or providing an adequate basis for effective international control and the elimination of atomic weapons from national armaments."

Such was the situation in the Atomic Energy Commission in the spring of 1948. The Soviet were adamant against the acceptance of the elements of control which the majority were convinced were necessary and having regard to the far reaching and terrifying consequences of any doubt on these matters, the majority could accept nothing less.

As a result it became evident that the issue should be raised for clarification in the broader forum presented by the Third Session of the General Assembly then due to meet in Paris in September.

In proposing that the Security Council should be invited to accept this course, the majority members of the Commission after reaffirming the correctness of their proposals, pointed out that having concluded that part of their task concerned primarily with scientific and technological matters, they realized that the time had arrived when increased efforts should be made with regard to general considerations, including those of an international political character, the debate on which could be undertaken with greater advantage in the General Assembly of the United Nations itself.

The attempt to solve the atomic energy "impasse" in the Security Council by asking the Council to approve and transmit to the General Assembly the report of the majority of the members of the Atomic Energy Commission met, on June 22, 1948, with the 26th veto exercised by the Soviet Union. However, a procedural motion proposed by Canada to refer the three reports of the Commission to the General Assembly "as a matter of special concern" was passed by a majority of 9-2, and there was thus created an opportunity to test the conclusions of the majority both as regards their technical correctness and also, and most importantly, as to their acceptability to the nations members of the General Assembly.

I come now to the further development of these matters which took place in Paris during September, October, and November last.

In the opening meetings of the General Assembly the Atomic Energy Commission's proposals were given wide support and the urgency of establishing effective control was expressed by many nations other than the Soviet and its satellites whose delegates reiterated their insistence on "prohibition" of atomic weapons and the destruction of existing stocks. They repeated their rejection of the measures which would make control effective because they said that these measures would be an invasion of their sovereignty.