

at present.

In this situation, to maintain a demand for "immediate negotiations" I think constitutes a refusal to allow urgent practical work to be done. That refusal cannot be squared with the stated policy of those who are blocking this work. They say they want a test-ban treaty. If so, then let us work together on that treaty under the best mandate available to a conference which works by consensus. The mandate for such work tabled by Australia on behalf of nine countries is itself the product of considerable compromise. It is, I repeat, the best mandate available at present. That mandate proposes that the Ad Hoc Committee should work on "scope" and "verification and compliance", "with a view to the negotiation of a treaty". "Scope" of the future agreement is what is to be prohibited. In Australia's view this would be all nuclear explosions, in all environments, for all time. "Verification and compliance" constitute the remainder of a CTB treaty.

There are no other issues in the CTB. When these two matters have been fully considered, and not before, the Conference on Disarmament will be in a position to negotiate the text of a CTB treaty. That treaty would have to be fully verifiable. The Conference on Disarmament can and must work now on the required means of verification. Our draft mandate also provides for that work. The principles of verification I have tabled are a guide for those negotiations.

The compromise mandate which Australia has promoted is the road towards a CTB. Rejecting that mandate may support a feeling of sea-green incorruptibility on the part of some; regrettably, it may suggest an inner insincerity with regard to the CTB objective on the part of others, but neither frame of mind should be allowed to distort our work. The Conference should seize the opportunity presented by the Australian draft mandate.

A chemical weapons convention is also a high priority objective for the Australian Government. We believe there is a general will within the Conference on Disarmament to establish a convention requiring the declaration and destruction of existing chemical weapons and the means of producing them. Such a convention would prohibit the manufacture, stockpiling or use of such weapons and set up an effective system of international measures to demonstrate full compliance with all these provisions.

In this connection, the Australian Government particularly welcomed the tabling of a draft convention by Vice-President Bush of the United States in April. That action gave new impetus to the objective of achieving such a convention. The United States draft contains (by and large) the prohibitions which the Government of Australia would like to see in the future convention — in particular, an absolute prohibition on the use of chemical weapons. It also provides verification and compliance provisions of the standard which Australia believes is necessary if such a convention is to attract the adherence of all relevant States and to be fully effective in its physical and political objectives.

Australia wants an intensification and acceleration of the Conference's work on chemical weapons. The critical task is to resolve differences over the verification provisions. A striking example of this has arisen in connection with the United States draft convention and its provisions for ad hoc and special on-site inspections. Some delegations have argued that the draft provisions make a distinction in the verification regime from one country to another, depending on the degree of State ownership of the chemical industry.

The Australian Government holds that the verification provisions of the future Convention should apply with equal effectiveness to all countries, whatever their economic, social and political systems, and that comparable facilities should be subject to comparably effective controls, regardless of their ownership.

These are thoroughly legitimate, realistic considerations. The United States delega-