

However much we might have wished for a quicker response, the important thing now is that there has been a response from the Government of the Soviet Union, and our task is therefore to study it with the care and objectivity which the importance of this subject requires. It is only human to admit, however -- and I am sure that Mr. Vyshinsky, great realist that he is, will understand why we feel it necessary to say these things, and I hope we say them in good temper that, in view of the long and unhappy experience which we have all had in negotiations on this subject, we cannot wholly remove from our minds the memory of past manoeuvres intended to play upon the hopes and fears of all peoples for the narrow national advantage of one country in the battle for the minds of men. In 1954, the ninth year of the atomic age and the third year in which all countries have coexisted in the fear of hydrogen weapons, it is already much too late for any of us to treat the subject of disarmament as an element in the cold war.

No disarmament proposal can be treated merely as bait to be pulled out of the water if it does not catch its fish. Nor can any of us afford, let it be added, to dismiss any proposal as mere propaganda, at least until the proposal has been thoroughly sifted, preferably in a small informal group.

At this stage, I would not want my colleagues in this Committee to think that, because we submitted a draft resolution yesterday, we believed that the time had come for termination of the general debate on this subject. We think it is important that there should be a full and unrestricted debate in this Committee. I am sure that all of us were greatly impressed yesterday by the interrogations and the replies of Mr. Vyshinsky and Mr. Belaunde, and even the smile of the representative of Thailand. Assembly debate and Committee debate have an essential place, and, in the process of arriving at a collective assessment of the merits of the two sets of proposals before us, every country around this table has an important role to play. My country does not regard itself, just because it has been a member of the Sub-Committee, as among the few countries in the world that have a stake or a responsibility in the solution of this problem. In the final analysis, I think, our experience over the years has shown that no country can indefinitely resist the moral judgment of the great majority of the Members of this Assembly. We saw at the Seventh Session, for instance, how an Indian proposal, adopted with the support of almost all countries outside the Soviet bloc, subsequently was accepted as the basis for the Korean Armistice Agreement that brought the fighting in that part of the world to an end. Though the representative of the Soviet Union in the Sub-Committee in London rejected the Anglo-French proposals as vigorously as his delegation in the Assembly had turned down the Indian resolution on Korea eighteen months before, the Soviet Union has now accepted the Anglo-French proposals as the basis for discussion, after approximately the same interval of time as had elapsed before the Assembly's Korean resolution was virtually accepted by the Communists.

As soon as we have covered the ground in a general way in this Committee, I believe that the Disarmament Commission should be requested to reconvene its Sub-Committee to continue its work in an effort to reconcile the proposals made by the Soviet Union, France, the United Kingdom, the