

In this context, there has sometimes been too much emphasis on matters of semantics during recent discussions here. We have had a good deal of play on words in connection with this question of nuclear testing: such terms as "cessation", "discontinuance", "suspension", and "halt". Of course, these shades of meaning may represent different approaches to the problem. Yet I believe it is our duty to seek what is common in our aims and not to underline our differences. This, if I understood him correctly, was the object of the distinguished Foreign Minister of Sweden in his statement, and I was sorry that the Representative of the Soviet Union took occasion in his remarks of October 17 to give the impression that he was analysing away the possible grounds of compromise which Mr. Unden appeared to be indicating. Nevertheless, it seems to us that that common ground does exist, and it has become increasingly apparent during our discussions. Unless I am mistaken, most of the members of this Committee who have spoken (this includes the representatives of the great nuclear powers) have expressed themselves in favour of the objective of the discontinuance, under sufficient control, of nuclear testing for weapons purposes. There are important differences as to timing and as to the relationship of test discontinuance to other aspects of disarmament. But agreement as to the acknowledged goal remains.

Certainly, Mr. Chairman, the Canadian Delegation has no desire to foster an illusion of unity where none exists. On the contrary, we believe that a practical and realistic approach which faces all facts is the only one which offers any hope for progress towards disarmament. But we think that, if there is a measure of agreement as to our aims, this fact should find expression.

When we turn from words to deeds in this matter of test explosions, we are faced with an obscurity in the Soviet position which gives ground for real concern. One of the most promising auguries for the success of the forthcoming Geneva negotiations has been the willingness of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom to suspend all test explosions for one year from October 31, the date from which these negotiations begin. When is the Soviet Union going to match this offer? For what purpose is the Soviet Government keeping us all in suspense while awaiting an answer to this question. The equivocal statement made by Mr. Zorin on this subject on October 10 can hardly be considered adequate. Members of the Committee may be more interested in this practical question than in score cards of past nuclear explosions.