

Ecuadorean governments, President Velasco Ibarra has remained in power since the overthrow of the Arroyo del Rio régime in 1944. Having run through his liberal and left-wing support after the promulgation of the Constitution of 1945, the President went over to the Conservatives, calling another Constituent Assembly which gave birth to a new Constitution in December 1946. The President's relations with both Constituent Assemblies were strained. The last ended in less disorder than the first, but this is partly due to the fact that the second Assembly was a packed house of Conservatives, the Liberals having refused to take part in the elections. More recently Dr. Velasco has been in touch with the Liberals again. Their leader, Dr. Humberto Albornoz, is ready to collaborate, and the party directorate, after at first forcing Sr. Albornoz to resign, appears to have come round to his way of thinking. The

Liberals are still the strongest party in the country, and a new supply of Ministers might soon be acceptable to Dr. Velasco, who has now quarrelled with a fair proportion of those at present available for office. In January the Minister of Defence, Colonel Marcheno, resigned. The Minister for Public Works, Sr. Jorge Montero Vela, one of the President's favourites, on being called before Congress to explain certain appropriations of public funds was finally constrained to agree that the money had disappeared, and resigned. In the excited session, two shots were fired in the public gallery; the man responsible was arrested, and when the President insisted on his release, the Minister of the Interior also resigned. At the beginning of the year a local attempt at an armed rising took place, but on the whole the season has been a poor one for revolutions.

UNITED NATIONS

Disarmament

The Security Council's "Commission for Conventional Armaments" held its first meeting on the 24th March. All countries which are represented on the Security Council have representatives on the new Commission. Each country supplies a chairman for a month, the order of succession being alphabetical, beginning with Australia (Mr. Hasluck). Sir Alexander Cadogan said that his Government would be submitting practical proposals in the near future. Meanwhile he laid down some principles. Disarmament depended on international confidence. To say that confidence depended on disarmament was putting the cart before the horse. The arrangements for collective security contemplated in Article 43 of the Charter must be carried out before disarmament could begin, and, in the same way, a system of international control and verification must precede disarmament. Sir Alexander Cadogan then drew upon his experience in the League of Nations Disarmament Conference, where he played a leading part, to recall how the French had argued that since defensive armaments were maintained to give security, no country would reduce them without the certainty of an alternative source of security. Unfortunately, he added, the French had not succeeded then in teaching us wisdom. This whole question of the relation of disarmament to security had occupied much of the League's time. It was vital, and he only hoped that no Power today would follow in the steps

of Fascist Italy who sneered at the whole contention as "sophistry disarmament." Confidence developed gradually. It needed sound Peace Treaties and continuous proofs of co-operation. It needed good faith and a refusal to impugn the motives of others. It needed time, for the pursuit of quick results would in fact be a sure guarantee of ultimate failure. One step, however, could be taken without delay. Article 43 could be fulfilled. International inspection and control meant the loss of some elements of National Sovereignty; but so did every treaty! It was strange, he concluded, how loath the nations were to renounce the right to plunge the whole world into chaos.

The U.S. representative followed similar lines, using Japan's evasion of the Washington Naval Treaty to demonstrate the urgent need for the international control and inspection of the production of Atomic Energy.

Atomic Energy Commission

Something in the nature of a model discussion took place when the Commission met on the 19th March. The Chairman (Soviet Representative) introduced the following resolution: "Having received the resolution of the Security Council of the 10th March, 1947, adopted in connection with the discussion of the report of the Atomic Energy Commission, the Commission resolves that its Committees, and in particular the Working Committee and Committee No. 2, consider the questions following from the Resolution, and first

of all the questions relating to the establishment of international control of atomic energy on which the necessary agreement among its members has not yet been reached." The United States Representative supported the resolution, considering it fruitful. Sir Alexander Cadogan also supported it; but saw a danger that the words "first of all" might prevent the Committees emerging from the difficult problems of control, whereas the wiser course had already been shown to be to continue with the clarification of technical problems, hoping that time would allow

common sense to solve the problem of control. The Chairman was for dealing with difficult problems first; but he was accommodating. The French Representative supported his U.K. colleague. Finally the Representatives of Syria and Colombia proposed to cut out the words "the necessary" before "agreement," and to put "in particular" for "first of all." Thus amended, the Resolution was passed unanimously, though M. Gromyko remarked that he still believed that what he thought first things should be taken first.

THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

When the Ministers adjourned on Tuesday the 25th March to go to the Bolshoi Theatre the future seemed to promise well; for M. Molotov, after listening to Mr. Bevin on peace Conference procedure, said that his general view coincided with Mr. Bevin's; but so far the weather at the Ministers' meetings has had an April-like quality, and neither showers nor sunshine have lasted long.

On Monday the 17th Mr. Bevin, M. Molotov and Mr. Marshall gave their views upon economic affairs and Mr. Bevin enunciated his doctrine that German economic unity was indivisible. M. Bidault replied with the French case on Tuesday. The discussion continued on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday Mr. Bevin, M. Molotov and Mr. Marshall made careful statements on economic unity and on reparations, M. Bidault again following the day after his colleagues. Mr. Bevin showed how His Majesty's Government had refused to consent to any reparations figure being settled at Yalta, and had objected to the sum of 20 billion dollars discussed between the Americans and the Russians, as far in excess of what Germany could pay. In support, he quoted a telegram which the Cabinet had sent to Mr. Churchill, and which Mr. Churchill had read to the Conference: "We shall find ourselves paying for the imports necessary to keep Germany alive, while others obtain the reparations." Potsdam, Mr. Bevin added, had superseded Yalta, and Potsdam mentioned neither a reparations total nor the vexed question of reparations from current production. He defined the difference between M. Molotov's and his own views. Both regarded the matter of economic unity as fundamental; but M. Molotov inclined to concentrate on certain aspects to the exclusion of others. Unity was indivisible, and this indivisi-

bility meant that Mr. Bevin must reject Russian demands for joint control of the Ruhr and for the dissolution of the fusion of the British and U.S. zones until unity was achieved. He welcomed M. Molotov's suggestion to raise the level of steel production to between 10 and 12 million tons. His Majesty's Government had all along advocated 11 million tons! He did not, however, approve that the new level should be made dependent on the payment of reparations. Here Mr. Marshall joined Mr. Bevin, and recalled the fatal consequences of stimulating German production after 1918 in order that reparations might be paid. Mr. Bevin also drew attention to the danger lurking in proposals to place German heavy industry under the control of the central Government. International security would be better served if the *Laender* had the control. M. Molotov was conciliatory. While he declared that no economic unity would satisfy Russia that did not provide for reparations, he admitted that the new level of industry should (1) meet German internal needs, (2) pay for imports, and (3) pay for reparations. He did not lay down the order in which the three obligations should be met. He foresaw the possibility of agreement on the major problems. Mr. Marshall, like Mr. Bevin, saw things whole. He also recalled how at Potsdam the Soviet had proposed a steel production of only 3.5 million tons.

On Thursday the 20th M. Bidault made his country's agreement to economic unity and higher levels of industry dependent on the amount of coal Germany exported to France. He laid down two principles (1) that Germany should not retain a proportionately larger supply of coal than was available to her former victims, (2) that the steel production of Germany's neighbours should always be superior to that of