

and the reduction of social inequalities. Rare are the delegations with the audacity publicly to reject these aims, the only well-known exception being that of China, whose representative stated coldly that we should not place our hopes for world peace in disarmament.

But, though it is easy to agree on the reasons for disarmament, difficulties arise the moment one looks for ways and means of achieving this aim. To know how is much more important and difficult than to know why. Yet this problem would be relatively easy to solve if somewhere in the world there were an authority with the legal right and the physical ability to disarm — others. Since there is no such authority, disarmament can be brought about only through an agreement based on the free consent of the parties concerned, which means, in effect, that some must be willing voluntarily to renounce the advantages they already have, and the others those they hope to attain. There is a whole series of obstacles to such agreement, in which politics and technology are closely intertwined.

No equal footing

In the first place, the parties are not, at the outset, on an equal footing with respect to strength. As a result, there is no general or uniform solution that can adequately solve the problem of disarmament. If the status quo were maintained (and this would in itself be an improvement over the continuous increase in expenditure and the growing powers of destruction), inequalities considered by many observers to be sources of tension and reasons for conflict would be consolidated. A proportional reduction of forces or funds would have the same drawback, and it would also encounter the problem of the differences in actual situations: arms reduction cannot be achieved in the same way in the nuclear-weapons states and the countries that base their defence on conventional arms alone. Finally, the present balance of forces differs considerably from one region to another, so that the same measure would have opposite results depending on where it was introduced; in Latin America or Africa, the abolition of nuclear arms could have a stabilizing effect, because it would be a means of limiting intervention by the great powers, while the abolition of nuclear arms in Europe would immediately alter the balance in favour of the one of the two camps with an overwhelming superiority in conventional forces.

Since it is impossible to proceed in a general and uniform way, negotiation must

take the more effective but less spectacular route of sectional or regional compromise, at the risk of disappointing the public, which often confuses compromise with surrender of principles and caution with failure to act. Even at this more modest level, difficulties remain. The nuclear powers obviously hope to retain their advantage — which is, however, challenged by others. But, among the nuclear powers, the smaller ones like France and China are opposed to the super-powers on the matter of experimentation with new devices, for they fear that a total test ban would confirm once and for all the superiority now enjoyed by the United States and the Soviet Union.

The commitments these two nations have made to one another with respect to the limitation of certain types of weapon have had the effect of encouraging research on and development of new arms (such as the neutron bomb). Each time one difficulty is solved, another appears.

Assuming that these difficult problems of balance could be solved — in other words, that a rate of limitation or reduction, if not destruction, of arms might be found for each sector or region —, there would still be a number of sensitive problems to work out, notably control and the transfer of funds.

No country will agree to disarm unless it is assured that its rivals will abide by their commitments. Fortunately, technology comes to the rescue of politics in this area. The use of observation satellites makes it possible to circumvent, at least in part, the obstacles connected with the entry of control missions into foreign territory. But the solution is not perfect, since at present these satellites are in the possession and under the control of the two super-powers. Thus it is clear why the President of France proposed the formation of a control-satellite agency. But where, if not in the two great powers, would this agency find the technicians, equipment and capital necessary to create a satellite-control network? The question is all the more important because such an agency, if it ever came to be established, would potentially be an international authority capable of supervising the military activities of individual nations. Here, too, the decisive question of means has been evaded by the proposal of an intermediate end.

Development funds?

The same is even truer with respect to the allocation to development of the funds freed should military expenditure be reduced. This very generous idea was brought up many times at the United Nations

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