The Soviet delegate was prepared to discuss methods of control and inspection but he maintained that the immediate prohibition of atom bombs must come first. In recent discussions of the Soviet proposals, he has again made this point very clear; he holds that his prohibition convention must be signed, ratified and put into force before the Soviet will agree to even discuss a system of control.

The idea that the menace to world peace presented by the atomic bomb could be solved simply by the signing of an international agreement to prohibit its use or manufacture seems very unreal. The experiences of the last twenty-five years have shown that international agreements alone are not enough to safeguard the peace. The prohibition of the use and manufacture of the atomic bomb at the present time would merely seriously reduce the military strength of the United States, the only nation now in possession of atomic bombs, at least on any scale which would suffice to make atomic war. It would be an act of unilateral disarmament which would give no assurance that any country engaged in atomic energy activities would not, or could not, make and use the bomb in the future. Fissionable material, the essential substance for such peaceful applications of atomic evergy as the development of industrial power, is also the explosive element of the bomb, and in the absence of effective inspection and control could readily be diverted clandestinely from peaceful to military uses by a nation secretly preparing for atomic war.

For these reasons, most members of the Commission are in general agreement with the principles of the United States proposals. They consider that the prohibition of the use or manufacture of the atomic bomb should form part of an over-all control plan, so that when such prohibitions are put into effect they would be accompanied by the applications of safeguards such as international inspection of all countries to ensure that no secret activities in atomic energy were in progress.

After weeks of discussion along these general political lines, the Commission decided to seek a new approach to the problem by a systematic study, in committee, of the available scientific information, to determine whether an effective control of atomic energy was in fact feasible technically. This study resulted in a unanimous report by the scientists of all nations represented on the Commission that "they did not find any basis in the available scientific facts for supposing that effective control is not technologically feasible". With this conclusion before it, the Commission then proceeded to discuss the "safeguards" that would be required at each stage in the production and application of atomic energy to ensure its use for peaceful purposes only.

The Commission's findings were set out in detail in its First Report which was approved on 31 December 1946, by a vote of 10 to 0, with the Soviet and Polish Delegations abstaining. In this Report, the Commission pointed out that as all applications of atomic energy depended on Uranium and Thorium, control of these materials was the essential basic safeguard.

The Commission, therefore, recommended international inspection of all mines, mills and refineries to prevent possible diversion of materials to the making of atomic bombs. As the materials assumed a more concentrated form and were therefore more directly applicable to bomb making, the Commission believed that the controls would have to be even stricter. They considered that at least certain plants producing substantial quantities of fissionable material should be placed under the exclusive operation and management of the international authority.

The Second Report of the Atomic Energy Commission was approved by the Commission on 11 September and sent forward to the Security Council. Ten nations voted in favour, the U.S.S.R. voted against and Poland abstained.