

convention which he has said should be negotiated forthwith as the first step towards the establishment of international control. The representative of the USSR has refused to even pledge his country to any second step in the development of control, and to us it seems that the idea that the menace to world peace which is presented by the atomic bomb could be dispelled by the mere signing of an agreement to prohibit its use is very unreal indeed. Certainly, the experience of the last twenty-five years has shown that international agreement alone are not sufficient to safeguard the peace. The prohibition by itself of the use and manufacture of the atomic bomb at the present time would not contribute to security -- it would merely most seriously reduce the military strength of the United States of America, which is the only nation now in possession of atomic bombs, at least on any scale which would suffice to make atomic war. It would be a measure of unilateral disarmament which would give no assurance that any country engaged in the production of atomic energy would or could not use the bomb in the future, because the fissionable material which is the essential substance for such peaceful applications as the development of atomic power is also the explosive element of the bomb, and in the absence of an effective system of control could readily be developed from a peaceful to a military use by a nation secretly preparing to wage atomic war.

For these reasons, most members of the Commission are in agreement that the prohibition of the use and manufacture of atomic bombs should form part of an over-all control plan so that when such prohibitions are put into effect they would be accompanied by the application of safeguards such as international inspection of all countries on a scale and with a thoroughness sufficient to ensure that no secret activities are in progress. The prohibition of atomic weapons standing by itself is little more than a pious hope; but prohibition as part of a comprehensive, thorough and effective system of control, starting with the international ownership of all fissionable materials in trust for the nations of the world, is something else again.

This seems so elementary that it has been very difficult to realize that the USSR is really serious in its simple prohibition convention. It was felt in the Commission that no doubt whatever must be left on this point, and so during this last year more than half the time and the attention of the members of the Commission has been devoted to a meticulous re-examination of the USSR proposals in detail, in order to make abundantly certain that no possible misconception of their purpose should stand in the way of agreement. However, it is now evident there is no misconception and there thus remains a wide gap between the views of the USSR now supported in this Commission by the Ukrainian SSR, and those of the remaining members of the Commission who have rejected the USSR proposals as "completely ignoring the existing technical knowledge or providing an adequate basis for effective control and the elimination of atomic weapons from national armaments".

In contrast to the USSR proposals, the plans which have been evolved by the majority are based on a strict acceptance of the scientific facts as to the very nature of atomic energy, and on the conclusions which follow logically from these facts. After more than 240 meetings, the Commission has decided that "No other solution will meet the facts, prevent national rivalries in this most dangerous field, and fulfil the Commission's terms of reference".

Such is the impasse which has developed in the Atomic Energy Commission, and such is the state of affairs which made it evident that the issue raised in the Commission should be taken to the General Assembly of the United Nations. In this Committee and in the meetings of the General Assembly at this session, it will be the hope that the majority proposals may

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