

Unfortunately, far from indicating a more flexible approach to this question as we were trying to do, Mr. Vyshinsky has stuck fast behind his old formula "prohibit the bomb and then we shall discuss controls". It is true that this year he said that this prohibition would not take effect legally until the control system went into operation, but as I pointed out to him in the committee, he still refused to discuss in any detail what kind of controls the Soviet Union would be prepared to accept. Before he can do that, he says, we must agree to a declaration prohibiting the bomb.

Now, as we on the western side have been quick to point out, it is simply no good pretending that there is sufficient confidence between both sides to suppose that we in the west could for a minute consider depriving ourselves of our strongest weapon before we knew very exactly indeed what kind of international inspection and control system the Soviet Union was prepared to accept, and indeed until they had accepted it and put it into operation. Moreover, we must continue to insist, for the security of our peoples depends on it, that the atomic problem cannot be isolated from the disarmament problem as a whole. It would be most unwise for the west to agree to prohibit the bomb unless at the same time the Soviet Union had agreed to a general balanced reduction of armed forces and armaments, the whole programme to be under completely airtight international control to ensure that the agreement was really carried out.

Before the Disarmament Commission begins its work next year, I am sure that all of us on the Commission profoundly hope that the Soviet Government will take the advice of Mr. Moch, United Nations delegate of France, and agree to discuss with us the technical means by which the whole world could be assured that such a disarmament programme would be carried out in good faith by all the powers. If Mr. Vyshinsky will talk with the rest of us about ways and means, then I feel sure that we for our part will be ready to re-examine very carefully our position to see whether we cannot somehow reach agreement. Anyone who heard Mr. Vyshinsky's truly disheartening speech on Friday would find it hard to be optimistic about the success of our efforts. I can only say as Mr. Moch said in his reply to Mr. Vyshinsky, "I do not give up my hope in human understanding and human reason".

Note: Disarmament is being discussed at the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, under agenda item 23 - "Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments - report of the Disarmament Commission (resolution #704 (VII) of April 8, 1953). The subject is being discussed in detail in the First (Political) Committee and as with other agenda items, final decisions on it will be made in plenary meetings of the Assembly.

