

Apart from our worries over the timetable envisaged in the Soviet Union proposals, the point on which my Government feels the greatest uncertainty and uneasiness is whether the "necessary powers" which Mr. Vyshinsky says the permanent control organ would be given would include the power not only to verify information submitted by governments but to determine whether the information submitted was complete. Mr. Vyshinsky said on Monday that the Soviet position has always been that "to control is to verify". That is just the very problem. In the first phase of control, and apparently in the second, the Soviet proposals seem to conceive of control as a process of checking up on the correctness of information submitted by governments rather than of actively investigating, anywhere, at any time and by any means, whether the information submitted to the control authorities is not only correct but complete, or us, control is more than verification. For us, a control organ to be effective must have authority to go wherever it wishes, not in order to pry into the economic activities of any country, but because it must make sure that, to use Mr. Vyshinsky's own example, a button factory is not secretly making lethal weapons which have not been reported to the control organ. As Mr. Vyshinsky said, and I think said well, button factories can make things to kill people, and it is essential that the control authority be empowered to make a check at any time on any plant where weapons could be manufactured. This is not economic espionage, but it does involve a good deal more authority for the international control organ than mere verification of data submitted. I think it is in the interests of reaching agreement that this point should be clearly stated. This is the kind of question to which I think a simple "yes" or "no" answer can be given and I hope that Mr. Vyshinsky will find it possible to do so.

There is another aspect of the control problem which may be raised by the new Soviet proposals. It is proposed to take December 31, 1953 as the date fixing the levels of forces from which the reductions are to be made. This date was also suggested in the Anglo-French proposal. But I think we should be clear that this would not mean the exclusion from the disarmament programme, as understood by either side, of new weapons developed since that time, if there are any.

The question of the extent of the permanent control organ's powers is also raised in an acute form by the well-known Soviet reservation, which Mr. Vyshinsky mentioned earlier in his statement of September 30, that States must adhere to "the principle of sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States". If inspection of a continuing basis means permanent inspection with the right to go anywhere at any time in the territory of all States who have signed the agreement, that is all to the good. We have yet to hear, however, from any Soviet Union spokesman that this is what they mean by "inspection on a continuing basis", and this is certainly what my Government means. If the Soviet Union Government has not modified its doctrine of so-called national sovereignty and adapted it, at least partially, to meet the exigencies of an interdependent world, agreement on effective safeguards -- and, therefore, on a disarmament treaty -- is virtually inconceivable, and it is not fair to public opinion to state the situation in any other terms.