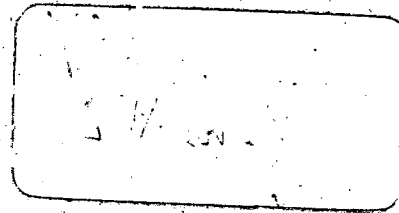


**A STUDY OF THE BRITISH ROLE IN THE EIGHTEEN-  
NATION DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE (ENDC)  
1962-1969**

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## PREFACE

By the time Britain entered the prestigious nuclear club in 1952 (as its third member) the decline and fall of the mighty British Empire had already taken place. It ceased to be a global power and in the restructured tight bipolar international system, Britain was relegated to the position of a secondary (Middle) power. The major justification for Britain to join the nuclear arms race was to recapture the trappings of the glorious imperial tradition and to influence decision making in international politics.

There was close nuclear collaboration between Britain and America since the early years of the nuclear age and it was maintained through the amendment of the McMahon Act in 1954 and subsequently. Britain had always been the closest ally of America and in the Cold War era of East-West confrontation it was further reinforced through the American Alliance System. In the over all NATO strategy, the British nuclear capability has been integrated while Britain is allowed to retain independence over its nuclear trigger. Thus, in the event of a nuclear threat from Moscow, apart from the minimum nuclear deterrent of Britain, she is entitled to the protection of the American nuclear umbrella.

Under the sheltering care of the U.S.A. Britain insisted in the disarmament negotiations that international control, inspection and verification should be an essential prerequisite of any nuclear disarmament plan. This was the kind of role

which the United States expected from its closest ally ever since the introduction of the Baruch Plan. After securing its rightful seat in the nuclear club, Britain was an ardent advocate of non-proliferation. However the unfortunate British decision to go nuclear was itself a major factor which stimulated nuclear proliferation in the 1950s. And by 1960 France emerged as the fourth nuclear weapon power.

After the infructuous and futile disarmament negotiations of the 1950s, the U.N. was concentrating its efforts to reverse the trend of the dangerous nuclear arms race, nuclear tests and the further possibilities of the spread of nuclear weapons. In the meantime, the nuclear weapon technology reached a new plateau by introducing the MRBM, IRBM, ICBM, and other long-range and sophisticated delivery systems to carry the monstrous megaton bombs to their targets. Therefore renewed efforts to keep disarmament negotiations going became essential to save the world from a nuclear holocaust. The Cuban missile crisis was a poignant reminder to the nuclear weapon powers, to pay serious attention to disarmament negotiations. The Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee was the outcome of this paramount concern of nations about nuclear disarmament.

The object of this study is to examine the role of Britain in the ENDC, particularly to find out whether Britain has had any role independently of the U.S.A. The framework of this study is thus narrowly defined to exclude matters



which would fall outside the scope of the ENDC discussions, although it has been attempted to briefly describe the British nuclear policy and to present a bird's eye view of the trend of the U.N. disarmament negotiations till the inception of the ENDC. Britain had actively participated in all substantive discussions on disarmament in the ENDC such as the Test Ban, Nuclear Proliferation and General and Complete Disarmament and also in the debates on collateral measures.

This brief empirical study has been possible by consulting a selective list of primary and secondary source materials which include Verbatim Reports of the ENDC. I thank Professor Hedley Bull and Dr T. T. Poulse for the valuable insight and guidance extended to me for the completion of this study.

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New Delhi 57

Sharmista Lahiri  
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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

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### INTRODUCTION

"All the ingenuity and penetration of British diplomacy must be used to find ways and means... to reduce the tensions between East and West, and to contrive agreements which will gradually but surely achieve a transition from confrontation by force to continuing negotiations to create a climate of confidence in which the world can begin to turn from war to peace..."

- Alec Douglas-Home

An examination of Britain's role in the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) intends to be a case study of the role of a secondary Power associated in direct nuclear relations with one of the Super Powers and yet representing the third independent force among the nuclear weapon Powers. For, in spite of a close adherence to the United States in most of the disarmament proposals launched by the latter, Britain has had her own areas of dissent too. It is still less a Power who would side with the nuclear 'have-nots' in a disarmament conference. In this sense the British role is unique as well as conflicting. For though she avidly championed the cause of non-dissemination of nuclear weapons while secure by means of a 'special relationship' with the United States, she was in no mood to make any concessions with regard to her own independent nuclear deterrent. The policy which a country proclaims to the world whether in an international forum or in treaty negotiations can always be traced back to the

domestic scene. It is tailored according to the particular political, strategic, economic, military and in Britain's case specially to the cultural needs of the nation. Indeed, Britain's role in the ENDC can be understood very clearly if we keep in mind the importance of this 'cultural role' which she decided to play in conformity with the cultural vestiges of ruling the diverse interests of a far-flung empire and her long experience in the subtle nuances of international diplomacy of the 'concert' style. The British diplomats are of the opinion that although in many matters the two Super Powers of the United States and the Soviet Union now appear to dominate the world, it is a mistake to underrate the influence of middle Powers and even small Powers in the new parliamentary diplomacy of the U.N. and other world organizations. Britain, like France (which abstained from the ENDC) has been a leading member of the two universal organizations for the maintenance of peace in the twentieth century, the League of Nations and the United Nations. It is true, as F.S. Northedge observes, that popular support in Britain for U.N. is less fervent than it was for the League and in part this no doubt is because of the reduced importance of her say in world affairs as a result of her shrunken status after the Second World War. "It is many years since a British Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, could say, in 1925, that 'It is in the hands of the British Empire and if they will that there should be no war there will be no war'. That role of

predominance has been lost for ever."<sup>1</sup> However, Britain still takes an active interest in world institutions because as a status quo Power Britain has always stood to gain from any international machinery which seeks to resist violent change in the existing system. "We are determined to work for peace and for harmony between peoples", said Heath at the 25th session of the U.N. General Assembly on 23 October 1970, "because it is only in such conditions that Britain, as part of the international community, can prosper."<sup>2</sup> No longer an imperial power, it is true that the United Kingdom with its tradition of democratic government, its long experience in traditional diplomacy, its world wide interests and especially commercial commitments, its dependence on world trade and its Commonwealth associations, has all the incentives and an unrivalled opportunity to take a lead in the search for common ground in international cooperation and joint agreements.

It is important to consider that the British role, often derided as something close to that of a satellite only to the United States, does not give us the true picture. For the British experience of independent decision-making at nuclear matters goes back to early 1940s. Great Britain then was among the pioneers in nuclear research and its leaders

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1 F.S. Northedge, "Britain and the U.N.", in K.J. Twitchett, ed., The Evolving United Nations, p. 141.

2 The Times (London), 24 October 1970.

were also quick to realize the post-war implications of nuclear weapons in international politics. But as the Empire gradually got liquidated, Great Britain got reduced to the level of a medium power and the cost, the complexity and the sophistication of nuclear research proved beyond her shrunken capabilities. Britain had therefore, to accept American association to a certain extent, whereby she became subordinate to the American nuclear efforts. Despite the general adherence to the United States in all major issues, Britain would not give up a theoretical right of independent action. Further, though an ardent proponent of non-dissemination of nuclear technology when it came to other medium and small Powers, Great Britain would not think of applying the same principle to herself, though the British contribution to the strategic balance of power in the bipolar world is not beyond doubt. These facts make the British role appear at times confusing.

The basic trends shaping the British nuclear policies originated as far back as in the 1940s. As the premier Power of a long standing, with its world-wide interests and commercial commitments, Great Britain had a stake in the maintenance of international order and it had been used to consider itself as the natural leader of the civilized democratic world. The quick, though perhaps hazy, perception of the implications of nuclear energy by the leaders of the nation was in line with this tradition. Indeed Lord Cherwell had strongly influenced

the Scientific Advisory Committee which said in 1941 that "we have to reckon with the possibility that the Germans are at work on this field...and it was 'strongly of the opinion that the development of the Uranium bomb should be regarded as a project of first class importance."<sup>3</sup> But then the U.S. was already emerging from its relative isolation and Britain was obliged to acknowledge some sort of a partnership. Lord Hankey thus thought that an atom bomb could make possible at last an "international police force" controlled by "American and Britain who in view of their overwhelming superiority of power should check its dangerous proliferation by preventing any other country from acquiring it."<sup>4</sup> Likewise Sir John Anderson advised that Britain should go on with the project so that she and her 'associates' could keep control over the enormous potentialities of atomic energy. The Maud Committee set up in 1941 to explore the possibilities of Uranium research in Britain had further reasoned that "even if war should end before the bombs are ready, the effort would not be wasted, except in the unlikely event of complete disarmament since no nation would, care to risk being caught, without a weapon of such decisive possibilities."<sup>5</sup> All this highlights the basic

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3 A.J. Pierre, Nuclear Politics: The British Experience with an Independent Strategic Force (London, Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 19.

4 Ibid., p. 20.

5 Ibid., p. 20.



philosophy of exclusiveness in nuclear arsenal and perpetuation of their domination over other nations, but in association with the U.S. presumably on the basis of an equal partnership with an independent nuclear option as then perceived by Britain. However, even after the lapse of over two decades, when the international strategic situation has changed beyond recognition, the military historian Michael Howard referred to this as 'the basic principle of British policy ever since.'<sup>6</sup> The nagging doubt remains if such a principle could be objectively valid today.

An interesting sidelight about the British nuclear posture may be very revealing. The British decision to pursue nuclear research in 1941 and her awareness of the implications preceded an equivalent action by the U.S. Government. When America entered the war and suggested coordination and even collaboration, the British response was lukewarm so as not to inhibit independence and complete control over her own project. Men like Lord Cherwell said that "However much I may trust my neighbour, and depend upon him, I am very averse to putting myself completely at his mercy and would, therefore, not press the Americans to undertake the work."<sup>7</sup> British policy makers were "fearful of the consequences of making America the one

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6 See Margaret Gowing, Britain and Atomic Energy, 1939-1945 (London, Macmillan, 1964), Reviewed in the Sunday Times, 27 September 1964.

7 Ibid., p. 47.

nuclear power."<sup>8</sup>

They, however, realized in a matter of months that a joint project with the U.S. would be desirable in view of resource constraints at home and the rapid progress achieved by the American nuclear programme. The American position had by then changed due to their keenness to develop the Bomb quickly for military use, and particularly because they suspected the British to have commercial interests in mind. Yet till then the Americans had not shown any inclination to keep the British out in order to avoid a second national nuclear weapons capability, a factor which was crucial to the British who perceived Great Power Status to be linked with nuclear weapons, since "the idea of the independent deterrent was already well entrenched"<sup>9</sup>. The British, therefore, were not to be deterred from their chosen path and they succeeded after painstaking and prolonged efforts culminating in the atomic detonation in 1952 and the demonstration of their thermonuclear capability in 1957, to reopen the doors of collaboration with the U.S. through the 1954 and 1958 revisions to the American Atomic Energy Legislation. This earned the British a place of right in the <sup>SubCommittee of the Disarmament Commission (1954-1957)</sup> Geneva Committee negotiating a ~~convention~~ <sup>and also in the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Tests (1958-1961)</sup> on Disarmament. Whether this right does in fact confer the status of major Power in today's strategic environment is

8 Ibid., p. 125.

9 Gowing, op. cit., p. 168.

an altogether different issue.

The nuclear policy pursued by successive British Governments has had the general support of the citizens to a very large extent (as shown by the public opinion polls), dissent of any strength expressed mainly when the opposition Labour Party was divided on the issue. The independent stance taken in the early 1940s was fully consistent with the eminence of Great Britain as the major colonial power of the day, and it was thought to be matched by the technical ability and the availability of resources till the shift in the balance in favour of the U.S. during the course of the Second World War. It would normally be expected that a very searching review would have been undertaken with the changed status and differing view points would have emerged. But somehow, apparently aided by what has been referred to as the 'psychological impulses', the nation succeeded in retaining a basic homogeneity in regard to its reaction to nuclear weapons. The Labour Party no doubt harboured a body of dissenters (Unilateralists) who had formed the <sup>Campaign</sup> Committee for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) but it was an extra-parliamentary organization without any member in the House of Commons. They highlighted the fear of nuclear war and the moral guilt about the existence of nuclear weapons and rejected the concept of nuclear deterrent. In short, it was a group characterized by neutralism, anti-Americanism and an yearning for moral influence through self-renunciation. The Labour leadership was, however,

of a different opinion. Hugh Gaitskell, the leader of the party, categorically came out in 1958 in favour of a nuclear role since it brought "influence and prestige and a measure of independence vis-a-vis the United States".<sup>10</sup> This, it may be noted, was a continuation of the official party line followed right from the days of Attlee. But the unilateralist view-point was strong enough to induce the Labour Party to include a proposal for preventing proliferation in its statement, 'The Next Step' before the 1959 elections. It stated that every nation barring the USA and the USSR should sign an agreement, preferably under the auspices of the U.N. pledging itself not to test, manufacture or possess nuclear weapons. This should be subject to full and effective international control and would lead to Britain stopping the manufacturing of nuclear weapons as also giving up those already in possession.<sup>11</sup> By then the French test was imminent and the Chinese intention amply clear. The British voters gave the Tories a comfortable majority in the 1959 election. The Gallup polls conducted between 1958-62, also showed the aversion of the British public to unilateral renunciation, though a measure of support could be there if U.K. were to function within the

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10 582 House of Common Debates, col. 1241, 19 February 1958.

11 Disarmament and Nuclear War: The Next Step, Declaration by the Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress, Transport House, 24 June 1959.

NATO force.

After the cancellation of the Blue Streak missile programme in April 1960 which the Conservative Ministry had so far proclaimed as the hallmark of the British independent deterrent, the discussion in the Labour Party further crystallized and a new policy was put forward before the General Election of 1964. It was contended by Labour Party that the cancellation of the Blue Streak missiles conclusively showed that the cost of technology of pursuing a 'truly independent strategic deterrent' was beyond Britain's resources and it meant that the Sandys-Macmillan defence policy 'so proudly launched in 1957 is now in ruins'. The Labour manifesto (1964 elections) accordingly criticized 'independent deterrent' as neither independent because of its dependence on the U.S. nor a deterrent because of its lack of credibility and while it fostered proliferation and unnecessary duplication in the West's nuclear armaments, it did not add to the country's influence. It undermined the solidarity of the Western alliance and drained away the country's defence spending thereby seriously weakening Britain's conventional forces and her contribution to NATO ground forces. Harold Wilson declared that a government under his leadership would seek an "anti-proliferation agreement limiting the ownership of nuclear weapons to the two major nuclear powers. It would renegotiate the Nassau Agreement to end the proposal to buy Polaris

submarines from the United States.<sup>12</sup> Gordon Walker also declared in the Commons, "We must try to reach a point at which the President's decision - because those are the decisions that matter in the world can only be made on the basis of an agreed, continuously worked out and elaborate nuclear strategy and doctrine".<sup>13</sup> The underlying assumption of the Labour position was to bargain away the right to purchase Polaris missiles and the independent deterrent in exchange for a say in the formulation of the strategy of American Defence Policy. The difference from unilateralism lay in the rejection of neutralism and acceptance of the alliance with the U.S. and participation in NATO.

In fact the pre-1964 stance of Labour led many in the US to believe that Britain was ready to give up her nuclear arms. Cyrus Sulzberger for example, wrote: "If Labour wins Britain's next election, it plans to get this country out of the atomic military business. This does not just mean abandoning an independent deterrent. It means phasing out manufacture of all nuclear arms, tactical or strategic."<sup>14</sup> Whatever the merit of this new stand, Labour went on to make subtle changes in its posture as the prospects of victory in

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12 687, House of Common Debates, cols. 443-44, 16 January 1964.

13 684, House of Common Debates, col. 496, 16 November 1963.

14 New York Times, 25 March 1963.

the elections became very good. It felt that in view of developments in Gaullist France, a British renunciation was unlikely to have any effect on the problem of proliferation, nor would cancellation of the Polaris Sales agreement help London's bargaining position on the Multilateral Force (MLF) or "its influence on the outcome of a nuclear sharing settlement in Europe".<sup>15</sup> Very keen on having a significant role in the negotiations for a non-proliferation treaty, Labour felt that the nuclear role perhaps may succeed in giving Britain an influential say in Geneva. This shift perhaps only reflects Labour's response to the general public opinion. Asked in September 1964, 52 per cent clearly wanted Britain to work to 'remain a world power'. Thus with victory in election a distinct possibility, Labour criticized the existence of the nuclear force as such less and less, but attacked the pretensions of its being independent. After coming to office, the Labour Government acknowledged that the Polaris submarines could retain the nuclear force inexpensively for over a decade and the 'renegotiation of Nassau' came to be the commitment of the Polaris submarine to the <sup>Supreme</sup> Strategic Allied Commander (SACEUR) while retaining the 'escape clause' of national targeting on matters of 'supreme national interest'. The difference between Conservative and Labour in relation to nuclear policy became more apparent than real from 1964 onwards. Labour did

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15 Pierre, op. cit., p. 269.

not any more question the existence of the force and the Conservatives spoke less of its being independent.

Thus the policy statement in the 1957 Defence White Paper of Duncan Sandys that "there is a wide measure of agreement that she (Britain) must possess an appreciable element of nuclear deterrent powers of her own",<sup>16</sup> while consolidating the trends of earlier years was to remain the basis of future policy as well. Of the various reasons stated from time to time in support of this policy, some no doubt looked irrelevant with the loss of independence, and the marginal tonnage of British nuclear war-heads ( 5 per cent of U.S. nuclear force ) vis-a-vis the two Super Powers. The extent to which U.K. will now be able to commit her nuclear capabilities if her targets were to differ from the order of priorities of the USA, for instance, would at best be doubtful. In the strategic sphere, the nuclear capability of Britain may not count for much in practical terms. But in others, the policy pursued in the fifties has hesitantly brought forth some of the advantages contemplated. Britain has had certain leverage, as a nuclear power, in political intercourse with other medium Powers. She has a seat in all Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Test-Ban negotiations and has a definite say in determining the Western Alliance Strategy.

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16 Defence: Outline of Future Policy, 1957, Command 124, p. 3.



The British did not waver from the notion of being a great power which invariably has to stand on its own, zealously guard against intrusion on its options and has to take a hand in maintaining world order. Churchill declared in 1956 that an independently owned and controlled nuclear force was strategically imperative so as to retain the nation's right to select enemy targets even if the US had a different order of priorities, a position reiterated by Harold Macmillan in 1963 while giving his reasons for continuing the British deterrent at Nassau. He said:

It is right and salutary that a British Government, whatever may be the particular conditions of a particular dispute, should be in a position to make their own decision without fear of nuclear blackmail...on issue vital to her life. 17

The assumptions that Britain would ultimately be defended against an enemy threat with the help of national nuclear force only is also clear from the Defence White Paper of 1964:

...if there were no power in Europe capable of inflicting unacceptable damage on a potential enemy, he might be tempted... to attack in the mistaken belief that the U.S. would not act unless America herself were attacked. The V-Bombers by themselves are and the Polaris submarine, will be, capable of inflicting greater damage than any potential aggressor would consider acceptable. 18

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17 670, House of Common Debates, col. 962, 30 January 1963.

18 Statement on Defence, 1964, Command 2270, p. 6.

Another justification given by successive Conservative Ministers was that the British nuclear force provided independence to Britain while contributing simultaneously to the Western deterrent.

All these arguments would now look somewhat fallacious, unless one proceeds by attaching the same meaning to 'force' and 'deterrent', two entirely different terms. While Britain no doubt has a nuclear force, it by no means, can be equated to a deterrent, since "a force is not a deterrent until it is thought to be capable of deterring a hostile action by the threatened use of force". Against Russia, Britain could have had a passive deterrent if she were able to inflict unacceptable damage on a vital Russian city/industrial complex to make a Soviet attack on the British Isles unattractive. It was contended that the V-Bomber force was an essential element of the Western deterrent in that it was to provide an important part of the first wave of the allied retaliatory force. But the British contribution, being only 5 per cent of America's total deliverable nuclear tonnage, was marginal and more geographic. Further the British warheads had little possibility of penetrating the Russian defences. As early as 1963, Khrushchev told Harold Wilson and Patrick Gordon Walker that British manned bombers had no military significance since they had little prospect of getting through Soviet anti-aircraft defences. Even making allowances for the propaganda value of such statements, there may have been some truth in it.

Deployment of ABM defences has further ensured that the Polaris missiles (sixty-four in total) can not reach Moscow unless the performance of the fleet, the load and the penetrating power are increased. This would need an additional cost of 50 per cent which Britain can ill afford. Another alternative is to replace these with the Poseidon missiles which are <sup>fitted with</sup> MIRVs. But apart from the prohibitive cost and a greater dependence on the U.S. it would entail, the MIRVs are more suitable for targets like hard silos where missiles are stored whereas Britain as per the <sup>escape clause provided in the</sup> Nassau Agreement of 1964 has been allowed independent targeting with relation to cities and industrial centres only. <sup>19</sup> Active deterrence against aggression aimed at an ally or an overseas colony is still more implausible since the British Isles with its thickly populated and densely concentrated industrial centres are virtually defenceless against the formidable nuclear might of the Soviet Union. The concept of independent deterrent could be credible against a non-nuclear hostile power has sometimes been suggested.

Who can say that the way of checking the Castros, the Sukarnos, the Nassers and persons of future will not be the single missile accurately aimed at a vital military target after a period of warning? <sup>20</sup>

But this, too, may be practically impossible in the bipolar

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19 Lord Chalfont, The Times, 2 September 1974.

20 Sunday Telegraph, 3 February 1960.

world of the present day and besides, such plans of nuclear blackmail are unlikely to have been ever envisaged.

Other justifications have no doubt been put forward from time to time. There were, for instance, economic incentives. After having long been a world Power, Britain had to look for cheaper means of assuring national security to suit shrunken economic capabilities and to avoid a serious dislocation of her economy. Primary reliance on a declaratory strategy of nuclear deterrence was to enable a reduction in conventional capabilities, the need for which was felt after the Korean War. In their programme for recuperation after the Suez adventure, a further reduction in defence expenditure was contemplated and national conscription was ended. Macmillan's election manifesto 'You never had it so good', in trying to boost up the consumer capacity of the people, might not have been possible without this presumption of nuclear security through nuclear deterrence. Labour did not reverse it and "In effect, security policy was forced into a nuclear straight jacket as the strategy was moulded to fit into acceptable Defence Budgets".<sup>21</sup> However, as we have seen earlier, the cost factor inhibited the development of a nuclear deterrent applicable to the most obviously probable source of worry, in the Socialist camp. The available force remained a cheap security only against medium Powers, assuming non-escalation and non-

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21 Pierre, op. cit., p. 309.

involvement of the big two.

Despite full consciousness of the inevitable interdependence with the U.S. in regard to guided missiles and other weapons systems, Britain however, could not get over the desire for some degree of independence or dissociation from America. The American involvement in local wars always had the risk of escalation. It also became progressively clear that the two dominant powers were more concerned with the preservation of their respective power-positions and areas of choice. This found full expression in Dr. Kissinger's later statement:

The real basis of (American) opposition to national nuclear force then, is not so much their ineffectiveness as the fact that we do not want to be drawn into nuclear war against our will. 22

Even during the Suez intervention, the American stance in the face of the Soviet threat could not have promoted British confidence in the reliability of U.S. assurances, when views at London and Washington differed. Development of missile technology added yet another dimension to this doubt. After Soviet Russia launched the Sputnik in 1957, it was clear that American cities were within reach of Soviet missiles and the U.S. without the comforting feeling of its non-vulnerability, would naturally, be wary of intervention unless a threat against itself developed. Likewise American missiles reduced

the value (to America) of advanced bases in Western Europe for covering the Russian cities. It indeed became doubtful if the U.S. would at all be willing to initiate a nuclear assault in response to a solely conventional attack upon Western Europe. Since NATO was weaker than the Warsaw Pact forces in the conventional sphere, the lack of certainty of a nuclear response could not have strengthened NATO. The evolution of the U.S. theory of flexible and graduated responses, too, could not have been very comforting to Britain or the other Western allies.

Dependent as Britain was on the US for the missiles, for some of the components of the Polaris submarines as also for the fissile materials taken earlier, there was little that could be done in this respect. Some Britishers, however, sought comfort in the theory that retention of the British nuclear force is itself an insurance against the contingency of a change of will in the U.S. vis-a-vis her security guarantee to Europe. This is based on the premise that a diffused nuclear deterrent introduces an element of uncertainty in the minds of the potential enemy which is taken as an essential ingredient for a stable deterrence. Since, however, there is little chance of British warheads penetrating Russian defences, this theory would not be entirely plausible.

We have noted that in tune with their traditional role as a great colonial power (though the bomb was primarily designed for its immediate utility during the war) the British

were quick to understand that "nuclear weapons would be an important index of strength for a great Power in the post-war pecking order..."<sup>23</sup> The initial British efforts at development and possession of nuclear arms right from the 1940s cannot thus be seen in isolation from its great Power status then. With the warning that came with the progress of the vigorous American nuclear programme, the British no doubt had to look for collaboration with the U.S., but they still looked upon themselves at least as equal partners with America in post-war developments and the image to be maintained remained that of a small Super Power rather than a strong medium Power. In the bipolar post-war world, when the rapid strides taken by the two giants in the nuclear field dwarfed all other powers, the strategic significance of a modest nuclear arsenal at the British command, even if independent, would be marginal at best. If the British planners were convinced of this, they were reluctant to concede the point and, change course. The debate within the opposition Labour Party, starting in 1957 with the Unilateralists and right upto the election of 1964, was perhaps more in accord with objective factors but it did not remain so for long.

"As the task of maintaining a credible 'deterrent' became more difficult in the face of mounting strategic and economic counter arguments", writes A.J. Pierre, "the

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23 Pierre, op. cit., p. 47.



justifications became increasingly political, emotional and at times apologetic." <sup>24</sup> Denis Healey in the debate on the 1963 Defence White Paper, had even talked of "a virility symbol to compensate for the exposure of its military impotence at Suez". <sup>25</sup> Alec Douglas Home was, however, more specific about the political advantages. He had publicly projected the function of the nuclear force as a 'ticket of admission' to discussions on the major issues of war and peace and observed that to abandon them would mean that Britain would no longer have a 'place at the peace talks as of right'. <sup>26</sup> To Home, Britain had a contribution to make to world peace in view of her valuable knowledge and experience in international matters and her 'unfanatical approach' to the problems of the world. Apart from this 'ticket of admission' and the retention of Britain's influence with the two Super Powers through a nuclear force which Labour also accepted from 1964 onwards, there was yet another angle. "The Anglophobia of the Fifth Republic sharpened Anglo-French rivalry, rekindled the British national pride, and made the British more conscious of the necessity to husband their resources in order to strengthen their negotiating position on such matters as entrance into the European Common Market and nuclear cooperation in

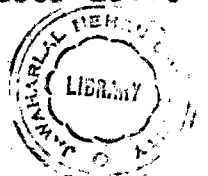
24 Pierre, op. cit., p. 176.

25 673, House of Common Debates, col. 49, 4 March 1963.

26 684, House of Common Debates, col. 49, 12 November 1963.

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in Europe".<sup>27</sup> No British Government could possibly expect any support for an act which would leave France as the sole nuclear power in Europe. The Russian appreciation of the British force "as an instrument of political conflict within the Western alliance, either to force adjustments to American strategy or as an element in the presumed struggle between Britain, France and West Germany for European hegemony"<sup>28</sup> appears appropriate in this context.

Retention of nuclear force, no doubt gave Britain the intended 'ticket of admission' and in the Moscow negotiations leading to the partial Test Ban Treaty of August 1963, Britain had a share of the exclusive discussions between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. even if associated at the last stage. Likewise, she was able to stave off the MLF which as envisaged by the United States would have fed the independent nuclear ambitions of West Germany. This however, may have been a rapidly dwindling asset as the subsequent Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) negotiations showed that when all major decisions seem to have been taken by the two Super Powers, Britain was effectively sidetracked. This is to be expected. With the gradual recession of the Cold War the two nuclear giants do not need

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27 Pierre, op. cit., p. 289.

28 Ibid., p. 176; Anatolyev, "Britain and European Security", International Affairs (Moscow), no. 2, February 1966, pp. 42-45; "Nuclear Weapons and the West", Symposium, International Affairs (Moscow), no. 9, September 1964, pp. 53-66.

British diplomatic help for finding a common ground any more and the British influence in world councils is on the decline. Besides, with the clear acknowledgement of dependence upon the United States as pronounced by the Nassau agreement and thereafter, this trend may be perpetuated in all spheres on matters of importance to the Big Two. The experience of Suez was symptomatic of this trend. In the Cuban missile crisis, Britain presumably was not even consulted by the U.S.A. With the advent of the Kennedy administration, the U.S. State Department's pronounced discouragement of independent nuclear deterrents in favour of centralized control in Washington and an increase of the conventional forces of the allies indicated that whatever additional diplomatic leverage British nuclear force had vis-a-vis Super Powers did not matter. But it would indeed ensure a certain weightage vis-a-vis other Powers. The influence of Britain in international politics would seem to depend not so much upon her nuclear force <sup>as</sup> than upon the soundness of her diplomacy, her continental standing, the Commonwealth links, and the strength of her economy. The nuclear deterrent, though a status-symbol and a supposedly counterweight to possible French predominance on the Continent, has kept Britain looking across the Atlantic rather than the Channel and it may have harmed her real interests by proving an impediment to full participation in the E.C.M. and the evolution of a reliable European nuclear force through MLF or ANF. Had Britain really been a nuclear power of standing,

France and West Germany would have looked up to it instead of Britain belatedly knocking at the doors of ECM desperately for entry.

To sum up, some of the significant aspects of the British nuclear policy may be enumerated:

- (a) In the 1940's and even early 50's, the conception of an independent British nuclear role was a rational policy formulation for a great colonial power of long standing with worldwide strategic interest;
- (b) The subsequent emergence of the Big Two and the liquidation of Empire however reduced Great Britain to medium Power, since then it was not feasible to maintain a credible independent nuclear deterrent;
- (c) The force maintained now by Britain is neither independent, nor a deterrent. It has little strategic significance;
- (d) It may have conferred some political advantage to Britain vis-a-vis other medium and small Powers; but vis-a-vis the Super Powers, it may not bring any extra weightage.
- (e) The effort to set up an "independent deterrent" ironically enough resulted in making Britain lose much of her strategic independence to the United States. The V-Bombers were independently manufactured by the U.K., but each of the subsequent strategic delivery system to follow made her progressively more and more dependent upon the American assistance and technical knowhow. While the Blue Streak missile programme was furnished with important technical information from the

American companies, its replacement with the 'Skybolt' would in effect have attached an American missile to a British aircraft. The cancellation of the Skybolt by the U.S. and its replacement by Polaris SLBMs made the strategic dependence upon the United States complete.

Also, for the operational requirements of the nuclear force, the so-called 'British deterrent' is dependent upon the early warning system of the U.S. and upon her satellite intelligence, and radio communications as well.

Thus, while the British nuclear force is supposed to provide an insurance against a possible failure of will in the United States, it is difficult to see how Britain could ask the U.S.A. to make available her missile technology while simultaneously threatening to use the very same missiles 'independently'. It is all the more likely that if the U.S. will to use nuclear weapons failed, the British will would fail too.

(f) For Britain, in the post-war decade it is a sad story of joining the technological competition with the other two nuclear powers without having either their resources or a clear understanding that it is more difficult than merely joining the nuclear club. She did not have enough means to carry on research in the various up-to-date projects to find out the best and this resulted in the cancellation of one project after another half way.

(g) It has hampered her alliance relationships and has overshadowed her identity of interests with Europe. But she could not really remain impervious to it for long. Though in her dislike of German nuclear intentions she had tried to undercut the MLF and had quieten<sup>ed</sup> Russian fears obstructing an early Non-Proliferation Treaty, it could not long be ignored in Britain that German cooperation was very helpful to British attempts at entering the Common Market and it was the beginning of the shift in the British policy. Britain entered into a joint fissionable material project with Germany somewhat against the wishes of the U.S.A., and totally disregarding her own earlier stand at nuclearism and in direct contravention of the spirit of the NPT. Britain looked to the United States as her strategic partner and looked to Europe for her economic salvation. This dichotomy in purpose has often lent British policy a schizophrenic quality.

(h) Finally, in the disarmament negotiations her interests are very well served by the Russo-American detente because "certainly the main elements on which the detente is at the moment being built - the status quo in Central Europe and joint action towards the prevention of any further diffusion of nuclear power tread on no British toes, whereas they do obviously, tread on German and French ones". While vociferously arguing in favour of non-dissemination she perhaps

forgets that the justifications which led her to the acquisition of a nuclear capability might apply with equal force to other countries as well.

Thus in a world which is politically multipolar and strategically still bipolar, the rationale behind the British nuclear policy remains mainly psychological, the "cultural" needs of a nation painfully trying to adjust to her habit of empire.

## Chapter II

UN AND DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE THE ENDC

## Chapter II

### UN AND DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE THE ENDC

Arms race and arms control, are not by any means, a peculiar phenomenon of the present international system. What is new, however, is the urgency which has been lent to these by the catastrophic nature of man's most dangerous invention, i.e., nuclear weapons. On 26 June 1945, when the United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco, disarmament and arms regulation was proclaimed as imperative for the maintenance of international peace and security; and as such was entrusted as a special responsibility to the Security Council and General Assembly. The world was soon to learn of the dropping of the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August 1945) and the attendant horror of wide-spread devastation and radioactive fallout therewith. Brought to the brink of its impending doom, the world thus became conscious, as never before, of the need for the containment of this nuclear gñu- and the very first resolution passed by the General Assembly (24 January 1946) unanimously established the UN Atomic Energy Commission, consisting of the members of the Security Council, and Canada (when not a member of the Council). The Commission was asked to draw up plans for the elimination of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons of mass destruction. Disarmament efforts, hereafter, were to be mostly concerned with these questions, in various forms.

From 1945 to 1949, the international system was marked



by the emergence of its first Super Power, the U.S., and the possession of the atom bomb insured a position of monopoly for her. U.S.S.R. at this time, put her efforts at a fervent pitch for the possession of her own nuclear weapons and the political and ideological differences between the capitalist and the communist bloc rapidly crystallized into the phenomenon of Cold War. The occupation of the East European countries and the setting up of communist regimes in all these States by USSR, sent panic through the entire Western world. The idea of the containment of communist expansion (first formulated by Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister in his Fulton speech and later developed by the U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles) led to the coalescence of the Western European States into NATO, placed under the protective umbrella of the U.S. The USSR in reply led the East European countries into the military alliance of the Warsaw Pact. The international situation was marked by distrust, fear, and hostility, perhaps unequalled in the entire history of mankind. The disarmament proposals forwarded, under these conditions, lacked any genuine desire for arms limitation and, as such, were useless.

Baruch Plan - The Western position on disarmament was expressed in the United States plan for nuclear disarmament (Baruch Plan) which was put forward in the Atomic Energy Commission in June 1946. It sought to create a system for control of atomic energy, with punishment for violation of the rules of operation. This was to be followed by a halt on the

manufacture of bombs and the destruction of all the stockpiles of existing nuclear weapons. The plan stipulated as a basic formula that control must precede prohibition; and the administration of the control would be free of the veto of permanent members of the Security Council. The Soviet Union, working feverishly at the development of a nuclear capability could not possibly accept the suggested degree of inspection and control - probably to be exercised by a body in which Western powers would have the major influence. Moreover, if at any time the treaty collapsed, it would leave the U.S. with a monopoly of atomic weapons. The Soviet Union on its part made a counter proposal in the Gromyko Plan of June 1946. It asked signatories to agree not to use atomic weapons, to prohibit the production of them and to destroy all existing stocks. In this plan, prohibition and destruction would precede control; thus, the United States monopoly in atomic weapons would be crushed. The Soviet Union modified this position in October 1948, whereby it suggested that the conventions on the prohibition of atomic weapons and on the establishment of international control over atomic energy be brought into operation simultaneously.

The Commission for Conventional Armaments, established by the Security Council in 1947 and comprising of its members started working in 1948, after the rejection of the Soviet idea that conventional and nuclear disarmament be considered simultaneously. The Soviet proposal asking for reductions in

existing forces by a third was not acceptable to the West as it would preserve in tact that Soviet Union's superiority in conventional military capabilities. The West was mainly concerned with the relative level of existing armaments. In retrospect, the game of disarmament, in this period, thus boils down<sup>to</sup> the introduction, by each side, of absurd proposals which sought to neutralize the other side's edge while preserved its own position - and as such were known already to be unacceptable. The two commissions not being able to agree on any issue, adjourned indefinitely in 1950.

The ensuing deadlock was broken again in 1952 when disarmament negotiations were started again. "Periods of disarmament are sometimes rapid and dramatic and sometimes gradual and imperceptible". Leonard Beaton makes this statement and goes on to say that "the most striking disarmament usually follows the political resolution of war; and rearmament is common when unresolved problems are growing more severe and bargaining is becoming more intense"<sup>1</sup>. In an international system, when the main thrust of the great powers is towards nuclear weapons, armament, however, has shown a tendency to develop some imperative thoughts on disarmament. Thus we find that in 1952, when Russia had already exploded an atomic device in 1949, and Great Britain was also acquiring her nuclear

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1 Leonard Beaton, The Reform of Power (London, Chatto and Windus, 1972), p. 73.

capability very soon (1952), there started a series of proposals and counter proposals among the big powers again. The very brief period of U.S. hegemony (1945 to 1949) was now replaced by the institutional signs of bipolarism and East-West relation was deteriorating fast. The occupation of Berlin by <sup>blockade,</sup> ~~the Soviet forces,~~ the Korean War in which the U.S. got heavily involved against the communist regime of North Korea - all these crises contained fears of escalation into a nuclear confrontation. The Western powers now agreed to merge the discussion of nuclear and conventional disarmament. A new Disarmament Commission was established in 1952 (consisting of the members of the Security Council plus Canada) and it was entrusted with the task to prepare proposals for the "regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments, for the elimination of all major weapons adoptable to mass destruction, and for effective international control of atomic energy to ensure the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only". In 1954, a subcommittee was formed in which France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States continued discussions in private until September 1957. On the Western side, the U.K., France and the U.S. made proposals in a 3-power plan suggested:

- 1) An international inventory and check of armament and armed forces through a process of disclosure and verification;

- 2) Disarmament to agreed levels;
- 3) The prohibition of atomic weapons;
- 4) The creation of safeguards.

Dean Acheson, the U.S. delegate to the U.N. observed that verification was more important than disclosure and that the plan had to apply to all armaments and armed forces, including security police, border guards etc.<sup>2</sup> The Soviet amendment to the tripartite resolution, on the other hand, emphasized on the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons; a one-third reduction of the conventional armaments and armed forces of the Big Five within one year, the establishment within the framework of the Security Council of an international control organ to supervise the prohibition of atomic weapons; the reduction of armaments and the cessation of the production of atomic weapons; and the use solely for civilian purposes of the atomic bombs already produced etc. It is clear that some common ground had already emerged out of the deliberations, between the two power blocs. The U.S.S.R. insisted on an unconditional ban on atomic weapons first, the creation of a control authority to inspect atomic installations afterwards, and the reduction of armaments in the end. The Western Powers, on the other hand, gave priority to the disclosure and verification of information on armaments and armed forces as of first importance, to be followed by the reduction of armaments by agreed proportions and

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2 UN Document A/C.1/SR 447 (19 November 1951), pp. 7-8.

the prohibition of atomic weapons and safeguards coming in the last stage only. Thus the differences rested in the order or the exact sequence in which various disarmament measures were to be carried out and not on the measures themselves on which all were agreed.

To facilitate the elimination of those differences, a subcommittee of the Big Five was set up, for, it had been clear by then as the Indian representative to the UN B.N. Rau stated that any plan of disarmament, whatever its virtues, could be successful only when an agreement had been reached among the Powers having large defence capabilities as it was they who had to disarm, and the smaller Powers would "probably readily agree to any programme of control of armaments upon which the great Powers were agreed."<sup>3</sup> In retrospect, it really seems an era of 'lost opportunities' for not long before the simple power ratio in the disarmament negotiations was overturned by the emergence of France and China as nuclear powers and with a host of potential nuclear powers in the Afro-Asian regions which complicated any disarmament proposal beyond all measure. Polycentric tendencies have come to stay in today's multipolar international system.

In the subcommittee, a series of disarmament proposals embodying different stages was put forward by each side. Proposals raise no risks and they rarely bound the government in

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3 UN Document A/C.1/SR 454 (26 November 1951), pp. 28-29; Ibid., A/PV 344 (14 November 1951), p. 130.

question into an irrevocable commitment. In 1955, for example, there appeared a convergence of issues when the Soviet Union agreed on most of the controversial points in the Western proposal. There was agreement on the eventual force levels, on the total prohibition of nuclear weapons, to be effected after 75 per cent of the reduction of armed forces had been carried out, and on the principle of permanent ground control posts to supervise inspection.<sup>4</sup> The United States made a hasty retreat immediately and in September 1955, the U.S. representative Harold Stassen put a "reservation" on all earlier disarmament proposals. Philip Noel Baker asks "why did the (Western) Governments repudiate in September 1955 what they had urged in 1952, 1953, 1954, and up to May 1955? "Has the thinking that inspired the United States policy of 1952-55 been eroded by the arms race?" It seems obvious that the 1952-55 Western positions depended on Soviet refusal and what had changed was the Soviet position. For as Beaton aptly comments, "few governments seriously believe that they will be taken up on their offers."<sup>5</sup>

After this the powers shifted their attention on limited issues such as measures against surprise attacks; disengagement; open skies proposal; establishment of nuclear-free

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4 SIPRI Yearbook of World Armament and Disarmament, 1968-69 (Almqvist & Wiksell, Stockholm, 1969), p. 162.

5 Beaton, op. cit., p. 133.

zones in Europe; arrangements for ground and air inspection; negotiations for discontinuance of nuclear tests etc. Thus was introduced the concept of arms control reflecting a strategic philosophy which, in contrast to the 'package' plans for disarmament, accepted the continued existence of national military establishments. Arms control is intended as a multi-pronged modus operandi, and its purpose is "to improve the safety of the international environment against the occurrence of dangerous wars by reducing certain risks inherent in the present military situation; and second to increase the chances that if military conflicts do occur...governments will pursue policies of intelligent restraint rather than engage in operations which lead to uncontrolled escalation, uninhibited violence, and unlimited damage to civilian populations." There is also a utopian third purpose frequently harped on by statesmen especially from Great Britain that it is to support policies that will facilitate the eventual attainment of complete disarmament and the growth of peace-keeping institutions in a world where all nation-States have been persuaded to set aside the rule of force in favour of the rule of law. Three years of intensified negotiations in the subcommittee led to some constructive developments. Bernhard G. Bechhoefer summarizes these as follows:

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6 James E. Dougherty, Arms Control for the Late Sixties, ed., Dougherty and Lehman, Jr. (D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1967), Introduction, p. 23.



By the end of 1957 both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. realized that a nuclear war would be devastating for both the sides; that it being no longer possible to account for the past production of fissionable material, no known system of safeguard could vouch for elimination of nuclear weapons; as such large-scale warfare should be avoided by resisting big power entanglement with limited wars and by checking the spread of nuclear weapons; in order to reduce the danger of nuclear war a safeguards system should be evolved which could be installed with a minimum breach of the iron curtain; and this search had singled out three promising fields: the cessation of nuclear testing, defense against surprise attack by means of aerial and ground inspections, and limitation of armed forces and conventional armaments. 7

However, between July 1957 and the late fall of 1957, the West took a number of positions which reversed some of the most fundamental trends underlying disarmament negotiations.

One was the Western insistence on the inseparability of its package proposals of 29 August 1957 (The West had modified this position by January 1958); second, the suggestion on 29 August proposals that the U.S. and the U.K. might be permitted to transfer nuclear weapons to its allies (in basic contradiction to President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace program, on which the Soviet Union and the West had reached some measure of agreement); and finally the Western insistence, despite Soviet opposition, on a General Assembly endorsement of their August 29, 1957 proposals. Since 1948, the West had recognized

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7 Bechhoefer, Postwar Negotiations for Arms Control (The Brookings Institution, July 1961), pp. 433-34.

that any measures for arms control would be fruitless without the approval of both the Soviet Union and Western powers, and the change in the Western position led to a disruption of the negotiations in August 1957. At this stage the Soviet Union declined to discuss disarmament of arms control measures except in a commission comprising the entire membership of the General Assembly, or in a group where the representatives of the Soviet bloc equalled in number to the representatives of the Western bloc. Noel-Baker rightly remarked that until a serious negotiation was tried, "Mr. Khrushchev can prove us insincere to the two-thirds of humanity who watch the arms race with growing fear and with a growing desperate feeling that there is nothing that they can do."<sup>8</sup>

In March 1960, the Ten Nation Disarmament Committee was formed with five members from the NATO countries and five members from Warsaw Pact countries. By the inclusion of an equal number of representatives of the Soviet bloc the negotiating body for disarmament was shed of its disproportionate tilt towards the West in its composition. The disarmament negotiations were still infructuous. In the bilateral talks between the USA and the USSR, Moscow asserted that the composition of the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee should be enlarged to include

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<sup>8</sup> New York Times, 24 January 1960. Address by Noel-Baker at the dedication dinner of the American Jewish Committee's Institute of Human Relations, in New York.

the non-aligned nations who, though not possessing powerful armed forces, were "no less interested than all the other countries in a speedy solution to the problem of disarmament and in the removal of the threat of war." According to the Soviet Union equal participation of the neutral States, in a disarmament committee, "would have a positive value in the search for mutually acceptable solutions."<sup>9</sup> Though at first reticent about granting the non-aligned bloc rights of full membership, the U.S. gave in at last and the two Super Powers reached agreement on the composition of an Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (eight non-aligned States being added to the 10-Nation Committee) and on 13 December 1961, a joint resolution was submitted to the U.N. General Assembly and unanimously adopted as Resolution 1972 (XVI). The ENDC started its deliberations from March 1962, and as France never participated in the proceedings, it remained virtually a 17-Nation Committee till 1969.

The ENDC had its full share of frustrations, but it undoubtedly was a step forward from the earlier sporadic meetings of the disarmament experts and for the first time it provided an established forum in which antagonists and neutrals exchanged their views thereby reflecting the needs, aspirations and the attitudes of a pluralistic world. "At the ENDC it has

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<sup>9</sup> The Soviet Aide Memoire, 28 July 1961; See also U.N. Document A/4887 (25 September 1961).

been possible to lay the groundwork for actual and potential agreements, for more restraint than would otherwise have been shown and for greatly improved understanding by the Soviet and the Western blocs and the non-aligned nations of the respective points of view of all the three groups."<sup>10</sup>

When the talks started in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, there were new developments in the international system which portended well for the future of the negotiations at Geneva. The 1960s witnessed some thaw in the Cold War. It was the beginning of an era of strategic parity between the two Super Powers, and the evolving relationship between them had been aptly termed as an 'adversary partnership' by Dr. Coral Bell.<sup>11</sup> A nuclear China and France introduced an element of uncertainty into the world power structure which this condominium between the Super Powers sought to neutralize.

The thaw in the Cold War was also accompanied by a gradual loosening of the Western bloc and the disintegration of the Sino-Soviet alliance which led to a decline of the relevance of ideology as a factor in world politics. While France under de Gaulle strove to give a more Carolingian bend to the European States rather than its previous Atlantic orientation

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10 Archibald S. Alexander, "A Twenty Years Quest" in Arms Control for the Late Sixties, op. cit. Chapter I, p. 6.

11 Coral Bell, "The Adverse Partnership", in Holbraad, ed., Super Power and World Order (Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1971), p. 25.

under NATO, China accused the Soviet Union of getting revisionist under the leadership of Khrushchev. The rigidity of dogma inside the Soviet Union had slackened and scientists like Sakharov who suggested freer access to the Western world for the advancement of science and technology were no longer liquidated. Greater interflow in the fields of commerce, culture, etc. followed. With the help of improved modes of communication and technology, the West became more affluent and with the decolonization, the West also shed some of its exploitative nature.

The Cuba episode hastened the process of rapprochement between the nuclear giants. From the first nuclear confrontation, the two Super Powers learnt the lessons of reciprocity even in a state of hostility in order to avert the danger of nuclear war.

One final point about Britain. She was acceptable to both the Super Powers. Britain was not a revisionist power vis-a-vis Russia and by discouraging Germany's sharing of nuclear trigger in the NATO and the Multilateral Force, she absolved herself from Russian suspicions. As to America, apart from their historic 'special relationship', the British diplomatic traditions - alliance building, compromise, accommodation, balancing of interests, tolerance of spheres of power rather than efforts at radical settlement could be very useful guidelines.

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12 Coral Bell, *Debatable Alliance*, op. cit., p. 116.

The British diplomatic habit of quiet and discreet negotiations in contrast to the 'forensic' type of diplomacy (carried on in the U.N.) was useful to the ENDC to carry on delicate negotiations in small subcommittees, away from the general furore in the Committee of the whole.

Closely allied with this British attitude was the belief that in the last resort it is the mutual relations between the great powers of the day and not speech making or the votes of a host of small and weak countries, which will decide the future of negotiations. Even at the heads of the state level, Harold Macmillan repeatedly throughout his premiership of 1957 to 1963 called for quiet talks between the paramount powers. This is because the two Super Powers are so far ahead of everyone else in nuclear weapons production that no one can at present challenge their superiority. Thus while the ENDC has sought to bring moral influence to bear on the Super Powers, they have remained uncoercable. The growth of the Super Power's weapons systems has not been arrested and whatever checks or institutionalized arrangements have been achieved, came as a result of agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on their initiatives, in their interest. "They have been pushed and pulled by the rest of us, but they have moved at their own pace."<sup>13</sup>

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T.B. Millar, "The Nuclear NPT and the Super Power Condominium" in Holbraad, ed., Super Powers and World Order, op. cit., p. 65.

Chapter III

BRITAIN AND THE PARTIAL TEST BAN TREATY

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### BRITAIN AND THE PARTIAL TEST BAN TREATY

Discussions on a treaty on the cessation of nuclear tests formed a major portion of the work of the ENDC in its initial stage, and the Partial Test Ban Treaty signed on 5 August 1963 in Moscow, though in its final stage a product of tripartite negotiations between the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union, had its real basis on the preceding discussions in the ENDC between March 1962 and the first half of 1963.

Emphasis on the negotiation of a test ban treaty clearly reflected a trend to move from the general to the particular, from the complete to the fragmentary. For some years, the Soviet Union and the United States discussed proposals for general and complete disarmament. Slowly, however, it was realized that a step by step approach will yield better results in disarmament negotiations.

Pressure for disarmament negotiations was built up over the years mainly because of the increasing number of atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons. The U.S. thermonuclear tests at Bikini Atoll in 1954 contaminated Japanese fishermen and their boats and consequently world public opinion was roused against all nuclear tests. The Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru proposed a "stand still agreement" for the cessation of nuclear test explosions. The Soviet Union was the first among the big Powers to demand as a first step, the conclusion of an agreement on the cessation of all kinds of nuclear weapons.



tests. This was not acceptable to the Western Powers then. On 25 July 1956, India also submitted a memorandum to the Disarmament Commission containing specific proposals on test ban. The British delegate Nutting sought to give a diplomatic pat on the back of India in deference perhaps to her Commonwealth associations and praised it as one "inspired by great sincerity" bringing to the discussions "a freshness, a vigour, even a hope."

Despite this posture of encouragement, Britain was a strong opponent of the suspension of tests. Noble, the British delegate, not only considered radiation from tests as insignificant and "very small" but also categorically stated in the UN First Committee that London "could not agree to the suspension<sup>1</sup> of tests without any assurance of real disarmament."

However, in Britain as well as in the United States, an opinion in favour of a restriction of nuclear tests was gaining ground. The British Labour Party strongly denounced the tests and a number of eminent scientists including 875 Americans<sup>2</sup> submitted the Pauling Petition against nuclear tests in 1957. On 23 July 1956, Sir Anthony Eden, said in the House of Commons, that he was ready to examine the question of nuclear tests<sup>3</sup> separately from general disarmament and arms control. In the

1 UN Documents A/C 1/SR 869 (14 October 1957), p. 18 and A/C 1/SR 890 (4 November 1957), p. 118.

2 R.E. Lapp, The New Priesthood (New York, Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 130-53.

3 G. Fischer, The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, translated by David Willey (Europa Publications, London, 1971), p. 3.

United States, Senator (later Vice President) Humphrey asked for the separation of a test ban from general disarmament, the latter being subject to over-strict control measures.<sup>4</sup> However, as Georges Fischer observes, "the whole subject was characterized by a lethargy that can and indeed must be deplored, but that shows up the political and psychological difficulties that hold up agreement in the field of disarmament and arms control."<sup>5</sup>

In January 1957 Britain supported the idea of limited tests by way of an advance registration of nuclear test explosions.<sup>6</sup> Though by appearance it looked like a restraining measure and a compromise proposal, one could not help seeing in it an attempt to sanctify those explosions under the U.N. auspices and, as observed by Krishna Menon, "was more or less licensing vice." It would bring up all the complicated questions of inspection and control without eliminating the radiation hazards caused by nuclear tests. It was not until 1959 that Britain and the United States officially recognized that negotiations on test ban need not be linked with the progress on other measures of disarmament. It is noteworthy that throughout the negotiations, well before the conclusion of the

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4 E.H. Voss, Nuclear Ambush: The Test Ban Trap (Chicago, Regnry, 1963), p. 125.

5 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 4.

6 Draft Resolution (A/C. 1/L. 162).

Partial Test Ban Treaty, Britain together with the United States adopted a maximalist position by maintaining that peace was endangered by the manufacture of the nuclear bomb rather than by tests.<sup>7</sup> Under the Western Powers' proposal of 29 August 1957, for instance, a test ban formed one item in a package of twelve inseparable items embracing conventional and nuclear disarmament. Both the United States and Britain were then carrying on intensive series of tests necessary for the perfection of thermonuclear weapons and though nothing to compare with the overwhelming number of U.S. tests (172 between 1945 and 1958), the number of British tests (which was only 3 between 1952 and 1955) rose to 21 by 1958.<sup>8</sup> Any arms control measure which sought to inhibit the acquisition of an independent nuclear capability on their part was at that moment, as such, unacceptable to the British Government. The Soviet Union on its part (89 tests in all between 1949 and 1959), in various proposals beginning from 1955, had foreshadowed a method of gradual approach, right up to 1961; and this trend became more and more common in the disarmament negotiations.

Between 1954 and 1958, all the three nuclear Powers were engaged in carrying out a series of tests in increasing

7 H.K. Jacobson and G. Stein, Diplomats, Scientists and Politicians: The U.S. and the Nuclear Test Ban Negotiations (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1966), pp. 18-20, 42-45.

8 SIPRI Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament, 1968-69, op. cit., p. 242.

frequency and the demand for discontinuance of nuclear tests made in the United Nations and the Disarmament Commission was quietly ignored. However, there was mounting public opinion against the hazards of radiation in terms of 'genetic effects' etc. In March 1958, the Soviet Union suddenly stopped testing nuclear weapons and in September, the United Kingdom and the United States followed suit by announcing a voluntary suspension of nuclear testing. This moratorium on tests lasted till September 1961. France was unwilling to give up its prospect of becoming a nuclear power without an indication that the existing nuclear weapon powers were moving in the direction of ultimate general disarmament.<sup>9</sup> France conducted two tests in the Sahara in 1960.

In 1958, with a view to study the possibility of detecting violations of a possible agreement on the suspension of nuclear tests, a Conference of Experts of both sides was convened in Geneva from 1 July 1958 to 21 August 1958. The report of the experts was unanimously endorsed by both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. and seemed to provide an adequate basis for further negotiations. Accordingly, the U.S.A., the U.K., and the Soviet Union agreed to begin negotiations in the Geneva Committee on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Tests on 31 October 1958. The negotiations for the cessation of tests among the

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9 Bernhard G. Bechhoefer, op. cit., p. 353.

Big Three continued till the resumption of testing by Soviet Union in 1961 and in March 1962, the question of test ban was included in the agenda of the ENDC at the instance of the non-aligned nations. The test-ban negotiations in the ENDC, though far more extensive and detailed, had the hang over of the attitudes of past negotiations.

On 24 April 1962, William Godber, the U.K. delegate to the ENDC said that "the U.K. and the U.S. have worked in close cooperation throughout the long and complicated negotiations for a test ban treaty which began as long ago as 31 October 1958." Thus emphasizing the Anglo-American identity of interest in the test ban issue he went on to state the Western case as "soundly based, reasonable and flexible"<sup>10</sup>. The whole question of test ban was intricately woven round a few basic requirements such as technical data, the composition of the control commission and control posts, the veto, and on-site inspections.

The Conference of Experts to study the possibility of detecting violations of a possible agreement on suspension of nuclear tests which met at Geneva on 1 July 1958, had reached agreement on the technical feasibility of monitoring an agreement for the suspension of nuclear weapon testing. However, the new data obtained by the United States from the series of underground tests carried out in Nevada in October 1958,

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10 ENDC/PV 14 (3 April 1962), p. 23.

revealed that it was more difficult to distinguish between earthquakes and explosions than had previously been estimated. Consequently, the West suggested modifications of the technical report on which mutual agreement had been reached before. The Soviet Union did not pay much attention to the new data and persistently refused another meeting of the technical experts on this issue. In the meanwhile, a movement to resume testing, led by Edward Teller was gaining momentum in the United States and was supported by many high officials of the U.S. Government who opposed the President's support to cessation of tests. The Soviet Union, naturally started suspecting the United States motives and in February 1960, came forward with a suggestion which its technical experts had concluded after considering the new data. It agreed to only three veto-free on-site inspections a year and a concurrent moratorium on underground testing for five years. The signs of Soviet flexibility disappeared after the U-2 incident but the Soviet Union did not break off negotiations.

As regards the composition of the Control Commission, the United States and the United Kingdom suggested a body consisting of the three original parties and four others selected by the general conference. In specific terms this would mean adding one ally of the United States and the United Kingdom, one ally of the Soviet Union, and two neutrals (3-2-2). The new Soviet formula called for a commission comprising the United States and the United Kingdom plus an ally,

the Soviet Union plus two allies, and one neutral country (3-3-1). Apart from this, the Soviet Union's "package proposal" of December 13, 1959 had made a few other piecemeal concessions also. The Soviet Union would accept the Western control post staffing pattern (1/3-1/3-1/3), and would give up its demand for a veto over budget matters if the United Kingdom and the United States agreed to its formula for the composition of the Control Commission.

This was preceded by a three-power agreement that a two-thirds vote would be required for budget matters. Acceptance of the Soviet 3-3-1 formula would mean that one member of either the Soviet bloc or the Western group would have to join with the other to muster the necessary two-thirds vote and would turn an unqualified veto into a "hidden" veto "both the Soviet and the Western proposals for the composition of the Control Commission", remarked Bernhard G. Bechhoefer, "are far from the United Nations concept of an international control organ... Thus, the Soviet Union and, to a lesser extent, the United States and the United Kingdom were coming close to the original Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin concept of the "Four Policemen" who would maintain order in the post-war world."<sup>11</sup> Similarly, while the Soviet Union proposed that the control posts should be staffed mostly by the nationals of the country in which the post was located, the Western compromise

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11 Bernhard G. Bechhoefer, op. cit., p. 506.

formula suggested staffing the control posts with one-third Soviet personnel, one-third United States or United Kingdom personnel and one-third from other countries. Both these formulae could hardly be described as "international control". On questions of veto and on-site inspections, the Soviet Union had relaxed its earlier position of a general veto on all substantial decisions but still insisted on the right of veto over decisions on the budget and decisions to dispatch teams to investigate events that could be nuclear explosions.

On February 11, the United States, supported by the United Kingdom proposed a phased treaty which would end immediately all nuclear weapon tests whereby effective controls could be readily agreed upon, i.e. all tests in the atmosphere (thereby eradicating health perils), in the oceans, in the outer space and all underground tests above a seismic magnitude of 4.75, a threshold agreed upon by the Soviet and Western scientists. The Western proposal made twenty on-site annual inspections as the minimum requirement for a test ban treaty.

The Soviet Union would agree to a phased treaty if it would in addition prohibit tests below the threshold for "four to five years". President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan jointly announced on 29 March 1960, that the United States and the United Kingdom would agree that provided all the other outstanding divergences were settled, a phased treaty was signed, and some coordinated research to improve control methods for events below seismic magnitude 4.75, were undertaken.



They would institute a voluntary moratorium of agreed duration on nuclear tests below 4.75. However, after the disastrous summit conference of May in Paris, the Soviet Union was disinclined to bridge the remaining gap between the two positions. Still, the Soviet Government accepted a British proposal on certain details of staffing the control organ. Later, in June and July 1960, the Soviet Union agreed to accept an annual quota of three on-site inspections which would be free of veto. Though very small, yet the very offer of such a quota was a decisive advance beyond previous Soviet positions, as it constituted for the first time a breach of the iron curtain and made possible the progress of further negotiations on arms control. The most urgent task of the Western negotiators then was to get the Soviet Union to raise its offer.

The Soviet initiatives in the direction of a test ban treaty coincided with the shared concern of both Great Britain and the United States about the fearful consequences of excessive radiation in the atmosphere and also, of the so-called "Nth Country" problem - the danger that a horizontal nuclear proliferation would increase the danger of a nuclear holocaust. Another important motivation might have been the desire to prevent the further improvement of the U.S. nuclear weapons as a result of further tests. However, there were indications that the United States was then engaged in the perfection of her tactical rather than strategic nuclear weapons and hence needed only underground tests.

Britain had become increasingly dependent on the United States for her nuclear delivery system and for more sophisticated nuclear warheads. Thus, it was only natural that in all her proposals on arms control, the United States would obtain an active support from the United Kingdom as the security of the latter was being closely intertwined with the strategy of the former. The British delegate Lord Home, could say confidently in the ENDC, "We are prepared to say to the Soviet Union here and now, keep your advantage. We are prepared in spite of what you have gained in the latest series of nuclear tests in the autumn, to sign an agreement now if you will give the minimum machinery of verification."<sup>12</sup> Verification continued to be the crux of the controversy on the test ban issue in the ENDC. Lord Home said on 23 March 1962, trying to emphasize the importance of this problem that "...there are some treaties, for instance non-aggression pacts which, if they are broken, are broken openly. The difference between a disarmament treaty and treaties such as a nuclear test ban, is that they can be broken secretly."<sup>13</sup> Keeping in view the Soviet need for secrecy and fear of espionage, Britain considered it the main business of the Committee to obtain the minimum verification needed to provide an adequate safeguard. The British delegates, however, always harked back to the new data discovered by the United States in regard to nuclear tests carried out in Nevada in 1958

12 ENDC/PV. 5, 20 March 1962, p. 11.

13 ENDC/PV. 8, p. 28.

as an accepted basis of technical considerations. Referring to a statement by Dean Rusk, the United States representative, about detection and location, Lord Home said, "...it is quite clear to the Committee that there is a genuine difficulty in distinguishing between a nuclear explosion and an earthquake."<sup>14</sup> He further maintained that the British scientific advice is the same as that of the United States and their instruments were not yet accurate enough to fulfil all these functions. The Soviet Union had not yet accepted the new Western data and refused to allow the Western scientists to have a talk with their counterparts.<sup>15</sup>

Godber, the British representative to the ENDC, summarized the British attitude to the question of nuclear tests in his statement of 2 April 1962. He referred to the unanimous agreement reached by the 1958 Conference of Experts as an acceptable technical data and said that since both the Western bloc and the Soviet Union had agreed at that time that any departure from the basis of the expert's report would be unacceptable, the new rigidity of posture on verification, adopted by the Soviet Union since late 1961, was incomprehensible to the United Kingdom. The British representative recalled that the 1958 expert's report (EXP/NUC/28) was endorsed by the Governments of the U.K., the United States, and the

<sup>14</sup> ENDC/PV. 8, p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Soviet Union and they fully accepted the requirement of an appropriate control system for the enforcement of an agreement on nuclear test ban. "That was the basis, then, on which the Geneva Conference on Discontinuance of Nuclear Tests began in October 1958."<sup>16</sup> Godber also recalled that in sending its representatives the Soviet Government stated "that the purpose of such a conference is to conclude an agreement on the permanent discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapon tests by the States and to establish an appropriate control system for the enforcement of such an agreement." (A/3940). It was on this basis that by early 1961 agreement had been reached on seventeen out of about twenty-four articles, and two annexes out of three, required for a nuclear test ban treaty. The outstanding issues left were not concerned with the principle of international supervision or verification but with the degree of it. The British representative said that at this stage, in order to facilitate the work of the conference, the United States and the United Kingdom had tabled on 18 April 1961 a complete draft treaty incorporating all these agreed articles and the two agreed annexes (GEN/DNT/110). In putting forward their draft treaty, the United States and the United Kingdom said that their position was still completely flexible, and that their draft treaty was fully negotiable. The British

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16 ENDC/PV. 14 (3 April 1962), p. 24.

delegate stipulated that their stand was progressively getting more moderate and that while the 1958 experts' report had proposed an international inspection of every unidentified event, the Western side, for their part, proposed international inspection of, at the most, one in every four or five of those detected events.

The British contended that the Soviet stand, on the other hand, was getting increasingly rigorous and that they categorically refused to discuss a single one of the subsequent proposals of the West and also withdrew from some of the more important provisions on which agreement had previously been reached.

The Soviet Union, finally, resumed testing in August 1961 and on 27 November, it submitted new proposals (ENDC/11) which offered a treaty embodying no form of international verification, as the United Kingdom saw it.

The Soviet Union had developed a renewed mistrust in the West after the U-2 incident in which a U.S. airplane scanning the Russian sky was shot down by the Soviets. This was followed by the <sup>abortive</sup> disastrous summit conference at Paris and finally it was on the question of a peace treaty on Germany and the resultant blockade of Berlin that the East-West relations were deeply exacerbated. The Soviet attitude stiffened noticeably and she announced a resumption of testing in August 1961 on the plea that on the Western side, the continued French tests

in the Sahara augmented the nuclear capability of NATO and thus put the USSR in a disadvantageous position as against the NATO Powers. However by the end of 1961, Kremlin had carried out enough tests, including the powerful 50 megaton test, to make up for any lacunae in its weapon development programme. She was now fearful of the Chinese conducting their own nuclear weapon tests and also afraid of facilitating the nuclear ambitions of West Germany. Hence, <sup>these factors might have been in the background when</sup> the Soviet Union agreed to consider the question of test ban separately from a treaty on general and complete disarmament, and put forward a new proposal on 27 November 1961. It proposed a moratorium on underground tests pending agreement on tests in the other three environments. Great Britain and the United States recalled their earlier experience of the Soviet violation of the first moratorium and were suspicious about secret Russian underground testing. In March 1962, Washington announced its decision to resume atmospheric tests and conducted as many as 133 tests in that year.<sup>17</sup> Commenting on the Soviet statement of 12 April 1962 that a new uninspected moratorium on nuclear tests should be undertaken for as long as the 18-Nation Disarmament Conference remained in session, the British representative stated categorically (even before his U.S. counterpart gave his reply to the offer or heard his own

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17 SIPRI Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament 1972, p. 462.

Government's reaction from London Office): "...I would only remind him of what happened once before when he relied on such a unilateral undertaking...one cannot wipe out past history by talking here... I would say to him that for that reason we cannot take up such an offer, which would give us no security at all so far as I can see."<sup>18</sup> The USA did not intend to place its own security and that of its allies, "at the mercy of Soviet on-again off-again tactics", Washington<sup>19</sup> asserted.

The prompt reply given by the British representative made it amply clear that whatever progress was there on test ban talks in Geneva, it was almost a surety "that the United Kingdom Government did not intend to refrain from the tests scheduled for the end of April", the Soviet delegate, Zorin<sup>20</sup> rightly remarked. It evoked the non-aligned countries to be more persuasive. Arthur Lall, the Indian representative to the ENDC, said, that the sense of urgency with regard to the stopping of tests was, "curiously enough, being displayed much more by the non-aligned countries, the countries that are not testing, than by the nuclear powers."<sup>21</sup> If certain governments asserted the validity of the argument that the development

18 PV/19, 12 April 1962, p. 36.

19 Statement from Washington read out to the ENDC by the U.S. delegate - ENDC/PV. 20, 13 April 1962, p. 11.

20 ENDC/PV. 19, 12 April 1962, p. 40.

21 ENDC/PV. 67, 8 August 1962, pp. 24-32.

and perfection of nuclear weapons was necessary in their security interests, "can they not see that they are encouraging other countries to follow the path in favour of which they so strenuously develop their justifications?" the Indian delegate asked.<sup>22</sup> Britain, however, consistently maintained together with the United States that they could not agree to what they called an unpoliced moratorium and forego their planned tests until a treaty with effective controls was signed.<sup>23</sup>

The Indian delegate quoted the Nobel Prize winner, Professor Pauling, to the effect that the current atmospheric tests by the USA, in terms of genetic damage, would bring about 3 million deaths,<sup>24</sup> and unless the nuclear weapon Powers could reach an agreement "on stopping tests now the armaments race will reach a new pitch of acceleration."

Great Britain, nevertheless, extended her full support to the United States policy on resumption of tests. As to the Soviet charge about a larger number of tests by the Western side, Britain countered by saying that the value and volume of the past series of Soviet tests were greater by far. Godber quoted from Daily Mirror, known for its anti-government views, to show the "genuine feeling in this matter, not only of the

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22 ENDC/PV. 72, 20 August 1962, pp. 16-17.

23 ENDC/PV. 19, 12 April 1962.

24 ENDC/PV. 34, 9 May 1962, pp. 33-39.



United Kingdom Government, but of the people of the United Kingdom: "President Kennedy's decision to resume American H-tests in the atmosphere is a tragedy.... But the world must realize that the responsibility...is Khrushchev's. It is exactly five months and twenty-seven days since Khrushchev exploded the biggest ever H-bomb over the Arctic. The date was 30 October 1961...during the past five months and twenty-seven days, President Kennedy has delayed authorizing fresh American tests in the hope of winning an agreement to ban tests for ever. He has held out as long as possible in the face of very heavy pressure from his military advisers...nobody...can blame Kennedy for making Western Security his first consideration." Any increase in the strength of the U.S. nuclear arsenal could only add to the feeling of security in Great Britain, and she followed a policy of close adherence to the United States in all these political decisions of vital importance.

Another significant aspect of the British stand on the issue of test ban at this period was the maximalist attitude it adopted as against the Soviet proposal of cessation of tests in the three environments which did not require much international verification. Moscow, had simply sought to extend the Western Powers' proposal of 3 November 1961 suggesting a ban on atmospheric tests without international control to two other

environments, i.e. under water and in the outer space. When the Soviet and the Czechoslovakian representatives suggested in the ENDC on 11th and 12th April respectively, "that the West had accepted the fact that tests could be detected and identified in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water",<sup>26</sup> the British representative replied that "in fact this is not correct...."<sup>27</sup> He explained that the 1959 experts report by the Technical Working Group on the detection and identification of higher altitude nuclear explosions (in which Soviet Scientists participated) (GEN/DNT/HAT/8) proposed a complicated international system in order to detect events at high altitudes and in outer space. "Certainly there are no national systems of this kind in existence at the moment,..." said the British delegate and "as regards explosions under water we have no knowledge of detection systems operating on a worldwide scale under national auspices, anymore than we have for outer space. In 1958 the experts recommended (EXP/NUC/28, pages 15, 20) that there should be ten ships on the world's oceans operating in the international control system, which would be responsible for detecting underwater events in remote areas. There are no such ships at the moment, and I doubt whether it is desirable, in a treaty such as that proposed by

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26 ENDC/PV. 19, 12 April 1962.

27 Ibid., p. 37.

the Soviet Union, to encourage the construction of national fleets for this purpose." <sup>28</sup> With regard to the position in the atmosphere, the British representative recalled the response of Premier Khrushchev (GEN/DNT/121) to the Anglo-American offer in this respect, on September 1961 - which had graphically stated the dangers in regard to underground inspection from such a limited and restricted treaty.

In short, the U.K. was not at all prepared to commit herself to any undertaking banning tests and thus inhibit her own planned tests to be begun soon. She echoed the United States desire to conduct a fresh series of atmospheric tests so that the recent Soviet gains from her voluminous tests could be neutralized by the Western side.

The non-aligned nations in their anxiety about nuclear test explosions, tried to find a way out from this impasse and submitted an eight Power proposal on 16 April 1962. The joint memorandum (ENDC/26) put forward the following three ideas:

1. A control system based on already existing "national networks of observation posts", to be further strengthened by the establishment of new posts and use of improved methods of detection;
2. The establishment of an International Commission with "a limited number of highly qualified scientists, possibly

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28 ENDC/PV. 19, 12 April 1962, p. 38.

from non-aligned countries, designed to be an improvement both on the Anglo-American draft treaty of 8 April 1961 that spoke of a control body headed by a single administrator in the interests of efficiency and the Soviet proposals of 1960 which spoke of a troika - the 3-man administrative Council to head that body to ensure impartiality;

3. A system of on-site inspections by invitation from parties to the treaty.

The eight Power proposal, by admitting the need for a certain degree of on-site inspection conceded "the substance" of a basic Western principle.<sup>29</sup> "Although the Memorandum did not specifically stipulate an "obligation" to invite inspection, it was phrased in such a way that failure to invite the impartial international scientific Commission to perform the requested inspection was tantamount of self-incrimination in the eyes of the other parties, which would be free to withdraw from the treaty, and the whole world."<sup>30</sup>

The non-aligned nations' Memorandum helped to bring about a more flexible approach by the nuclear weapon powers but some areas of disagreement still remained. While the United Kingdom supported Washington's contention that in the case of a 'suspicious' even the concerned party must allow the

29 Arthur S. Lall, Negotiating Disarmament (New York, 1964), pp. 17-21.

30 M. Samir Ahmed, The Neutrals and the Test Ban Negotiations (New York, 1967), pp. 26-27.

Commission to conduct on-site inspection, Moscow persisted that the obligation to invite the Commission was not binding because the Memorandum stated that the concerned party "could invite" it.

Referring to the suggestion about an international scientific Commission to be responsible for detection and observation the British representative said "our own thought in regard to this has always been that an international body for the purposes intended should be governmental in its composition although of course it should and indeed must have a scientific element."<sup>31</sup> The United Kingdom favoured the idea of another meeting of the scientists of both the sides which by furnishing added security and faith would perhaps enable a fresh political decision to be taken.<sup>32</sup> For Britain wholeheartedly agreed with the representative of Nigeria who observed that the main issues were essentially political and the aid of science was merely required to give the arguments added faith.<sup>33</sup>

However, there appeared to be a thaw. On 9 May 1962, Zorin, the Soviet delegate stated that it would be possible "in individual cases" for Moscow "to invite scientists, members

31 ENDC/PV. 21, 16 April 1962, p. 23.

32 ENDC/PV. 19, 12 April 1962, p. 35.

33 ENDC/PV. 19, p. 16.

of the international Commission to ascertain in loco the nature of the events which are in doubt,..."<sup>34</sup> As the 17th session of the UN came to an end, Khrushchev, in his letter to the U.S. President, proposed a test ban treaty on the basis of 2 or 3 on-site inspections a year. With this significant shift in the Soviet attitude, the Western Powers also moved from their previous positions. The US-UK draft of 27 August 1962 on a Partial Test Ban in three environments, namely, in the atmosphere, in outer space and underwater accepted supervision by nationally controlled observation posts without the necessity of international controls.<sup>35</sup> Britain and the United States, however, in their draft on a Comprehensive Test Ban still insisted on 12 to 20 on-site inspections and 80 control posts (instead of 180 as proposed in 1961). The proposal suggested that the control posts could be nationally manned but should, however, be subject to supervision by an international Commission.<sup>36</sup>

With the presentation of a modified draft by the United Kingdom and the United States in August 1962, Partial Test Ban Treaty had indeed become a foregone conclusion.<sup>37</sup> If it was not signed until August next year, it was because of

<sup>34</sup> ENDC/PV. 35, 9 May 1962.

<sup>35</sup> ENDC Document ENDC/58 and 59.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> J.P. Jain, India and Disarmament (New Delhi, Radiant Publishers, Kalkaji, 1974), vol. 1, p. 110.

disagreement among the three nuclear weapon Powers on the terms of an underground test ban. Motivated by an apprehension that Washington with an advanced technology in conducting underground tests, would be enabled to improve its weapon system even when a PTB was in effect, Moscow insisted that it should be coupled with a moratorium on underground tests.

Meanwhile a 37-Power draft resolution was submitted (A/C.1/L.310) which condemned all nuclear weapons tests and proposed the cessation of tests before 1 January 1963 regardless of a test ban treaty. Canada moved an amendment that if no agreement was reached by 1 January 1963, the parties concerned should enter into an immediate agreement prohibiting tests in the atmosphere, underwater and in outer space "accompanied by an interim arrangement suspending all underground tests, taking as a basis the eight nation joint memorandum and taking into consideration other proposals presented at the Seventeenth Session, of the General Assembly."

Britain's reaction to it was mixed and she joined the United States in opposing an uncontrolled moratorium and desired the endorsement of their views of international control. The U.K. and the U.S.A. suggested the addition of the clause, "such interim agreement to include adequate assurances for effective detection and identification of seismic events by an international scientific Commission." Thus by agreeing to rely on a scientific instead of a political body, the Anglo-

American stand made way for significant adjustments with the majority of world opinion. However being averse to a dead limit set on tests as by 1 January 1963, both the U.S.A. and the U.K. abstained on it.

With the increasing stabilization of the political climate that had been badly shaken by the Cuba episode in 1962, the nuclear weapon Powers entered into a joint dialogue among themselves and as a first measure a direct telecommunication link was set up between Moscow and Washington. The next step was a partial Test Ban Treaty. While on 10 June 1963, President Kennedy announced a voluntary moratorium on atmospheric tests, Premier Khrushchev expressed his willingness to give up the demand for a moratorium on underground tests. The Moscow Treaty on Partial Test Ban was initialled by the U.K., the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. on 25 July 1963, and finally signed on 5 August 1963. It banned nuclear weapon test explosions "or any other nuclear explosions" in the atmosphere, in outer space and underwater. Thus the only substantive change in it from the Anglo-American proposal of 27 August 1962 was the absence of a provision which had allowed nuclear test explosions for peaceful purposes in all environments, under carefully controlled circumstances, provided the original parties to the Treaty agreed to them. <sup>38</sup> The change was brought about



at the instance of the U.S.S.R. to which the original Western stipulation on this issue proved unacceptable. Underground nuclear test explosions are banned only if they "cause radioactive debris to be present outside the territorial limits of the State under whose jurisdiction or control such explosion is conducted."

The Partial Test Ban was in reality negotiated in secret among the Big Three. Many of its provisions are 'imprecise and vague' and it is not exactly clear what the terms "territorial waters" or "underground tests" cover. "They alone know exactly what they meant, for they thought it was neither necessary nor perhaps useful to give details to other parties of the exact contents of and precise reasons for their agreement."<sup>39</sup> It is also true that the crucial issues on the question of cessation of tests were settled mainly between the United States and the Soviet Union with Great Britain associated with them only in the last stage. The following observation by Godber in the ENDC makes it clear: "Here I welcome...the move forward which was made in the approach from Chairman Khrushchev just before Christmas and which formed the basis for the renewed discussions which took place in New York and Washington, first

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G. Fischer, The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, op. cit., p. 7. Quotes his source as W.C. Foster, Head of the United States Agency for Arms Control and Disarmament, Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Hearings, Committee on Foreign Relations; U.S. Senate, on Executive M., August 1963, p. 445.

between the Soviet Union and the United States and latterly with the United Kingdom included, so as to represent as it were, the Sub-committee of this Conference..."<sup>40</sup> "We did not wake up to understand the sombre reality even when the Super Powers suddenly, in the summer of 1963", says A. Myrdal, Sweden's representative to the ENDC, in retrospect, "switched the test ban negotiations from Geneva, where we were in good faith continuing to labour on a total test ban, to bilateral talks in Moscow, where within weeks was produced a partial ban."<sup>41</sup>

Senator Mundt observed that the Moscow Treaty was an exceptional document in that it had been drawn up by the Big Three who, after having reached agreement, called on other States to recognize it, to support the Treaty and to subscribe to it.<sup>42</sup>

A perusal of the discussions held in the ENDC reveals the first side-tracking of the crucial issue of a comprehensive test ban, when the "accent was shifted from stopping tests as a means to stop the further development of nuclear weapons, to stopping them instead in order to avoid the side effects of atomic radiation...the shifting of concern from

40 ENDC/PV. 96, 12 February 1963, p. 29.

41 Alva Myrdal, "Game of Disarmament" in Impact of Science on Society (Paris), vol. XXII, no. 3, July-September 1972.

42 Congressional Record, 23 September 1963, p. 16815.

nuclear-weapons development to radiation risks was probably rather a result of 'over sell' on the part of those opposed to nuclear testing, which soon got mighty support from public opinion...that the existence of the nuclear weapons themselves was the larger worry was somehow lost sight of... The Moscow Treaty introduced the practice of sealing off disarmament schemes with a full stop, as soon as some token measures of success could be registered and sold to the general public - however partial, one-sided or illusory."<sup>43</sup>

To the nuclear Powers, anyway, the problem of radioactivity "of real or assumed dangers from fall out", as U.S. Secretary of State Rusk put it, was only of secondary importance. "No matter whether a test was labelled for peaceful or nonpeaceful purposes, the scientific advances which might result could be used for military as well as non-military ends. Despite the costs, it seems better, therefore, to keep the lid on as tightly as possible than to try to introduce exceptions."<sup>44</sup>

The rationale behind the big Powers initiative was different. The Treaty showed it clearly that between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., certain balance in deterrence had come through.<sup>45</sup> On the Western side, it was thought that by

43 Alva Myrdal, op. cit.

44 Arthur H. Dean, Test Ban and Disarmament: The Path of Negotiation (New York, Harper & Row, 1966), p. 98.

45 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 14; E. Rabinowitch, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, April 1963, p. 2.

driving tests underground, the Soviet tests of high yield weapons would be made more time consuming and expensive. However due to considerable technical progress since 1963, it is possible today to test very powerful nuclear weapons underground and to make decisive progress in the technology of those weapons. Since 1963, the tests carried out by the United States and the Soviet Union underground have been intensified and unchecked. It is now known that all underground tests give out some amount of radioactive fall-out and the contaminated air in its natural course pass the territorial limits of the testing State. Since 1963 upto 1968 at least sixteen U.S. tests and 3 Soviet tests have set free radioactive waste.<sup>46</sup> More important still, the Moscow Treaty was conceived as the first step to check proliferation of nuclear weapons and it made the production, development, and the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear weapon States even more difficult. In this, the Western Powers had a mutuality of interest with the Soviet Union, which in addition had to take into account the German question and the bellicosity of China. That no disarmament was intended was made amply clear in President Kennedy's own statement when the treaty was introduced to the U.S. Senate. While the military interests thought that this would deprive

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46 SIPRI Yearbook of World Armament and Disarmament, 1968-69, pp. 249-51. The hopes raised by the Moscow Treaty thus have not proved very well founded.

the United States of certain advantages in nuclear weapons, especially in the development of anti-missile system, Kennedy said, "The United States has more experience in underground testing than any other nation and we intend to use this capacity to maintain the adequacy of our arsenal. Our atomic laboratories will maintain an active development programme including underground testing, and we will be ready to resume testing in the atmosphere if necessary."<sup>47</sup> Alva Myrdal regards<sup>48</sup> it as a public health rather than a disarmament measure.

On the part of Britain, it made her more dependent on the United States. Apart from certain components of the Polaris Submarines, Britain was dependent upon the supply of fissionable materials from America for its warheads for the Polaris missiles. Because of the Test Ban Agreement, the British warheads would be left untested in the atmosphere, so that the nuclear force would be dependent either upon tests carried out earlier by the United States or on untested warheads.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, for Britain, the peace plank in the electoral platform was important and valuable. "The British conservative Government fought hard for the partial nuclear

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47 Documents on Disarmament, 1963 (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1964) (U.S.A.C.D.A., Publication 24), p. 300.

48 Alva Myrdal, op. cit.

49 704 H.C. Deb., cols. 701-4 (17 December 1964); 707 H.C. Deb., cols. 1572-73 (4 March 1965).

test ban treaty and subsequently derived real electoral benefits from it."<sup>50</sup>

Strategic dependence on the United States for its security had become a natural tenet of British policy by then. At the eighty-seventh plenary session of the ENDC, Michael Wright summarized the position of the United Kingdom with regard to the conclusion of a treaty on test ban.<sup>51</sup>

He said that there "is in fact much common ground between us in the suggestions and proposals now before the Committee, not only in the more recent suggestions, but also in the Western draft treaties ENDC/58 and ENDC/59, and, of course in the eight Power memorandum (ENDC/28)", and that taking into view the many valuable suggestions that have been made recently in the ENDC, it should "lead us forward to at least some temporary agreement which might, in turn lead to a permanent treaty."<sup>52</sup> The United Kingdom, on her part, suggested four alternative forms of agreement. The British delegation put forth that the aim of the United Kingdom was a comprehensive treaty.<sup>53</sup> However, it recognized that the principal obstacle to it was the fact that the United Kingdom and the United States did not as yet possess the scientific knowledge

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50 Leonard Beaton, Reform of Power *op.cit.*

51 ENDC/PV. 87, 5 December 1962, pp. 5-14.

52 Ibid., p. 5.

53 Ibid., p. 6.

of how to identify all underground events without on-site verification. If the Soviet Union can show the Western side, "as it claims to be able to do, how to identify all underground events by national detection systems, we ought to be able to sign a permanent and comprehensive treaty by 1 January 1963."<sup>54</sup> At the twelve hundred and forty-sixth meeting of the First Committee of the United Nations in New York, the Russian delegate Zorin had stated that though the Soviet Union possessed this scientific knowledge, it was not willing to communicate it to other Governments, in the present state of international tension (A/C. 1/PV. 1246, pp. 57 and 61). The United Kingdom suggested that if not to any Government, the Soviet Union could at least furnish the information to the Secretary General of the United Nations which would make possible the signature of a comprehensive treaty without any controls immediately.<sup>55</sup>

If, on the other hand, more research is needed for the identification of underground events, then a comprehensive treaty with the minimum amount of international verification still required, at least for the time being, could be signed. In this connection Michael Wright pointed out that this minimum may be on the lines of Chairman Khrushchev's own earlier proposal set out in his message to Macmillan of 23 April 1959,

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54 Ibid., p. 6.

55 Ibid.

and introduced by the Russian delegate Tsarapkin at the 180th meeting of the Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapon Tests on 9 July 1959 as a draft article expressing in treaty language Khrushchev's proposal. That draft article had agreed to the idea of a minimum amount of international verification required for the treaty to be effective.

If the Soviet Union wants more time for negotiation on either of these proposals, then the United Kingdom was prepared to carry out the recommendation in operative paragraph 6 of the General Assembly Resolution 1762 A(XVII) and conclude a permanent agreement without international verification in the three fall-out environments with an interim agreement on the underground environment. With regard to a temporary agreement in the underground environment the "United Kingdom is willing and more than willing to take account of the suggestions put forward by among others the delegations of Sweden, Canada, India and Mexico. We are willing to pursue this question with the Soviet Union either in private conversations or in the three-Power Nuclear test ban Sub-Committee or here in plenary meeting."<sup>56</sup> The essential elements of such an interim arrangement should according to the United Kingdom, firstly, be the setting up of at least an interim international commission, whether or not that interim commission would take more or less the same

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56 Ibid., p. 9.



shape as a permanent commission, and, secondly, as laid down in the General Assembly Resolution 1762 A(XVII), that there should be adequate assurances for the effective detection and identification of seismic events by the Commission. As to the form of an international commission, the new Western draft treaty proposals suggested eight representatives divided equally between two nuclear sides and seven of uncommitted countries (ENDC/58, Article IV), while the non-aligned bloc suggested that the commission should be composed entirely of neutral scientists. The United Kingdom was of the opinion that whatever the composition on either basis the commission should be the body which alone should decide whether an event qualified for inspection. But the commission having so decided there could be two alternatives. The first was that a country would be under obligation to invite inspection of any event which the commission had thus decided. But if it was objected that it might result in too many inspections - perhaps 40 or 50 a year in a given country - there was the second alternative of a quota, perhaps ten or twelve or fewer, which the British representative stipulated, would amount to a deterrent inspection of about one in four or five events which by decision of the commission would qualify for inspection. In that case, he said, the decision by the commission on which of these events would qualify for inspection, which of these should actually be inspected, should rest with the other nuclear side.

This was, in the view of the United Kingdom, on the lines suggested by the proposal of Khrushchev. The United Kingdom agreed with the view of the Indian delegation that there might be a certain quota of invitations per annum (ENDC/PV. 85, p. 42 - Provisional) and that quota could only be fixed in the first instance for the first year because instruments might improve which would justify a revision of the stated quota (ibid). The United Kingdom also agreed with the representatives of Mexico (ENDC/PV. 85, pp. 33-37) and Burma (ENDC/PV. 86, pp. 14-15) that the suggestion that invitations should be extended if the international scientific commission believed that in the case of doubtful event on-site inspection was necessary was one which, together with the idea of an agreed annual quota of on-site invitations mentioned by the Indian delegation, merited earnest consideration by the nuclear Powers. The United Kingdom supported this approach wholeheartedly.

To the statement of the Indian representative that "In fact the agreement of both the commission and the country is, I would suggest, axiomatic whatever form is chosen for the modalities of verification", Britain's reply was that "no country can ever be forced to accept an on-site inspection".

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57 ENDC/PV. 87, 5 December 1962, p. 12.

58 Ibid.

There must be free consent, but that free consent must be expressed beforehand in a treaty commitment. That commitment might be qualified as regards numbers or the areas for which invitations would be issued - for example, 85 per cent of the Soviet Union is not an earthquake area: there might be a very small number of inspections a year in this vast area. But in the remaining 15 per cent of the Soviet Union, where there are earthquake areas - which is not in the heartland of the Soviet Union but chiefly in the Kamchatka Peninsula, in the Kuriles and in the Pamir region - there might be need for a few more inspections, although Great Britain recognized that perhaps the number of these could be reduced by the use of "black boxes" in these areas.

With regard to the idea of using "black boxes", i.e. - of unmanned seismic stations for the detection of underground events, the United Kingdom proposed a meeting between the two nuclear sides, preferably of experts, to discuss and see whether it may help to narrow the gap between the two sides and reduce the requirements both for the use of conventional detection stations and even perhaps, for the number of on-site inspections.<sup>59</sup>

The United Kingdom also stated it as an essential point that if any country or countries were guilty of breaches of the

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59 Ibid., pp. 12-13.

agreement, such breaches would free the other members from being tied any longer to the agreements.<sup>60</sup>

On the key issue of on-site inspections, Britain offered "...to come down from a sliding scale of from twelve to twenty if the Soviet Union will come up from zero" as a proof of its desire "to negotiate and to offer compromise".<sup>61</sup> Again, Godber stated in the nuclear Sub-Committee of the ENDC on 9 August that "on the precise relations between the international commission and national detection posts necessary to ensure the requisite high degree of accuracy and uniformity, I think it should be possible to bring the positions of the two sides closer together." The United Kingdom's position on this was that the degree of supervision should be no more than is clearly shown to be necessary to ensure that results from a station play their part in providing an adequate world wide coverage on which the international commission would feel fully able to rely.

The British delegates in the ENDC consistently maintained that the new Western draft proposal of 27 August 1962 was much more lenient than their 1961 proposals (ENDC/9). The Geneva System provided for 180 detection posts (EXP/NUC/28, annex VII, para 3), all of which included seismic detection. However, in the light of the new detection data, it has been

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60 Ibid., p. 11.

61 ENDC/PV. 72, op. cit., p. 13.

possible to suggest a very small number of posts for seismic detection alone, assuming such posts to be equipped with the best possible recording techniques and assuming that they can be located in the most favourable environment. But before a complete system can be decided upon, the United Kingdom found it necessary to consider the capabilities and to examine the joint location possibilities for all these methods, other than seismic, which have already been agreed upon as essential to monitoring a nuclear test ban.<sup>62</sup>

The British delegate said that the draft proposal of 27 August had also made an attempt to allay Russian fears of espionage possibilities in the treaty. Under the 1961 proposals (ENDC/9) two out of three persons operating detection posts in the Soviet Union would have been foreigners. "Under the new proposals, to meet Soviet wishes, we are not proposing the presence of one single foreign national on Soviet territory as an operating member of a detection station."<sup>63</sup>

The proposal of the West, the British delegation maintained, had tried to take fully into account the ideas behind the eight Power memorandum.<sup>64</sup> The United Kingdom delegate stated it as one of his main purposes to try on behalf of

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62 ENDC/PV. 69, 14 August 1962, p. 40.

63 ENDC/PV. 80, 5 September 1962, p. 15.

64 Ibid., p. 12.

the United Kingdom to give further impulsion to the initiatives and suggestions of the non-aligned delegations.<sup>65</sup> In spite of these soothing idealistic assertions, however, we find frequent glimpses of British pragmatism. After evaluating non-aligned proposals Godber said, "We must be realistic in regard to this problem. Whatever the views held by one delegation or another at this table, the essential point is that the great nuclear Powers should agree: they must agree."<sup>66</sup> Whether Britain considered itself as one of those "great nuclear Powers" remains an interesting question. There was an implicit threat in Godber's assertion in the ENDC, when referring to the Western draft proposal of 27 August 1962, he stated: "And here I must be quite plain...if the offer to make the present massive series of Soviet tests the last of its kind fails, then it is obvious that the whole dreadful and deadly game of leapfrog could begin again."<sup>67</sup>

The British representative, Thomas welcomed the treaty after it was initialled in Moscow as "a major contribution to the cause of peace" but was candid enough to admit that "it will not itself reduce armaments. Moreover, it may not necessarily prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons."<sup>68</sup> The

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65 ENDC/PV. 87, op. cit., p. 12.

66 ENDC/PV. 69, 14 August 1962, p. 42.

67 ENDC/PV. 80, 5 September 1962, p. 9.

68 ENDC/PV. 148 (U.K.), 30 July 1963, pp. 14-16.

real opposition to a comprehensive test ban as Walter Lippman pointed out at that time "is inspired by the hope that, if we keep on testing, we shall invent the absolute weapon - a weapon of annihilation against which there is no defence; the opposition to a ban is also inspired by the fear that if we do not invent the absolute weapon the Soviets will invent it."<sup>69</sup>

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69 Walter Lippman, "Today and Tomorrow", Gape Times, 1 August 1963.

**Chapter IV**

**NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY**



## Chapter IV

### NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

Non-proliferation has been a favourite theme with the British ever since the first atom bomb was exploded in 1945. With the entry of China into the nuclear club in October 1964 arms control discussions in the ENDC acquired a new vigour and the Soviet interest in it was very marked. Throughout the negotiations Great Britain also displayed unqualified support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as such; however in details, three different facets are discernible in the British policy framework: first, intra-nuclear weapon Powers; second between the nuclear powers and the non-nuclear powers; and third concerning the Western alliance. It is significant that from the very beginning the question of a Non-Proliferation Treaty got curiously mixed up with her European policy and her reaction to it underwent a distinct change in the course of the negotiations for a treaty. In the years 1965-66 Britain tried to forestall German nuclear sharing in the NATO by showing a clear lack of enthusiasm for the Multilateral Force. It was designed to remove the Russian objections to the NPT. When in 1967-68 the question of safeguards became a tangled issue and in the subsequent tussle between the jurisdiction of the IAEA and the Euratom, she distinctly aligned herself with Europe and her fears of West Germany faded away. This again involved a choice of course between her Atlantic and European destiny and she tried to keep both the options open.

So far as the drafting of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was concerned, the role of the Geneva Committee was much more important than during the negotiations of the Moscow Treaty of 1963 and "it was noticeable first of all that Britain's role was far less prominent than during the 1963 negotiations."<sup>1</sup> Though the Committee carried on negotiations on the basis of proposals presented by the Big Two, represented by the two Co-chairmen; nevertheless, many amendments were put forward by members of the Committee. The two groups of "aligned" States did not toe the Cold War line. Romania among the Eastern bloc countries and Italy and Canada among the Western bloc countries adopted an independent line, not always in tune with the two Co-chairmen. Non-member States also submitted memoranda to the ENDC - e.g., Switzerland, Spain and West Germany. In addition, the NATO was kept in touch with the progress in Geneva and so also the Euratom Commission. The first Treaty draft was presented by the U.S.A. on 17 August 1965.<sup>2</sup> The Soviet Union submitted its draft directly to the General Assembly on 24 September 1965.<sup>3</sup> On 24 August 1967 in the ENDC, the U.S.A., and the U.S.S.R. tabled two identical proposals which kept the provision for 'safeguards' vacant, and

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1 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 47.

2 ENDC/152

3 A/5976.

the U.S. delegate said that the proposal was recommended for discussion and negotiation by the Committee of 18, and for examination by all governments.<sup>4</sup> The first US draft was jointly sponsored by Britain, Canada and Italy. The later revised texts of the drafts were the result of private discussions between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. and the United Kingdom was consulted no more than any one else. The treaty however, did not encroach upon her nuclear prerogatives which had come to be synonymous with her 'special relationship' with the United States. Britain showed a zeal for the treaty which was almost missionary and if at all it was more doctrinaire than the two Super Powers. "Being favoured by a treaty on which it has not been asked to help, Britain could not loudly object; thus it might have felt driven loudly to applaud."<sup>5</sup> Apart from this, its privileged status as a nuclear power egged her on to keep on to this prestige stance similar to that of the Super Powers, and she naturally showed a keen interest in halting proliferation. De Gaulle's observation that those who have a monopoly of power always consider it the best arrangement is not without an element of truth in it. It can be stated that the Russian interest in NPT was unmistakably fraught with the expectation that it would obstruct an MLF/ANF

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4 ENDC/PV. 325, 24 August 1967.

5 Quester, The Politics of Nuclear Proliferation (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins, 1973), p. 152.

accord which would have given Germans some role in the nuclear policy of the alliance. The British interest in NPT too was marked by an eagerness which apart from its expected remittance of a high dividend in British domestic politics, was also associated with the memories of its 'Non nuclear Club' proposal of 1959 in the Labour mind.<sup>6</sup> This attitude was also mixed with the desire for a reconciliation with the Soviet Union "which would help offset the eroding influence of Vietnam upon the East-West relationship."<sup>7</sup> Apart from these psychological impulses, there were practical considerations too. Great Britain might have felt relieved to get hold of an escape clause which would help it avoid embarrassing requests for direct or indirect assistance on nuclear weapons. The IAEA safeguards would effectively guard against any request for a particular form of equipment that India might want; the NPT would finally terminate any expectation for a supply of nuclear warheads that Australia might entertain keeping in mind the tests that Britain had carried out on Australian soil in the 1950s. Despite the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Britain lost no time in ratifying the treaty on 27 November 1968 and in the process became the first nuclear weapons State to do so. The crux of the treaty lay in Article I and II and so far as

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6 Pierre, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

7 *Ibid.*

these essentials are concerned the Big Two stuck to their position despite suggestions of modifications. After the revised draft was presented in the ENDC on 24 August 1967, the United Kingdom strengthened the hands of the co-Chairmen by discouraging even minor amendments on the plea that the text of Articles I and II was the result of very long and complicated negotiations and the delicate balance established should not be disturbed.<sup>8</sup> Articles I and II of the first U.S. draft of 17 August 1965 had not been to the full satisfaction of Britain. By Article I each of the nuclear States party to the Treaty was forbidden transfer of any nuclear weapons to the national control of any non-nuclear State, either directly, or indirectly through a military alliance, and "each undertakes not to take any other action which would cause an increase in the total number of States and other organizations having independent power to use nuclear weapons." Secondly, the nuclear States were forbidden not to assist any non-nuclear State in the manufacture of nuclear weapons. By Article 2, the non-nuclear States were put under corresponding obligations.

Here the intra-nuclear weapon power dispute began. After the first draft of the United States was tabled on 17 August 1965, the Soviet delegate Tsarapkin asked whether in

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8 ENDC/PV. 337, 10 October 1967, p. 19.

the opinion of the U.S.A., the draft treaty would exclude both direct access by means of national ownership, control and operation and also indirect access by means of the MLF or any similar body.<sup>9</sup> He also asked point blank whether on this latter point the treaty would preclude the creation of an MLF in which West German military or non-military personnel would participate. Before any official reply came on the part of the US delegate, the U.K. delegate, Lord Chalfont hastened to affirm that "it is no part of its purpose to place an embargo on all arrangements for sharing the control of nuclear weapons within NATO or any other alliance so far as they are not dis-  
seminatory...."<sup>10</sup> Expressing concern about Soviet anxiety he said further that "my Government is anxious to eliminate any possibility of dissemination... Indeed, it is our view that the present draft of articles I and II of the treaty does leave open one possibility which may have more theoretical than practical importance but which we would prefer to see closed."<sup>11</sup> The United Kingdom firmly expressed its opposition to any formulation for the Western Alliance which would enable making use of nuclear weapons subject to a majority vote as distinct from a unanimous vote, or a vote in which the existing nuclear

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9 ENDC/PV. 224, 17 August 1965, p. 40.

10 ENDC/PV. 225, 19 August 1965, p. 10.

11 Ibid.

countries had the power to veto. In the opinion of Britain Articles I and II did not rule out the possibility that such an association of States might be set up, and expressed their desire to change the actual wording so that dissemination was "interpreted in the strictest possible way."<sup>12</sup>

It may be useful here to give a brief sketch of the proposed MLF. This idea originated in 1960 in the United States with a view to pacifying West Germany's nuclear ambition which in the light of a British and French nuclear status was considered inevitable. It would carry out West Germany's nuclear education while it would not let her have an independent national nuclear force. American officials stressed that the creation of an MLF inside the NATO will not constitute an act of proliferation but would consolidate European unity, would counterbalance French intransigence and be an "organic experiment in cooperation".<sup>13</sup> This force, at first multinational, was supposed to become multilateral, i.e. mixed manned, each unit containing elements of different nationalities. Originally it was to consist of three US nuclear propelled submarines, Britain's Bomber Command, and West German, Belgian, French, Italian, Dutch and Turkish fighter bombers, placed under the direct command of SHAPE-SACEUR. Though

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12 Ibid., p. 11.

13 George Ball, The Discipline of Power (Boston, Atlantic-Little, Brown & Co., 1968), p. 206 et seq.

integrated in theory, in effect it would have fully been under the U.S. control. The MLF would have been jointly financed and controlled by those members of NATO who were willing to join and would have had two vetoes - one to be exercised by the U.S.A., and the other by all the other participants collectively. Subsequently, the plan was modified to include Polaris submarines and then replaced by a plan for a fleet of 25 surface vessels.

British lukewarm response to the MLF scheme was due to several factors. First, the Polaris fleet to be contributed to the force would require a heavy additional expense on the existing figure. Secondly, as discussed earlier, the system of veto to be exercised by all the participants would give non-nuclear members a virtual control over the use of nuclear weapons and Britain was very reluctant to concede to West Germany this share of the nuclear trigger. Even if only the United States retained a veto it was considered doubtful whether this would satisfy German ambition for a share in the nuclear strategy for long. If the United States eventually withdrew from the MLF under a "European clause", which the U.S. officials hinted might come about after Europe was more organized in unity, this would lead to a further disengagement of the U.S.A. from the defence of Europe. The MLF would also make Russia apprehensive and adverse which would block the progress of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Finally, it was



disliked as purporting to be a further divisive force within the Western alliance, so long as France refused to participate.<sup>14</sup>

The Labour Government after it came into office proposed an alternative <sup>scheme</sup> proposal - the Atlantic Nuclear Force in 1965. The ANF was to consist of British and American naval elements and a much smaller number of surface vessels whose crews and command would have been supplied by all the other participating countries. The British national element, the Polaris submarines and the V-bombers would remain with the force 'as long as the Alliance lasts'. The British contribution of Polaris fleet would remain nationally manned and controlled. It tried to solve the problem of veto by introducing a system of multiple veto to give all the member countries a veto over the release of any of the nuclear weapons of the ANF. Labour Britain opposed the concept of a "European clause" and to any planning which would withdraw the American veto over strategic weapons. Unlike MLF, it would not have imposed a fresh extra expenditure on Britain. In Geneva, when the Swedish delegate raised the question of retaining national control over nuclear weapons, Lord Chalfont quoted Prime Minister Wilson as saying in the House of Commons on 25 January 1966 that "we are seeking, on terms which will stop the spread of nuclear weapons, to have the so-called independent

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14 A.J. Pierre, op. cit., p. 246.

British deterrent internationalized within the alliance."<sup>15</sup>  
 However, Soviet Union continued its diplomatic offensive against any MLF/ANF scheme, arguing that the creation of a new naval force would amount to an act of proliferation. The British were set on NPT, however, and the British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart on his visit to Washington in October 1965, made it clear to Secretary Rusk that the U.K. would drop the ANF if the Soviets would agree to a treaty.<sup>16</sup>  
 At the ENDC, Lord Chalfont, who had taken a considerable share in the formulation of the ANF scheme a year back, stated that the retention of a European clause in the American draft treaty was undesirable. This British move in attaching a priority to non-dissemination over the ANF, struck an accord with the then still minority opinion within the US Government where people like Senator Frank Church pointed out the necessity of working towards a European political settlement by not insisting upon the retention of the European clause and heavily underlined the importance of NPT.<sup>17</sup>

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15 ENDC/PV. 244, 1 March 1966, p. 8.

16 The Times, 12 October 1965; Henry Brandon, "Shifts in Nuclear Aims", Sunday Times, 17 October 1965.

17 Lord Chalfont, "The Politics of Disarmament", Survival (Institute of Strategic Studies, London), vol. VIII, no. 2, November 1966, pp. 342-49; William C. Foster, "New Directions in Arms Control and Disarmament", Foreign Affairs (Council on Foreign Relations, New York), vol. XLIII, no. 4, July 1965, pp. 587-601; Senator Frank Church, "US Policy and the 'New Europe'", Foreign Affairs, op. cit., vol. XLV, no. 1, October 1966, pp. 49-57.

The British Foreign Office, however, had always maintained that the German drive for a nuclear role and for equality with Britain was not so hard as Washington claimed. The lessening of nuclear interest in Germany, relaxation in U.S. pressure for deciding over MLF, the successful prospects of a non-Proliferation Treaty etc. led Britain to cease giving any serious consideration to the ANF any more and a new approach to nuclear sharing emerged.

The U.S. Defence Secretary McNamara in November 1965 and December 1966 referred to the creation of a nuclear planning group within the NATO (initially it was known as the McNamara Committee) consisting of two permanent bodies, a nuclear defence committee to supervise the general policy and a seven member nuclear planning group, which would report to the former Committee.<sup>18</sup> The British policy-makers found it quite suitable as "this consultative arrangement left the British nuclear force in the same unfettered position it was under the previous Conservative government."<sup>19</sup>

Lord Chalfont observed with satisfaction that it would impose no 'hardware solution' for European unity (as Henry Kissinger put it), would provide nuclear guarantee to West Germany and other countries of Europe, and was unlikely to be rejected by the Soviet Union.<sup>20</sup>

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18 Hearings, 1966, pp. 82-83.

19 Pierre, op. cit., p. 283.

20 Lord Chalfont, op. cit., pp. 347-48.

The American amendments of 21 March 1966 had taken into account British objections to the draft of 17 August 1965. By Article I Nuclear States undertake "not to transfer nuclear weapons into the national control of non-nuclear weapon States...not to take any other action which would cause an increase in the total number of States and associations of States having control of nuclear weapons."<sup>21</sup> The term "control" was defined as "the right to or capability of firing nuclear weapons without the additional agreement of a State possessing nuclear weapons"<sup>22</sup> and it specifically laid down in much clearer terms that the acts prohibited herein are not to be committed either directly or indirectly "...through third States or association of States, or through units of the armed forces or military personnel of any State, even if such units or personnel are under the command of a military alliance." By employing a policy of persuasion and persistence Britain thus had her way in exercising some restraint on 'American impetuosity'. The Soviet-American proposal put forward in the ENDC on 27 August 1967, implied in its Articles I and II, "not to "transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosives directly or indirectly" and the word control is not qualified by the adjective 'national'. "It would be

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21 ENDC/152.

22 Ibid.

concluded from this" observes G. Fisher, "that the text of the proposal allows the creation neither of a European deterrent force (even with the participation of a nuclear State, and even dependent on the veto of such a State) nor of an organization like the MLF."<sup>23</sup> This is corroborated by Secretary Dean Rusk's statement on 10 July 1968, before the Foreign Relations Committee that the Treaty banned all transfers of nuclear weapons to any one at all, including<sup>a</sup> multi-lateral body.<sup>24</sup>

With regard to the so called European option, the treaty seems rather ambiguous. It seems the Germans were told that the U.S. will not be against a European force while at the same time Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. were being assured by the USA to the contrary.<sup>25</sup> While some members in the ENDC interpreted the provisions as excluding the European option, Dean Rusk said "It does not deal with the problem of European unity, and would not bar succession by a new federated European State to the nuclear status of one of its former components." 25a

As the United States withdrew its plan of MLF, the Soviet Union also removed its objections to West German nuclear

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23 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 74.

24 Hearings 1968, pp. 5-6.

25 W.B. Bader, The U.S. and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons (New York, Pegasus, 1968), pp. 45, 48, 59-62.

25a Hearings 1968, pp. 5-6, 51-52.

participation through the new nuclear planning organization. According to the Treaty, nuclear States were those that had manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other explosive nuclear system before 1 January 1967.<sup>27</sup> This meant that the nuclear status of the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, France and China was recognized and safeguarded. Secondly, by Article I, a nuclear State party to the Treaty is forbidden to assist, encourage or induce a non-nuclear State (party to the Treaty or not) to manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons - but the possibility was open that a State already nuclear could seek further assistance from a more advanced nuclear State to develop more sophisticated weapons. The drafting of the text of Article I was thus in accordance with the spirit of the United States internal legislation which allowed a continuance of the "special relationship" with the United Kingdom. The official statements said that the U.S. assistance to Great Britain did not extend to the transfer of nuclear weapons or their control but was confined to scientific exchange and close cooperation. That was the only exchange permissible under the Treaty between one nuclear State and another. It was said that American assistance to Britain in nuclear armaments had been curtailed and that it consisted of mainly of Vectors which were not in themselves nuclear

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✓ 1/1963, 7 May 1963  
Hearings 1966, p. 742.

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Art. IX (3).

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 weapons. But under the Anglo-American Agreements of 1958, Britain received fissile material (mainly enriched uranium) to be used for military purposes, and one wonders whether the continuation of these Agreements after the entry into force of the non-Proliferation Treaty, would not be contrary to the provision of Article I.<sup>29</sup>

So far as the question of facing the criticism of the non-nuclear States was concerned, Britain behaved exactly as the two Super Powers did; and if anything, her stance was more royal than the King. Lord Chalfont gave full vent to his oratorical skill hammering in the essential righteousness of the Treaty as against the effort of certain non-nuclear States (India being the foremost of them) to gang up against the treaty, and very often the battle of words in the ENDC bordered on acrimoniousness.

Articles I and II like many other provisions in the Treaty perpetuated an inequality between the nuclear States and the non-nuclear States, the first was to renounce the transfer of nuclear weapons only while the latter was to give up their military nuclear option altogether. Cuba pointed out that it ignored the danger of imperialist concepts of local warfare as directed against the Third World since 1945,

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28 Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Hearings Before the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, 1968, p. 89; Hearings 1969, pp. 355-56.

29 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 66.

and added the hypothetical risk that the U.S. might be legal-<sup>30</sup>  
 ized to employ tactical nuclear weapons in this kind of war.  
 Non-nuclear States in the ENDC complained that it imposed  
 considerable sacrifice on them, without any corresponding  
 sacrifice on the part of the nuclear States. The Treaty  
 sanctioned discrimination in law for the first time, they  
 argued.

India put forth that unless the nuclear Powers under-  
 took certain sacrifices in their nuclear arsenal too, the  
 problem of proliferation could not be settled and imbalance  
 in the world could not be abolished.<sup>31</sup> It is true that the  
 Non-Proliferation Treaty should better be called a Non-  
 Dissemination Treaty since it leaves the problem of vertical  
 proliferation untouched.

The British delegation hardly ever admitted that the  
 Treaty was one-sided. Once Lord Chalfont even implied that  
 while in the Partial Test Ban Treaty, the nuclear Powers had  
 accepted a greater burden and while that of the non-nuclear  
 powers was 'only theoretical', the non-nuclear States should  
 not fall them at the NPT.<sup>32</sup> But who was he trying to hood-  
 wink? Perhaps British eloquence had run short of any tenable  
 argument at that moment. The Moscow Treaty banning nuclear

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30 A/C.1/PV. 1566.

31 ENDC/PV. 370.

32 ENDC/PV. 244, 1 March 1966, p. 6.



tests in the atmosphere, underwater and in the outer-space was agreed upon in direct negotiations between the three nuclear powers because their need for further tests in these three environments had been reduced and "because certain scientific, technological and political compulsions led the powers concerned to legitimize the existing situation in which their superiority and preponderance could remain in tact."<sup>33</sup> If anything, the 1963 clause prohibiting atmospheric tests made the production, development, and the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear weapon States even more costly and more difficult. Who took the 'greater burden' in the Partial Test Ban Treaty, would, therefore, better have been left unsaid. The British stand on the need for balanced obligations between the parties to the Treaty was formulated along the following lines. So far as Her Majesty's Government is concerned, it believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty is only a single step in a much wider disarmament and non-proliferation strategy. It should be followed by such measures as a comprehensive test ban treaty, a freeze on nuclear delivery vehicles, a cut-off in the production of fissile material for military use, reduction in the existing weapon stockpiles etc. However in reply to Alva Myrdal's (Sweden) statement putting priority on collateral measures of disarmament, Lord Chalfont hastened to say, "I agree entirely with the representative of

the United States that it would be wrong to make other partial measures of disarmament pre-requisite to a non-Proliferation Treaty, or, to be more specific, to tie an agreement on the 'cut-off' too closely to the non-proliferation negotiation.<sup>34</sup> The blame for procrastination with regard to these issues, he put squarely on 'Soviet intransigence'. However to put off the treaty when the emergence of China as a potential nuclear power had shown how precarious the existing strategic balance could be, was in the British opinion 'to make the best enemy of the good'.

Going into a literary trance, Lord Chalfont even quoted Shakespeare and cited the prophetic words of Brutus in Julius Caesar to say that unless the ENDC could stop and set back the nuclear arms race before many more months had passed, one would have little to look forward to but shallows and miseries.<sup>35</sup> To persuade further he said, "If the non-nuclear powers of the world, and especially those that are non-aligned, cease to look upon nuclear weapons as an evil and begin to look upon them instead as a symbol of prestige and power, to be acquired or renounced simply on ground of narrow national expediency, then we shall be lost".<sup>36</sup> He

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34 ENDC/PV. 281, 11 August 1966, p. 17.

35 ENDC/PV. 225, 19 August 1965, p. 5.

36 Ibid., p. 5.

admitted that the idea that nuclear weapons were tickets of admission to some powerful exclusive cabal was largely the fault of the existing nuclear powers - the U.K. being one of them. But this was accepted as a "fait accompli" to which nothing can be done. However, in the event of another country acquiring nuclear weapons the nuclear powers may feel pressurized to transfer nuclear weapons or their control in pursuit of some illusory balance of power and as a result will feel obliged to undertake a compensating increase in their own nuclear armoury thus adding new dimensions to the arms race.<sup>37</sup> Again, to justify the lack of substantial nuclear disarmament measures among the nuclear powers Lord Chalfont said that although these might make it easier for non-nuclear powers to sign a non-Proliferation Treaty, it would also make it more difficult for the nuclear powers to extend a guarantee to a non-nuclear power against the possibility of attack or blackmail by a nuclear power that had not signed the non-Proliferation Treaty.<sup>38</sup> In this context the position of India and China was often made use of by British policy-makers and when Labour retained the national nuclear force in 1964, the need for security guarantee to India against the Chinese threat was cited as one of the compelling factors towards such

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37 Ibid., pp. 7-8.

38 Lord Chalfont, The Politics of Disarmament, op. cit., p. 348.

a decision. Lord Chalfont referred to an easing of tension between East-West relations in Europe and emphasized the need to develop and coordinate rational foreign policies according to this. The trouble spot of the future in the British view will lie no more in Central Europe but in the problems of the Third World countries and a rapprochement in political, strategic as well as economic relations between the European countries is "no longer simply an option of foreign policy. It is an imperative historical necessity."<sup>39</sup> The theory of white man's burden thus became very convenient again to justify policies which had become expedient for national self-interest.

This trend was echoed in the ENDC too, and Fred Mulley, the then British delegate warmly endorsed the views of his East European colleague Goldblat of Poland to impress upon the nuclear have-nots how greatly the treaty would help solve their security problems. By inhibiting the spread of nuclear weapons it would reduce instability thereby promoting the security of non-nuclear States in general. To the criticism that the treaty purported a threat to the security of non-nuclear weapon States by perpetuating their have-not status, the British delegate's view was that even after acquiring nuclear weapons a State might find its security diminished. He argued that "the military evaluation of nuclear capability goes much beyond the capacity to produce a nuclear bomb and

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39 Ibid.

includes a consideration of the character of the nuclear weapons available to a State as well as the means of delivery at its disposal. As we know, the problems in terms of sophistication and cost of the delivery system are as great as, or greater than, the problems of military nuclear technology itself."<sup>40</sup>

To the anxiety felt by some non-nuclear powers that the loss of the option to make nuclear weapons could prove a source of weakness, the U.K. delegation sought to pacify them by suggesting assurances from the nuclear powers to protect the security of the signatory States, to be provided, not within the treaty itself but perhaps within the framework of the United Nations.<sup>41</sup>

In the ENDC discussions, following the tabling of two drafts by the USA and the USSR in 1965 and the US amendment in 1966 some non-nuclear countries expressed apprehension that the treaty might inhibit the spread and the development of peaceful nuclear technology. Britain maintained that "the assurances which have been expressed by each of the nuclear weapon States represented on this Committee should make it impossible for any of those States to adopt a restrictive attitude once a treaty comes into force" and categorically stated that as one of the nuclear weapon States, "it is

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40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

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certainly not our intention". In the revised draft, in Article IV as also in the preamble, the nuclear Powers made this point clear which was not so in either of the two draft proposals presented by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1966, in the ENDC.

On the problem of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, the British stand was put forward in the light of their own experience in nuclearism. A "peaceful nuclear explosion" implied a programme of using nuclear explosives for engineering purposes, such as digging canals or creating oil deposits - what is called in the United States, the "plowshare project". Some of the non-nuclear weapon States were of the opinion that a provision to ban these peaceful nuclear explosions in a non-Proliferation Treaty would deprive them of an important branch of civil nuclear technology and engineering. Lord Chalfont argued time and again in the ENDC that in the present state of technological development peaceful and military nuclear explosive devices (both implying an uncontrolled use of nuclear energy, either by fission, fusion, or a combination of both), are totally indistinguishable; and pointed out that "a nuclear device which can be used to move a million tons of earth for engineering purposes can also, given an effective means of delivery, be used to annihilate a city of a million people." For this reason in the opinion of the U.K. "a treaty which

permitted the unrestricted use of nuclear devices for peaceful purposes would contain a serious loophole, which could fatally undermine its stability."<sup>43</sup> Besides, the United Kingdom delegation consistently expressed doubts whether the proposition would be safe or economic in the near future.<sup>44</sup> Fred Mulley told the Geneva Committee "the expert opinions made available informally to members of delegations in the spring seemed rather sceptical about the practical prospects for peaceful explosions in the foreseeable future." He further discouraged plowshare projects by arguing that apart from entailing a staggering expenditure it might also clash with "some of the uses to which this technique might hypothetically be applied with the provisions of the partial test ban treaty." The British delegate persisted that the diversion of scarce resources of material and skilled manpower to a limited, costly and possibly fruitless endeavour, when vast possibilities of reactor technology were there to be developed, would not be a likely course of action for Britain, "but if we should do so we shall make our contribution under the terms of this article."<sup>45</sup> About the criticism from non-nuclear quarters that the advantages flowing from 'spin-off' (the technological advance which is gained in the civil field of nuclear energy

43 Ibid.

44 Lord Chalfont, House of Lords, Debates, 8 March 1967.

45 ENDC/PV. 358, 23 January 1968.

from having a military programme) would be denied to the signatories of the NPT, the British delegate said if British experience was any guide there was very little, if any, "spin-off" and the two techniques were entirely different. It believed the spin-off argument to be overplayed. An amendment to the earlier draft was suggested by Mexico suggesting positive obligations on the part of the nuclear powers with regard to peaceful explosions to be incorporated into the treaty. The British representative opposed it saying that the proposed amendment would impose upon the United Kingdom as a nuclear weapon power obligations which, in the foreseeable future at least, the British Government may not be in a position to fulfil.

In his statement in the ENDC on 10 October 1967 the British representative had recommended that the treaty should contain a formal commitment in appropriate wording to make available any benefits that might eventually arise from the peaceful applications of nuclear explosions.<sup>46</sup> The complete revised text of the treaty tabled by the Soviet Union and the USA at the ENDC on 18 January 1968, contained such a commitment in Article V of the treaty. The British delegation confirmed in the Geneva Committee that the British Government would "cooperate in every way possible on the elaboration of a separate agreement to deal with the details and arrangements

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46 ENDC/PV. 337, 10 October 1967, p. 15.



by which the benefits of the application of nuclear explosives to peaceful purposes will be made available to all."<sup>47</sup>

In its efforts to quieten the voices of dissent within the Committee asking for a balancing of obligation between the nuclear and non-nuclear signatories, the British delegation suggested on 10 October 1967, that of the measures previously listed in the ninth and eleventh preamble paragraphs the most logical one to transfer to the operative part of the treaty was that relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race. Article VI in the revised draft wrote down in treaty language the obligation to negotiate further measures of disarmament.

Another suggestion of the British delegation was to provide for a review conference to be held five years after the treaty came into force, which would review the matters dealt with in the preamble to the treaty along with the purposes and provisions of the treaty itself. On his statement made on 23 January 1968, commenting on the revised draft, Fred Mulley observed that the preamble was still wider than the new Article VI in the disarmament field, and asked the co-Chairmen to consider inserting an amendment in the text providing for an examination of these further disarmament issues by the said review conference.

With regard to Article VIII dealing with amendments to the treaty, the British delegation agreed that along with

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47 Ibid.

the provision for veto on amendments which could be exercised by the parties represented on the IAEA Board of Governors, there was also the option to accept or reject any amendment for itself. While an opinion was expressed that such a permissive clause would create instability in the treaty, the British representative recognized the legitimacy of the reluctance of countries to commit themselves at the time of signing a treaty to future obligations stemming from amendments to that treaty which they could not foresee or control.

The British delegation also agreed with the recommendation in Article IX that the number of ratifications by non-nuclear weapon signatories be fixed at forty.

In regard to Article X providing for a conference to be convened twenty-five years after the entry into force of the treaty to decide whether the treaty shall continue in force indefinitely or to be extended for additional fixed periods, the United Kingdom would have preferred the provision for a treaty of indefinite duration as in the previous draft of 24 August 1967.

The British representative also felt the need to provide for some security assurances to be given to non-nuclear weapon States, as a kind of guarantee against nuclear attack or nuclear threat.

The revised text was presented in the shape of two

identical drafts on 18 January 1968, and apart from incorporating an Article about controls, it included eight of the amendments proposed by members of the Committee. Taking note of further criticism, the two co-Chairmen agreed on 11 March 1968 to revise their draft on three points. The preamble was furnished with a new paragraph concerning a comprehensive test ban as the Swedish delegation had suggested. Articles VI (Disarmament) and VIII (Review Conferences) were modified in accordance with the suggested amendments by Britain and Sweden. By June 1968, Declarations were also made in identical terms by the representatives of the U.K., the U.S.A., and the U.S.S.R. offering security guarantees to non-nuclear States acceding to the Treaty.

So far as Article III dealing with the question of safeguards was concerned, it brought into full play the interaction of her special interest within the Western alliance. Britain was soon caught in the dilemma between its long-standing joint sponsorship with the American draft proposals and the opposition brewing among some of the Common Market countries as well as of Euratom, one of the Common Market institutions that Britain wanted to join.

In the beginning, the American and British versions of the draft treaty contained provisions for international inspection to verify that civil nuclear reactors in the

signatory countries were not to be diverted to military use. There was no inspection clause in the Soviet draft. In February 1967 when the negotiations were under way for the agreement on a joint U.S.-Soviet draft proposal, the United States and Britain had insisted on the inclusion in the treaty of a clause for inspection by the International Atomic Energy Authority in Vienna. The Soviet Union still maintained that they were ready to accept the treaty without any form of inspection. When it came to the knowledge of the EEC countries that the U.S.A. was proposing IAEA inspection, they immediately took issue with it, and accused the great Powers of trying to divide the world into nuclear haves and have-nots. While West Germany insisted that IAEA inspection would expose its civilian nuclear plant to industrial espionage by Russia or its satellites, Euratom was of the opinion that the IAEA would encroach upon its own territory, interfering with its inspection role within the EEC. As a compromise the United States introduced a proposal that the Euratom would continue to inspect nuclear plant in the EEC countries for another three years more. By that time it was hoped that some arrangements with the IAEA would be hit upon and in case of no agreement till then, IAEA would take over. This compromise proposal failed to win the approval of the Euratom. The Soviet Union on the other hand, told the U.S. representative in the ENDC that it cannot agree to such local "self-inspection", and

started insisting on the provision for inspection and specifically on the need to have IAEA controls. A British columnist remarked, "The Russians have evidently seized a great diplomatic opportunity and the U.S. and Britain are caught in a trap, largely of their own making."<sup>50</sup>

The provision for safeguards which came to be identified with IAEA controls unleashed a veritable storm within the Western Alliance and coming on the eve of her application for entry into the Common Market, Britain's position got the most precarious. Opinion within Britain started expressing doubts as to the advisability of pushing the Non-Proliferation Treaty so hard in the face of such confirmed opposition from some of the Common Market countries. Faced with an indifferent French stance on the British admissibility, West Germany had to become the best bet for supporting the British application, and it would not do for Britain to treat West Germany as if it was an Nth country. A subtle change became expedient in the solid British thrust for a NPT along the Super Power line. Lord Chalfont made a statement in the Lords with regard to this issue and after mentioning that he was going to Brussels shortly with a view to discuss some of these problems with the European Atomic Energy Commission, he said: "So far as safeguards are concerned, Euratom already operates a very effective system, and we certainly should not wish to see the Euratom system disrupted."

Nor could we support any international agreement that disrupted European cooperation in the peaceful development of nuclear energy. Indeed, as potential members of the European Economic Community it would scarcely be in our interests to do so, even if we were only looking at this problem in the context of narrow self-interest."<sup>51</sup> As Lord Chalfont further elaborated, the British endeavour henceforth was to be directed towards reaching an agreement in which both the systems, the IAEA and the Euratom would be able to work side by side in harmony.

A change in British approach was first visible when Lord Chalfont was replaced by a more moderate person in the ENDC; at the same time the Indian ambassador Trivedi was moved from Geneva to Vienna and it had been described as a mutual de-escalation of the pro- and anti-NPT sides. More serious in implication was the British decision to enter into a joint collaboration project with the Netherlands and West Germany to develop centrifuge processes for the enrichment of Uranium. In Britain the whole issue was projected as commercial and technological while the military and political implications were underplayed. In the United States the main concern was focussed on keeping it secret, so that ~~its~~<sup>the U.S.</sup> near monopoly on

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51 Lord Chalfont, House of Lords, Debates, 8 March 1967, reproduced in Arms Control and Disarmament, Notes on Current Developments, issued by the Foreign Office.

the enrichment of uranium and supply of reactor fuel may not be seriously jeopardized by a wide diffusion of the knowledge of the simplified process. The centrifuge method, if successful, would produce enriched uranium at a much lesser cost than the prevalent gaseous diffusion method. Workable on a small scale, it could be progressively built over a period of time, and as such are easily concealable. Thirdly, it could be adopted from the early stages of uranium enrichment that is required for the nuclear reactor to a higher enrichment stage which would make it possible to build a hydrogen bomb very easily.

Politically, it means "Britain placing its weight on the opposite side of the negotiating scale, strengthening rather than weakening Germany's ability to be slow in accepting American advice or IAEA jurisdiction."<sup>52</sup> The British and Dutch motivation may be mainly economic in it but work on this field is also under way in West Germany, Japan and Australia where the choice for a future military option may have been kept in view. While Britain relies on the political power of the NPT,<sup>53</sup> the NPT provisions have not introduced strong enough rules to govern all the technical factors involved in nuclear dissemination.<sup>54</sup>

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52 Quester, op. cit., p. 153.

53 Leonard Beaton, "Controlling the Atom Menace", Survival, vol. XI, March 1969, pp. 74-77.

54 "Who Shall have the Bomb", The Times (London), Editorial, 23 January 1969.

Chapter V

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT,



## Chapter V

### GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

General and complete disarmament (GCD) has been the proclaimed objective of all governments, for a long time now. Even if the military advisers of any government have never equated such a scheme with the problem of security, the heads of governments and their diplomat representatives have never failed to reiterate their faith in this beautiful objective, as a kind of harmless goal, a constant incentive to proceed further. The British Foreign Secretary, R.A. Butler once affirmed at the Geneva Committee: "It is not an empty phrase when the Queen's Speech, which sets out the Government's programme for each session of Parliament, regularly refers to disarmament as one of the first aims of our policy..."<sup>1</sup> If this is true of Britain, it is the same for other governments as well. "Having committed themselves to ends which are at variance with the established national security policy of their countries", Beaton points out, "the disarmament delegates of each are under an obligation to find serious disagreements about the means."<sup>2</sup> This has not been difficult. While the Soviet Union accuses the West of trying to use disarmament as a means to legalize espionage, Britain and USA, persisted

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1 ENDC/PV. 169, 25 February 1964, p. 8.

2 Leonard Beaton, The Reform of Power, op. cit., p. 81.

in their view that without effective verification and inspection of what remains after reductions, they cannot sign off the security of today for an unsubstantiated disarmed world of tomorrow. The British representatives have time and again mentioned in the ENDC that effective plans for disarmament have run aground on the rocks of verification - this technical impediment being projected as the main obstruction to total disarmament. They substantiated it with other arguments such as an improved political climate which will eventually induce nations to accept the risks and responsibilities that go with comprehensive disarmament. The official British view on this was expressed by Foreign Secretary Butler, in 1963 that "agreement on the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament cannot be easily or quickly achieved... Supreme national interests are at stake in the process of disarmament... nations are still divided by suspicion, distrust, grave political differences and what is known as ideological struggle."<sup>3</sup> Thus, in British opinion, progress towards general and complete disarmament should be matched by progress in other fields towards the reduction of international tension. Needless to point out that even the most optimistic assessments of the most favourable political climate over a century is unlikely ever to produce political conditions in which the major powers of the

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3 ENDC/PV. 169, op. cit., p. 7.

world would agree to empty their national arsenals substantially. Lord Chalfont's call for realistic definitions in the sphere of GCD in a somewhat later British stand (in 1966) makes this point explicit. He defined GCD as "a world structure in which the size and power of national military establishments have been progressively decreased to a level at which they will be capable only of meeting the requirements of internal security and providing a residual ability to defend communities against attack from outside".<sup>4</sup> This would impose upon the international community, the simultaneous task of providing an international peace-keeping force and this is, as the British Minister for disarmament said, "a priori a system which will involve a substantial element of armed force". The world institution in whose command such a 'substantial' force would be placed cannot be anything but a world government. Apart from serious doubts whether this would be technically possible, it is equally difficult to imagine any of the permanent members of the Security Council accepting a political body militarily dominant over them. Much of earlier British thinking on GCD at any rate, proceeded along these lines. Harold Macmillan when Minister of Defence told the House of Commons in 1955 that "control must provide effective international or, if we like, supranational authority invested with real power. Hon. members

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<sup>4</sup> Lord Chalfont, The Politics of Disarmament, op. cit., p. 343.

may say that this is elevating the United Nations, or whatever may be the authority, into something like world government.... In the long run, this is the only way out for mankind."<sup>5</sup> Duncan Sandys said the same thing in the British Defence White Paper of 1958: "The ultimate aim must be comprehensive disarmament by all nations, coupled with comprehensive inspection and control by a world authority. Nothing less than this makes sense."<sup>6</sup> Current British thinking on this, rules out the pure notion of total disarmament as a vision pertaining to a kind of 'moral catharsis' without any practical relevance to international system, but retains emphasis on the role of peace-keeping force. In the early 1960s, discussions in the ENDC were predominantly occupied with the achievement of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. Under General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI), the ENDC was given an agreed mandate - the goal of GCD under effective control. The US-Soviet Joint Statement of Agreed Principles of 1961 formed the basis of subsequent negotiations on it. The USSR submitted its "draft treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control" (ENDC/2) on March 1962, and the USA, presented its "outline of basic provisions of a treaty on general and complete disarmament" in April 1962 (ENDC/30). The Geneva Committee got down to examine both the

5 House of Commons, Debates, 2 March 1955, col. 2815.

6 London, H.M.S.O. Cmd. 363.

drafts in the light of the Agreed Principles and tried to ascertain what was common between the two plans.

To give a brief outline of the Agreed Principles, it recognized GCD as the goal of disarmament negotiations. It stated that in a disarmed world, war should no longer be an instrument for settling international disputes. It contemplated a UN peace-keeping force, and provided for the retention of internal (non-nuclear) forces for the maintenance of law and order by all States. It provided for the disbandment of armed forces, elimination of all stockpiles of nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons and the cessation of their production, the dismantling of military establishments and training institutions, the elimination of armament production, and of the means of delivery of the weapons of mass destruction and discontinuance of military expenditures. It envisaged progress in the field of disarmament in stages with specified time limits. It pointed out that at no stage should any State or group of States acquire military superiority or advantage over others. All disarmament measures should be implemented from beginning to end under strict and effective international control, etc. The present Soviet plan for GCD approaches it in terms of drastic reductions. It sets out in three short stages to abolish all forms of military power including armed forces, armaments, military bases, weapons of mass destruction retaining only some "police (militia) equipped with light firearms". All general staffs, military budgets and

armaments are converted or abolished "under strict and effective international control." The whole process is to be completed in four (later amended) to five years. The corresponding U.S. draft submitted on 18 April 1962 enjoyed full support from Britain, Canada and Italy, the three Western allies of the United States represented in the conference. Both the plans envisaged a three stage process of disarmament to be carried out under effective controls and provided for the establishment of an international disarmament control organization. While the Soviet plan proposed more drastic reductions in stage I and II, the U.S. plan believed in a process of gradual reduction by maintaining a nuclear deterrent till the end of the disarmament process. The U.S. plan would take nine to ten years to put into effect. (3 years for each stage I and II and an agreed period of unspecified time for the condition of stage III). While the USSR would reduce the armed forces of each of the two principal powers to 1.9 million in stage I and 1 million in stage II; the U.S. plan would reduce them to 2.1 million and 1.5 million respectively; the Soviet figures included civilian employees of the armed forces, those of the United States did not. The U.S.S.R. would eliminate all vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons in stage I, while the United States would spread the process over all three stages; the position was similar with regard to the elimination of nuclear weapons. The U.S.S.R. would agree on control and verification with regard to the

weapons being destroyed, whereas the U.S.A. considered it essential to inspect the weapons retained. The British and as such the whole Western approach thus recognized the problem of power in the disarmed world and they made it the agent of law. But in their plan they avoided the central question of the disarmament process as to who should possess decisive physical power in the end. The Soviet plan, on the other hand saw a disarmed world where equality has been established and 'extra-national power abolished to the point of anarchy'.

At the beginning of the ENDC sessions, the British representative suggested a useful procedure with regard to the two plans, namely to compare and adopt them where they were consistent with the Agreed Principles and to amend the rest until they conform.<sup>7</sup> According to the opinion of U.K., three basic principles should be considered essential in any plan for disarmament.<sup>8</sup> First was Point 5 in the Agreed Principles that "All measures of general and complete disarmament should be balanced and at no stage of the implementation of the treaty could any State or group of States gain military advantages and that security is ensured equally for all." (ENDC/5, p. 2) Second, verification lay at the heart of any disarmament measure to satisfy nations that they were not endangering their right to an independent existence.

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7 ENDC/PV. 5, 20 March 1962, p. 8.

8 ENDC/PV. 5, PV. 169, p. 8.

Third, in a disarmed world a fully effective international force would be essential for the security of all.

Questions relating to the elimination of the vehicles of delivery of nuclear weapons, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, foreign military bases, conventional weapons and armed forces; - all these were thus irrevocably bound up with the first principle of disarmament to which the British delegation adhered - i.e., the retention of a balance of deterrence till the final stage of the disarmament process. A brief formulation of the arguments extended in support of this principle with regard to each may be useful.

The Soviet Plan which included in stage I the total destruction of delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons and the dismantling of all foreign bases, meant, said Lord Home, "that Principle 5 to which the Soviet Union has subscribed is breached from the start."<sup>9</sup> The British delegation maintained throughout the negotiations that such a measure is fraught with imbalance as it would mean for Europe the return to America of all American troops in Europe including Britain, while the large Soviet conventional armies and equipment still loomed menacingly over the continent. To Britain, therefore, the U.S. scheme seemed reasonable which would provide for 30 per cent reduction of weapons right across the board and "the balance will be preserved in stage one and at all subsequent

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9      ENDC/PV 5, op. cit., p. 8.



stages until there is a total abolition of weapons - arms,  
men and bases."<sup>10</sup>

Referring to the question of elimination of the means of delivery the British delegate Godber said that the "proposals of Rusk were realistic in the extreme. Possibly they could be speeded up a bit..."<sup>11</sup> The time limit set by the U.S. proposal was thus considered negotiable by the U.K. delegation. Britain argued that it is right to divide the disarmament process into three stages. Though there is nothing sacrosanct about any of those stages, yet they should constitute a logical progression in a process of gradual and continual reduction. While the Soviet Union said that the West was seeking to maintain the risk of nuclear war to the very end of the process, the British delegation pointed out that by deliberately overloading the first stage the Soviet Union was seeking to prevent the process from starting at all.<sup>12</sup>

The British representative asked Soviet Union to insert a paragraph about international peace keeping forces in the preamble of the draft. Godber argued that nuclear weapons however horrible it was to contemplate, constituted a deterrent and quoted Khrushchev's statement referring to

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10 Ibid.

11 ENDC/PV. 11, 29 March 1962, p. 28.

12 ENDC/PV. 11, op. cit., PV. 120, 10 April 1963.

imperialism as "paper tiger with nuclear teeth" to show that so far as the balance of deterrent fear existed compromises were possible. A logical progress from this order of things would be to develop international capability in the same tempo as the national weapons are reduced with effective control "to such a degree that international measures for maintaining security will take the place of national measures."

On 22 October 1962 the Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko had agreed to carry on certain nuclear delivery vehicles from the first stage to the second [A/PV. 1127 (Provisional) p. 38]. The missiles to be retained would consist of ICBMs, anti-missile and anti-aircraft missiles, but a strictly limited number which "would make it difficult to use these weapons for aggression."<sup>13</sup> Tsarapkin, the Soviet delegate in the ENDC referring to the situation obtaining in the Soviet Stage II said that the retention by the USA and the Soviet Union of inter-continental missiles will deter an aggressor and the retention of anti-missile missiles and anti-aircraft missiles will protect the security of States in the event of such an aggression, and this would in effect make any concealment of armaments pointless. The Gromyko proposal was, therefore, interpreted by the British delegation as agreeing to two-thirds of the disarmament process taking place under the 'respective nuclear umbrellas' of the nuclear powers, and for

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13 A/C.1/PV.1267, p. 16.

one-third (meaning the second stage) the security of East and West should be protected by something close to the concept of minimum nuclear deterrent<sup>14</sup> (although Soviet Union was averse to mention the word 'deterrent' in this connection). The British representative welcomed this as a move towards the right direction and said that the principles underlining both the Western and Soviet proposal were much the same. However, as Michael Wright had also pointed out in the First Committee, in the opinion of Britain it would be necessary to retain into the third stage, rather than merely the second stage, measures proposed by the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup> Godber, the British representative emphasized the link between passing that critical stage in the disarmament process, i.e. when the nuclear deterrents were dismantled - and the establishment of adequate peace-keeping forces. Under the Gromyko proposal there were no provisions for establishing any peace-keeping forces until after the end of Stage II, that is, after the time when under the Soviet proposal, the deterrent will have been dismantled.<sup>16</sup> That would leave a dangerous gap. In the opinion of the U.K. the Gromyko proposal should be more appropriate in relation to the third stage rather than the second because

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14 ENDC/PV. 120, 10 April 1963, p. 15.

15 ENDC/PV. 92 (U.K.), 14 December 1962, p. 26.

16 ENDC/PV. 120, op. cit., p. 20.

"by that time the International Disarmament Organization will have been functioning for some time; we shall all, I trust, have gained substantial confidence from the way it is functioning, and by that stage it should not be so difficult for the Soviet Union to accept that greater and fuller degree of verification which would enable one to satisfy oneself about clandestine arms, just as much as about other matters."<sup>17</sup>

The inclusion of anti-missile missiles in the Soviet proposal was also opposed by U.K. The British representatives showed a real anxiety in their retention and pointed out its grave implications as would destroy the stability of the strategic balance and would set a dangerous momentum for further relentless search in devising newer and more ingenious systems and counter systems.<sup>18</sup> Needless to say, a wide deployment of anti-ballistic missile defence by the Soviet Union would reduce the viability of the British deterrent to a zero.

Another point on which the British representative disputed the Gromyko proposal was its concentration upon land-based missiles only being retained and reminded the Committee that sea-borne missiles had substantial advantages for both sides from the point of view of invulnerability. Since a vulnerable threat may be a positive invitation to pre-emptive

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17 ENDC/PV. 124, 24 April 1963, p. 24.

18 ENDC/PV. 112, 22 March 1963, pp. 9-10; ENDC/PV. 117, 3 April 1963, pp. 15-16.

attack, invulnerability of a particular weapon-system is very important. The U.K. disputed the Soviet contention that Polaris missiles fitted on nuclear submarines were weapons of surprise attack. It argued that the very fact that the U.S. was incurring vast expenses and diverting valuable scientific and technical effort to the development of sea-borne Polaris missiles and make them almost indefinitely mobile by providing them with nuclear propelled platforms, when the same missiles on unprotected land sites can be as effective an instrument of aggression, proved that they were aimed at a defensive role. Therefore, the British delegate asked Soviet Union to include sea-borne missiles in its list.<sup>19</sup> About nuclear delivery vehicles there cropped up another question which as the Polish delegate asked was whether the "atomic protection should consist of an equal number of missiles kept by the two sides".<sup>20</sup> The British expressed their opinion in favour of percentage reduction over a period of years. They said that since there was an uneasy balance of power, "one has to accept the position as its is and, pari passu on both sides and at the same time reduce until we come down near the level of zero".<sup>21</sup> Opposing the Polish delegate's arguments against percentage reduction the British

19 ENDC/PV. 124, op. cit., pp. 25-29.

20 ENDC/PV. 124, op. cit., p. 11.

21 Ibid., p. 22.

representative quoted statements of Marshal Malinovsky and Chairman Khrushchev that in the opinion of the Soviet Union, the West had neither qualitative nor quantitative superiority in ICBMs, and said that if there was a rough equality, percentage reduction should be the most realistic method as the U.K. saw it. The Soviet suggestion that almost all the defensive nuclear armoury of both the sides should be destroyed in the first stage of a disarmament treaty (eighteen months according to the Soviet proposal ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1) seemed unrealistic and of propaganda value rather than of disarmament value. On 19 September 1963, the USSR announced to the General Assembly its willingness to agree to such a retention of missiles by the USA, and the USSR until the end of the third stage of disarmament.

On the question concerning nuclear disarmament the United States submitted an amendment to its earlier draft (of 18 April 1962) relating to nuclear disarmament in the first stage of disarmament. It envisaged: (i) a cut-off in the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons; (ii) a reduction in nuclear stockpiles through transfers of substantial quantities of weapons grade U-235 to purposes other than use in nuclear weapons; (iii) States would undertake obligations with regard to the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons; and (iv) a nuclear test ban treaty if it had not been achieved by that time. The British delegate fully

supported this proposal. He said that although concerned mainly with Stage I measures it should be set clearly in the broad framework of the other problems especially verification problems involved in the complex field of nuclear disarmament as a whole and added that Stage I measures could not always be considered in complete isolation from Stage II and Stage III.<sup>22</sup>

The main concern of the nuclear Powers was the central risk that a batch of weapons could be taken from the present stockpiles and concealed indefinitely. The only method so far suggested with regard to this danger was detailed tracing of all the records of fissile material production. Britain welcomed the U.S. suggestion of setting up expert study groups on the feasibility and means for accomplishing the verified reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons and the halting of production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority submitted the results of many years of research to the ENDC on 31 August 1962.<sup>23</sup> This paper concluded that a) a control Organization could make sure that diversions of current production of plutonium did not exceed 1-2 per cent and on Uranium 235 one per cent; b) a control Organization would not be able to guarantee a British figure of past plutonium production to

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22 ENDC/PV. 138, p. 39.

23 ENDC/60; ENDC/PV 77, 31 August 1962, pp. 22-23.

within 10-15 per cent accuracy. (If it could be sure that records of electricity supplies to gaseous diffusion plants were accurate it would not be possible to falsify past U-235 production more than 5-10 per cent; if these records could not be traced, there might be a margin of 15-20 per cent; and (c) In other nuclear powers, it was likely that a control organ would be able to guarantee the number of weapons to within 10 to 20 per cent varying from country to country.

An important nuclear power could keep three or four secret stocks, each by different group of people using different methods. If a country like the USA maintained four minimum deterrent stocks of 250 weapons each, this would make a total of 1000 out of perhaps 100000 American weapons, which was 1 per cent. The Soviets could do the same without exceeding 3 per cent. Both these figures were well inside the lower limits set by the British study. The British representative pointed out three basic propositions arising out of the analysis in the U.K. working paper (ENDC/60). These were: a) that even after further detailed technical study, there would always be a serious margin of uncertainty in trying to account for past fissile material production; b) it would be possible for nuclear powers to hide and retain significant quantities of both fissile materials for weapons purposes and, possibly, the nuclear warheads themselves; and (c) it would, therefore, be unlikely to achieve complete, total nuclear disarmament until a peace-keeping machinery was established which could be relied



on to deal adequately with the threat to the security of States posed by the possibility of clandestinely retained nuclear warheads and fissile material for weapon purposes.

The Soviet proposal also included a draft declaration asking for the elimination of foreign military bases simultaneously with that of the nuclear delivery vehicles and under international control.<sup>24</sup> The U.K. and the U.S.A. put forward that the USSR proposal, taken either alone or in the context of first Stage measures, would if implemented, create a grave imbalance in favour of the USSR. The U.K. delegate argued that it was seeking to give advantage to the States which were one cohesive whole and had large landmasses but designed to give disadvantage to those alliances which were widely spread and particularly to countries like Great Britain. He said that an agreement on GCD would permeate every corner of their foreign bases in the sense that a 30 per cent reduction in armaments in a given period would not be limited to one's home territory, but they would go down *pari passu* with the rest. Therefore "to dramatize the question of foreign bases" meant, as the U.K. saw it, an attempt "to capitalize on one's geographical position."<sup>25</sup> He denounced the Soviet contention that NATO was an aggressive organization and said that it came into force as a defensive alliance against Russian expansion

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24 ENDC/75.

25 ENDC/PV. 96, p. 29.

and progressive deployment of nuclear weapons subsequently by NATO ensured the threat of retaliation to any possible attack which had stabilized the situation. Thus "until a sufficient measure of trust and confidence has been established between East and West, we must examine any proposal put forward here in the harsh light of reality."<sup>26</sup> The first operative paragraph in the Soviet draft declaration asked to dismantle foreign SLEM bases and to renounce the use of foreign ports as bases for such submarines (ENDC/75). The U.K. base in the Holy Loch in Scotland which is used by U.S. submarines would have to be thus given up while the Soviet Union having no such bases will not be affected at all by this measure. It was thus a step asking for unilateral concession from the West. Secondly, the U.K. referred to the invulnerability of the sea-borne Polaris missiles as a distinct improvement from the earlier Jupiter and Thor, delivery systems which were not satisfactory against the <sup>presence</sup> pressure of very large Soviet forces on the border of NATO member States. Their replacement with Polaris missiles because of their invulnerability will deter a surprise attack out of miscalculation and it will remove for the West any necessity for split second reactions giving it a tremendous advantage of time for a careful assessment of a situation which might bring forth a nuclear war. Thus the British delegate said that the Soviet

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26 ENDC/PV. 115, 29 March 1963, p. 38.

proposal to withdraw Polaris missile bases from Europe until such a time as a treaty on GCD was achieved was "a retrograde step...not only for our own security but for the safety of the world as a whole."<sup>27</sup> Paragraph 2 of the declaration asking for the withdrawal from foreign ports aircraft carriers armed with nuclear weapons also entailed a unilateral concession from the West with no balancing concession from the Soviet Union. Again paragraph 3 and 4 taken together would mean that not one Soviet missile need be removed since they would fall below the 1,500 kilometre range specified in operative paragraph 3 and 700 medium range ballistic missiles of the Soviet Union (the British delegates quoted figures published by the Institute for Strategic Studies in The Military Balance 1962/63) which could be placed on the territory of the Warsaw Pact countries to threaten all of Western Europe. On the other hand the 2000 mile missiles could threaten the whole of Western Europe from the Soviet homeland and they would not be subjected to the provisions of operative paragraph 3. Thus "this...is not a matter of foreign bases alone, if a domestic base in the Soviet Union can threaten Britain in exactly the same way as" the Russian delegate "claims the Holy Loch base threatens the Soviet Union."<sup>28</sup> The British representative categorically put forth that the huge number of medium and intermediate range

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27 Ibid., p. 40.

28 ENDC/PV. 100, 20 February 1963, p. 43.

ballistic missiles and medium range bombers of Soviet Union were directed only at Western Europe and Far East "for they do not reach the United States or any other part of the continent".<sup>29</sup> Speaking from the point of view of Europe, as a representative of European NATO Power, the United Kingdom regarded this proposal as unacceptable, and maintained that some percentage of the foreign bases will have to be retained up to the last stage.<sup>30</sup> Taking into account the British decision to buy Polaris submarine missiles from the United States which was taken around this time and the subsequent Nassau Agreement of 1964, the great concern with the question of foreign bases and especially with submarine bases was understandable. The special edge in the British voice could perhaps also be traced to an apprehension stemming from the theory of "flexible response" of U.S. Defence Secretary McNamara, that the United States too was thinking in terms of withdrawal of its nuclear force from Western Europe and relying on a strategy of conventional war for the Continent.

The dispute over conventional arms and forces was less time consuming than that over the nuclear weapons system but it proceeded along the same line of balance of power as in the other field. The British delegation reiterated its adherence to the Agreed Principle provided the programme being "implemented in an agreed sequence, by stages until it is completed,

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29 Ibid.

30 ENDC/PV. 115, 29 March 1963, p. 45.

with each measure and stage carried out within specified time-limit."<sup>31</sup> It supported the U.S. plan for a reduction of all major armaments by 30 per cent in Stage I, 35 per cent in Stage II and the remainder in Stage III. In its revised draft, Moscow agreed with the Western position by raising its own figure of the armed forces in Stage I and even adopting the U.S. percentage cuts. It, however, asked for inclusion in the U.S. plan, of factories which might help to retain the earlier strength of a country by qualitative improvement even after quantitative reductions. So far as the problem of geographical deployment of armed forces was concerned, the withdrawal of U.S. forces from its military bases in Europe was deemed to affect the security interests of the West, particularly in the maintenance of balance in Central Europe. The United Kingdom delegation read out to the Committee of 18, excerpts from the U.K. Government Note (in reply to the Soviet delegation's Note of complaint on the arms build-up of NATO) pointing out that there were 20 Soviet divisions in the Soviet zone of Germany, a total of about 100 Soviet line divisions in the Western areas of the USSR and Eastern Europe.<sup>32</sup> These troops are supported with large number of tactical nuclear missiles and bombers. The withdrawal of U.S. armed forces and armaments from the European soil would be dangerous and in the British opinion

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31 ENDC/5, para 4.

32 ENDC/89, p. 2.

might lead to military action in Europe.

Taking this overriding concept of equality of balance in armed strength the difficulties of disarmament seemed really great. First of all, it was difficult to equate armaments today at any level when strategies which assumed the use of different kinds of weapons at different times and with a variety of weapon types which made any formal comparison impractical. The desire to produce equality at the end of every stage of disarmament was thus utopian. Moreover even if militarily it were possible to equate weapons, it will always happen that growing powers of importance will deem these disarmament schemes as discriminatory and demand a parity which the dominant powers will be unlikely to concede. <sup>33</sup> This has been and is likely to remain a chronic confusion of aim in any disarmament and arms control negotiation in an international forum.

Another basic requirement with the British and American approach to GCD was the establishment and bringing into force an adequate international peace-keeping force before the security of national deterrents was given away and the West would not sign a GCD agreement without an agreement on it. The establishment of a UN Peace Observation Corps was proposed in stage I of the U.S. plan and the creation of the UN Peace Force in Stage II during which parties to the Treaty were also

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33 Beaton, Reform of Power, op. cit., p. 73.

asked to accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

The U.S. plan did not rule out the possibility of the UN Charter as inadequate for the purpose. The Soviet delegate objected to the creation of a supranational body in violation of Article 43 of the Charter and proposed a non-nuclear force to be provided to the Security Council. Instead of a single command, the Soviet Union proposed veto or the idea of a troika command made of three groups of States (i.e., Eastern, Western and nonaligned). The U.K. and the USA did not favour the idea of veto but the US plan was not clear on this crucial issue of control or command either. The central objective was, however, clear that international armed forces will be of such a strength and character "that no State will be able to challenge it." The British Foreign Secretary suggested the need to build up the peace-keeping role and capabilities of the U.N. He said: "As the peace-keeping forces of the U.N. are built up, so the dissemination not only of nuclear weapons but of all types of arms can be brought under control."<sup>34</sup> He said that the U.K. was ready to discuss the problems of building up peace-keeping forces in Stages II and III of disarmament. More immediately the U.K. put forward three principles with regard to it: "First, the collective responsibility of all Members to

contribute to all U.N. activities, including peace-keeping operations; second, the need to take account of any excessive burden which the costs of an extensive operation might impose on the economies of the developing countries"; and "third, the special responsibilities and contributions of the larger countries, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, which have to be recognized since they are in fact liable to bear a heavy financial responsibility for large peace-keeping operations."<sup>35</sup> The British Government also intended encouraging the Secretary General to build up his headquarters staff, to digest the peace-keeping experiences in Congo, Cyprus, etc. to draw on the expertise of national forces and plan accordingly. The British were thus thinking in terms of the existing framework of the UN and of its privileged membership of the Security Council in their plan for a disarmed world. Whether control would be exercised by veto or majority decisions, it was clear that according to them the permanent members of the Security Council were to be the depository of the power of decision-making so as to preside over the fate of the rest of the world. The justification offered was the wealth of these Powers which would enable them to make a greater financial contribution to the peace-keeping operations, as also their privileged status today, being permanent members of the Security Council. It is doubtful whether the developing nations



would ever agree to sign away the security of their national forces in favour of an international force acting under the command of an exclusive cabal. This embryonic concept of world government, if the top is lifted, seems to be aimed at the <sup>perpetuation</sup> preservation of the existing ratio of power.

The heart of all disarmament measures, as the British representatives said, however, lay in the problem of control and verification. To put it in a nutshell the USA and the U.K. considered it essential that verification should extend not only to the agreed limitations and reductions taking place but also to those retained, so as to ensure against clandestine concealment of weapons. The Soviet Union was resolutely opposed to such control over armaments as against control over disarmament, and maintained that it would jeopardize the security of States. While Britain and the USA felt concerned about concealed stock or secret arms particularly because the Soviet society being a closed one, the USSR feared disclosure of its military secrets and espionage possibilities especially after the U-2 incident of 1960. At the beginning of 1963 the Soviet Union showed some flexibility and agreed to verification in cases of nuclear delivery vehicles that were to be retained after Stage I, under its modified stand. It envisaged control to be established at the launching pads themselves and as the Soviet delegate said in the ENDC, the number of launching pads should not be greater than the number of missiles retained.

Commenting on this new Soviet position, the British delegate said that the control which the Soviet Government had agreed to would apparently be limited in its scope to control over an agreed and strictly limited number of certain missiles in special categories, and as such the U.S.S.R. offer of inspection of declared launching pads was insufficient. The U.K. and USA stressed that the real <sup>ISSUE</sup> size was to make sure that the missiles themselves to be retained corresponded to agreed figures and that there was no clandestine stockpiling or production of missiles. The British representative nonetheless welcomed it as the first sign that the Soviet Government might have revised its position regarding verification of the remainders.<sup>37</sup>

On 18 April 1962, the U.S. delegate put forward the idea of sampling technique or zonal inspection so as to avoid covering the length and breadth of a country in the name of verification. As the British delegate explained, it would mean countries will be divided into zones and as one proceeded with disarmament, so one would proceed with the zones. It meant that if one agreed to 10 per cent disarmament, one would have the right to inspection of 10 per cent of the territory of the other country. The British representative Godber recalled that the idea was first put forward in Pugwash Conference

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37 ENDC/PV. 117, 3 April 1963, p. 16; ENDC/PV. 120, 10 April 1963, p. 19.

as a means to provide solution between East and West on this  
problem.<sup>38</sup> Moscow opposed this idea on the ground of its  
susceptibility to disclosure of military secrets but agreed  
to accept indirect means of inspection.

Addressing the ENDC in early 1964, the British Foreign  
Secretary, approached the problem of verification from a new  
angle and suggested a 'functional' rather than a regional  
approach. He suggested studies of certain essential categor-  
ies of armaments and certain key components of those armaments  
about how they were produced and stored. Those studies could  
lead in turn to fresh conclusions about the type of control  
needed - as a kind of spot or sample inspection to ensure that  
permitted production was not being exceeded. Similar checks  
might also give enough information about armaments already  
in existence, both those permitted and those which might be  
hidden. Adding the results of such studies together a fresh  
conclusion about verification might be reached and he further  
said that "If we could at the same time achieve those condi-  
tions of increased and firmer international confidence that I  
have envisaged, then it might be possible to verify the first  
stage at least of general disarmament with a lesser degree of  
intrusion than we have hitherto thought necessary."<sup>39</sup> From  
this it may be inferred that Britain thought it possible to

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38 ENDC/PV. 23, 18 April 1962, p. 39.

39 ENDC/PV. 169, p. 18.

climb down from the existing US stand on verification; however, with the exception of these occasional statements, it did not ever make this difference open. From the very beginning British delegation proposed setting up of special groups for the discussion of technical problems within the framework of the Eighteen Nation Committee, and the British Foreign Secretary stressed the need to "leave the platform for the laboratory". The Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko disagreed with it and said that "to refer the question of disarmament including control over disarmament, to technical groups means to hide the discussion of the problem of disarmament still further away from public opinion, to help the enemies of disarmament, those who regard the discussion of one of the cardinal problems of mankind as some kind of fencing at the Conference table". (Tass Report)

The negotiations on GCD (if it was intended as a public relations exercise) has lost its magic in getting sufficient public interest around it. From 1965 onwards the debates in the ENDC on GCD appreciably lessened and it had been stored away in deep freeze to make way for partial measures of arms control which were of more immediate significance. If the basic confusion in aim about the desirability of a GCD is the real cause of frustration, the statesmen are not prepared to admit it. In 1966, Lord Chalfont cited a method of "controlled schizophrenia" as the only practical approach and explained that "it relates to the process of seeking to achieve long-term aims of peace, equity and morality

in international affairs, while understanding and accepting that the world in which we operate is combative, inequitable and often immoral."<sup>40</sup> Since 'instant disarmament' is not possible (because of the growing struggle between Communist China and the Soviet Union, the Sino-US tension, internal disputes within NATO, polycentrism in the Communist world etc. as the British delegation saw them), according to a British Government statement of 1968, it is "wise to work for international agreement on more limited measures of arms control (sometimes called collateral or partial measures) which we think are urgently needed and which we believe are attainable... They would improve the international atmosphere, reduce tension and build up confidence".<sup>41</sup> Collateral measures were discussed as preliminary steps leading to the ultimate goal of GCD. The British delegation listed measures to reduce the risk of war through miscalculation, anti-surprise attack measures, establishment of nuclear free zones, a cut-back in fissile material production, freeze on nuclear delivery vehicles, physical destruction of armaments etc. as useful collateral measures.<sup>42</sup>

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40 Lord Chalfont, Politics of Disarmament, op. cit., p. 343.

41 Disarmament: The Path to Peace, Prepared by the Foreign Office, April 1968 (London, HMSO), paragraph 19.

42 ENDC/PV. 10, PV. 22, PV. 92, PV. 118, PV. 130.

Chapter VI

OTHER COLLATERAL MEASURES

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### OTHER COLLATERAL MEASURES

#### (i) Comprehensive Test Ban

The Parties to the Moscow Treaty in the Preamble spelt out their commitment as "seeking to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time, determined to continue negotiations to this end." The General Assembly of the United Nations also sought in vain the suspension of underground tests, the conclusion of a total test ban Treaty and the organization of an international exchange of seismic data.<sup>1</sup> The number of nuclear tests have showed an unprecedented and unchecked increase ever since they have been driven underground by the Moscow Treaty of 1963. From October 1963 to the end of 1968, the United States carried out 170 tests, the U.S.S.R. 24, the United Kingdom 2, France 16 and China 8.<sup>2</sup> With the hindsight of today one cannot help thinking that in spite of the promises incorporated into its text (Preamble and Article I (1, B), "a partial test ban treaty is in danger of retaining its incomplete character indefinitely."<sup>3</sup>

The ENDC had worked laboriously on detailed proposals, covering structures and provisions of a comprehensive nuclear test ban, as well as the structure and modalities of a control

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1 Resolutions 2032 (XX), 2163 (XXI), 2343 (XXII), 2455 (XXIII) and 2604 (XXIV).

2 SIPRI Yearbook of World Armament and Disarmament, 1968-69, p. 242.

3 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 163.

scheme. After the Cuba crisis (October 1962), the Soviet and the Western positions on the key issue of verification came very close to each other, i.e. only the small margin between two to three or seven on-site inspections, stood in the way of a treaty on total test ban. Even in that stage a decision to stop testing would have been operationally easy to implement and as Alva Myrdal says "it would have been much more effective than it could be later when the diabolic knowledge had spread."<sup>4</sup> It would have served to check the qualitative development of nuclear weapons ending thereby the competitive arms race between the nuclear Powers, and in addition it would have blocked effectively the acquisition of nuclear weapons on the part of non-nuclear-weapon countries. The fact that the U.S.A. and the U.K. did not accept the offer of two to three inspections a year which the U.S.S.R. then held out registered a 'new moment of lost opportunities'<sup>5</sup> in the history of disarmament negotiations.

In parliament as well as in official statements in the world organizations, the representatives of the United Kingdom Government consistently maintained that they were striving to put an end to all testing.

R.A. Butler, the Foreign Secretary of the U.K. addressing the ENDC at its one hundred and sixty-ninth plenary session

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4 A. Myrdal, "The Game of Disarmament", op. cit.

5 Ibid.



stated that according to the United Kingdom Government "it would be logical and most desirable to follow up the partial nuclear test ban treaty with a supplementary agreement which would make it comprehensive. I hope that not too much time need pass from the very small and really quite painless degree of inspection is accepted which would allow us to have a comprehensive ban."<sup>6</sup>

Speaking on British approach to the problem of inspection, Godber referred to Khrushchev's communication to President Kennedy at the end of 1962 offering two to three inspections a year (ENDC/73) and also to President Kennedy's letter to Chairman Khrushchev of 28 December 1962 (ENDC/74). He said that the smallest number which the United Kingdom and the United States had felt able to offer, on the evidence at present available to them, had been the figure of seven inspections a year.<sup>7</sup>

According to Godber the Soviet Union had been saying that it recognized that a treaty, if it is to be ratified by democratic processes in the West, must be such as to give the West some measure of confidence and accordingly it had offered two to three inspections a year, and three automatic seismic stations, which would check on the operation of the national detection system. However, if confidence was to be

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6 ENDC/PV. 169, p. 10.

7 ENDC/PV. 113, 26 March 1963, pp. 23-25.

created among responsible people of the West who wanted a nuclear test ban, then they should have to be told what the grounds for confidence were. This brings forward the question of probability of identifying not only of detecting, seismic events. It involves the probable number of seismic events each year in the territories of the nuclear Powers, the probable number of those events which can be identified as natural events and the capacity of existing detection techniques to detect, to locate and to identify. Since what one is concerned with here is not exact figures but probabilities, it is all the more important to have evidence on which to base the discussions. "That incidentally, is one reason why the United Kingdom delegation has on many occasions suggested getting some of our scientific experts together again... it is the lack of official collective scientific discussion which I think has definitely hampered us." <sup>8</sup> Godber further elaborated the Western position by saying that their assessment of the number of unidentified events which the West thought might remain in any one year on the territories of the nuclear powers, <sup>was based on scientific information</sup> and they assessed how many events it would be necessary to inspect in order to create confidence and that confidence would be established only if inspections were carried out in a certain way. The United Kingdom delegate, in saying this, thus tried to state the Western case as a

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8 ENDC/PV. 113, p. 26.

full-proof one, which also entailed the minimum risk. In demanding a higher number of on-site inspections the United Kingdom delegation observed that "the Soviet position, offering three inspections, is a political position pure and simple"<sup>9</sup> and being a decision reached for political reasons it should not be too hard for them to raise the number offered slightly, for after all, the Soviet Union is a vast country.<sup>10</sup> The number offered by the West was based on their best scientific information. With regard to "...the basic Western position...therefore, the political element is really the element of confidence, and unless we have confidence in an agreement, that agreement can have no political force."<sup>11</sup>

Speaking in the House of Lords in a debate over disarmament, Lord Chalfont, the British Minister of State with special responsibility for disarmament matters, who represented the U.K. in the ENDC, said on 8 March 1967: "...our best scientific advice is that it is not yet possible to be certain that underground events can be detected and identified positively by remote seismic techniques...we hope it is in this field, in the area of seismic detection and improvements in the techniques of seismic detection, that the effective verification of a test ban treaty will lie in the future."<sup>12</sup>

9 Ibid., p. 23.

10 ENDC/PV. 96, p. 31.

11 ENDC/PV. 113, p. 23.

12 Lord Chalfont, House of Lords, Debates, 8 March 1967,

The United States as part of its multimillion dollar VELA research programme for improving seismic capabilities, has constructed the first Large Aperture Seismic Array (LASA) at Billings, Montana. The Soviet Union have been reluctant to the suggestion of joint technical studies of the detection question and they have refused to comment on the evidence made available by the West.<sup>13</sup>

On 5 September 1965, the eight neutral States at Geneva demanded the conclusion of a Treaty banning underground tests, which might be supported by exchanges of scientific information and by improvement in techniques of detection and identification. The U.A.R. called for the prohibition of all underground tests above the threshold of seismic magnitude 4.75, to be accompanied by a moratorium on all tests of lesser magnitude, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive treaty.<sup>14</sup> The U.S.S.R., supported this proposal<sup>15</sup> but it was unacceptable to the United States and the United Kingdom. Referring to the U.A.R. proposal, Lord Chalfont, the United Kingdom delegate said on 9 September 1965, "we have learnt to be wary of these partial measures as a substitute for more comprehensive

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reproduced in Arms Control and Disarmament, Notes on Current Developments, issued by the Foreign Office, London.

- 13 PV/279, 4 August 1966, pp. 11-15.  
14 ENDC/PV. 224, pp. 9-10.  
15 ENDC/PV. 230, p. 9.

agreements; and particularly of the moratorium as a substitute for a formal treaty...any international agreement on arms control and disarmament that cannot be verified by national or international means contains within it dangerous seeds of suspicion and instability." <sup>16</sup> He further elaborated his argument on technical grounds that the seismic magnitude of an underground event is a resolution of many factors, e.g. the geological structure of the site of the explosion and the technical means used to reduce the shock waves such as decoupling, i.e. detonating the explosion in a large cavity. As such, the threshold of 4.75 cannot be ascertained as a scientifically exact figure, he contended. In order to find some common ground in the constructive suggestion of the U.A.R., the British representative once again urged the Soviet Union to allow its scientists to jointly explore the particular possibilities in this technical field.

The British delegation also put forward the result of the considerable seismic research done in the United Kingdom, in order to explore the possibilities of a new detection system. Using electronic data processing and a new system of beam-forming arrays, experimental establishments have been set up in the U.K. in collaboration with American scientists in the United States. "But in spite of all the technical advances that have been made...British scientists, like their

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16 ENDC/PV. 231, 9 September 1965, p. 12.

American colleagues, report that there still remains a residual number of seismic events at or above a seismic magnitude of 4 that could not be identified by remote seismological observations alone..."<sup>17</sup> A paper worked out on this problem by the U.K. Atomic Weapons Research Establishment was circulated to the ENDC accordingly, and it made available the result of the recent research reporting especially on the epicentral location at teleseismic ranges.<sup>18</sup> But the Soviet Union did not make any comment on the scientific evidence made available by the West.<sup>19</sup>

Referring to the suggestion by Sweden of "verification by challenge", Lord Chalfont said that at a non-governmental symposium held in Scarborough, in Canada, which he had attended, a scheme on similar lines was discussed. The idea involved a ban on all tests for a trial period, combined with the possibility of verification by invitation.<sup>20</sup> The phrase "verification by challenge", he felt, should be avoided for its hostile overtones and "verification by consent" could be used as a substitute. His delegation felt that it is worthwhile to pursue and examine this scheme further but at any rate

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17 ENDC/PV. 231, 9 September 1965, p. 11.

18 ENDC/PV. 279, 4 August 1966, p. 11.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid., p. 13.

21 Ibid., p. 15.

maintained that, it will not give the same assurance as would a treaty incorporating the right to even a very small number of on-site inspections.<sup>22</sup>

On 17 August 1966, the non-aligned nations made a new proposal: first, that underground tests over a certain level be banned altogether and others suspended until the conclusion of a general test ban treaty; second, that by forming the Detection Club, i.e. by international cooperation among national institutions, seismic information be improved; third, that a verification system by challenge be instituted, under which a party suspected of breach of the Treaty would be challenged to give all necessary information and even to allow an on-the-spot inspection; in case of an unsatisfactory reply, any other Party would be able to denounce the Treaty; fourth, that for cases where on-the-spot inspections were authorized, a list of impartial observers be deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations; and fifth, that experts recruited individually from among citizens of non-aligned countries should examine the problem of identifying underground tests and give their opinion about it.<sup>23</sup> The idea of "verification by challenge" was introduced by the Swedish delegation and its Chairman, Alva Myrdal demonstrated after much research that detection and identification methods had been improved to such

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22 Ibid.

23 ENDC/177.

an extent that it was possible to consider controls without on-the-spot inspections. <sup>24</sup> Mrs. Myrdal observed, "A decision over what constitutes adequate verification is without any doubt at all a political one, even if it has to be taken on the basis of completely adequate scientific and technical considerations." <sup>25</sup> The Swedish suggestion was disputed on technical and political grounds by the American and British representatives.

The non-aligned nations kept on their effort nevertheless, and in April and June 1968, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute organized two conferences of seismological experts from ten countries, who agreed that since 1965 detection and identification techniques have much improved. <sup>26</sup> The whole question of the future arms control and disarmament had been intermittently considered by the British Government and on 16 July at the opening session of the ENDC, Fred Mulley, the British representative, put forward certain proposals on collateral measures to which the United Kingdom thought priority should be given. In the nuclear field it was concerned with a comprehensive nuclear test ban and the arrangements for peaceful nuclear explosions; and in the non-nuclear field, chemical and biological warfare. Referring to a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty he said, "it seems to

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24 ENDC/191 and PV. 309, 315, 323, 332, 364, 385.

25 ENDC/PV. 399 and 415.

26 ENDC/230.



us to be a measure of cardinal importance because we think that the real danger of vertical proliferation lies in the development of more sophisticated weapons systems. Purely quantitative control will achieve nothing if the nuclear weapons that are permitted become more and more costly and more and more deadly. The merit of a comprehensive test ban treaty is just this, that it would prevent the development of more sophisticated weapons systems."<sup>27</sup> A United Kingdom working paper was circulated to the Committee on 20 August 1968 setting out the suggestions for breaking the deadlock over on-site inspection and for a phased approach to a total test ban which Fred Mulley had put forward in his speech on 16 July 1968.

In order to minimise the fear of espionage which the Socialist camp envisaged in an on-site inspection, the United Kingdom proposed the creation by Treaty of a special Committee to examine complaints about violations of the total test ban. The Committee would be composed of the representatives of the three nuclear States, of three non-aligned countries and a nominee of the United Nations Secretary General or the Director General of the IAEA.<sup>28</sup> This proposal thus continued the British preference for a more politically based governmental organ as against the proposition of a Committee by the non-aligned countries which was to be made up of independent scientific

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27 ENDC/PV. 381, 16 July 1968.

28 ENDC/232, PV. 381 and 387.

personalities. The United Kingdom proposal provided for the right of on-site inspection if the Committee decided by a majority of five to two that a prima facie case had been made out in support of the complaint. "The necessary majority could never be achieved if there was mere suspicion that an unauthorized nuclear explosion might have taken place. This should help to obviate all possibility of unnecessary on-site inspection and so rule out all fears of its improper use",<sup>29</sup> explained the British delegation about the composition of the Committee.

The British delegation also saw that the question of a comprehensive test ban was time consuming being closely linked with agreement on the cut-off of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, and with the limitation and subsequent reduction of offensive and defensive nuclear delivery vehicles. It suggested that if it were not possible to conclude a total test ban Treaty immediately, there might be a step by step diminution, starting with an agreed annual quota of underground tests of nuclear weapons. The quota would be on a descending scale for a fixed number of years ending up with a nil quota.

The British proposal did not find favour with the Soviet Union to which its principle of the Committee was not acceptable. As for the annual quotas, some countries, e.g. Sweden, disputed the proposal saying that it ought also to include peaceful

nuclear explosions.<sup>30</sup> There exists a link between the conclusion of such a Treaty and the problem of peaceful nuclear explosions. In the opinion of the British delegation, the matter which also related to Article V of the Non-Proliferation Treaty should be entrusted to the governance of the IAEA, rather than any other independent international organization in terms of which some countries were contemplating in the debate in General Assembly.<sup>31</sup> The idea was gaining ground, however, that a total Test Ban Treaty should except peaceful explosions carried out in conformity with appropriate international procedure and under the authorization of an international organization by countries which have signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the total test ban Treaty.<sup>32</sup>

Faced with a persistent refusal by the West, the U.S.S.R. withdrew their offer of 2 to 3 inspections in 1963 and now they are no longer willing to consider any inspection which they put in the same category as espionage. As far back as 1966, the U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk emphasized that on-the-spot inspection was necessary to give a feeling of security and confidence to those adhering to a comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.<sup>33</sup> In 1966, the United States government was

30 ENDC/PV. 385 (Sweden).

31 ENDC/PV. 381, 16 July 1968 (U.K.).

32 ENDC/PV. 385, 399, 415 (Sweden), 391 (Burma).

33 Hearings, 1966, p. 25.

tentatively considering the conclusion of a Treaty banning (without inspection) underground tests of over 20,000 metric tons, but there was very strong opposition from certain quarters and the scheme fell through. It is almost certain now that even if methods of detection and identification could guarantee total security, the United States Congress would, in all probability, be against the conclusion of a total test ban Treaty for psychological, political and perhaps economic reasons.<sup>34</sup> Even apart from pressures from the military industrial complex, noted physicists like Edward Teller persistently opposed a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty on the ground that the advance of scientific knowledge cannot be stopped by international agreement, especially when the agreement was with the Soviet Union. He believes that most arms-control schemes would give away the security of the free world.<sup>35</sup> Teller's position has been supported by many senior military officers and by a section of the United States Senate.<sup>36</sup> By 1967 it became evident that neither of the Super Powers would please the

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34 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 168; Michael Wright, Disarm and Verify (London, Chatto and Windus, 1964), pp. 118-29; W.B. Bader, The U.S. and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons, op. cit., pp. 122-24.

35 Edward Teller, The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Statement made before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 20 August 1963.

36 H.A. Kissinger in Editor's Note 'The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty' - by Edward Teller, in Problems of National Strategy (Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 411.

neutrals by eliminating entirely the provisions for testing underground while two nuclear Powers viz. France and China still reserve the right to develop their technology in the atmosphere.

Speaking at the Foreign Press Association on 29 October 1969, Lord Chalfont, the British Minister for Disarmament, Foreign and Commonwealth Office said: "The Comprehensive Test Ban is still with us...and I cannot pretend that the prospects for its early conclusion are much brighter now than they were then." There has been some progress nevertheless and "largely as a result of techniques developed by British scientists", the identification threshold has been lowered and there is now a large measure of international agreement among scientists on what can be achieved by monitoring techniques. In this connection he also mentioned the valuable work done by Canada. "But there is still a gap between the detection and identification threshold...so until the Americans decide that they can safely do without on-site inspection, or the Russians are willing to accept it, I am afraid that underground testing, and the development of new weapons systems that depend on underground testing, are likely to continue."

(ii) Reduction of the Risk of War Through Accident, Miscalculation or failure of Communication

Addressing the ENDC on 29 March 1963, Godber discussed the various proposals for measures to reduce the risk of war through accident, miscalculation or failure of communication.

He referred to his own statement in the First Committee of the General Assembly of 8 November 1962 where he had said that the Caribbean crisis had more than ever shown the urgency to reach agreement at Geneva on collateral measures.<sup>38</sup>

Godber had suggested that in the light of the recent events the most urgent task of the Committee would be to agree on what measures to be taken to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding and the misinformation on either side about the military dispositions of the other.<sup>39</sup> In the opinion of the United Kingdom such measures might include, "...the advance notification of military manoeuvres and movements, the exchange of military missions, direct communication between Heads of Governments, and the stationing of observers at major communication centres and airfields to report on concentrations and movements of military forces."<sup>40</sup> All these measures were included in the United States working paper (ENDC/70) submitted to the ENDC. Moreover, Godber contended that the setting up of land control posts was in fact one of the measures for easing international tension proposed by the Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko in the memorandum (A/4892) of 26 September 1961. The establishment of observation posts at airfields was included in the original Soviet proposals (DC/71) against

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38 A/C.1/PV. 1269, p. 21.

39 ~~ibid.~~ ENDC/PV.115, p. 38.

40 Ibid.

surprise attack submitted in 1955 and remained a part of Soviet proposals until 1958. The British representative thus sought to justify the United Kingdom's stand on this issue in the light of the common ground already evident between the two sides,<sup>41</sup> to combine elements from the proposals of both the sides. The British suggestions while in line with the proposals of the United States also coincided with those Soviet ideas which were already discarded by it.

The British delegate hailed the Soviet suggestion about methods of direct consultations between governments,<sup>42</sup> and also a similar suggestion in the U.S. paper and the resultant establishment of a direct communication link between the USA and the USSR following the agreement at a meeting of the ENDC on 5 April 1963, as a very helpful precedent and a stimulus in the field of collateral measures which would reduce the risk of war through miscalculation and misunderstanding.

The British delegation in the ENDC repeatedly raised the question of observation posts as an important collateral measure. The basic idea of the observation post, they contended, was there in general terms both in President Johnson's message to the ENDC of 21 January (ENDC/120) and in the Soviet memorandum of 28 January (ENDC/123). The British representative argued that in the last resort, such security as enjoyed

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41 ENDC/PV. 115, p. 35.

42 Ibid., p. 35.

today was based on mutual nuclear deterrence, and the world as such had been described as a powder magazine. So the risks from an accidental spark were of appalling and inconceivable proportions. The primary task of the Geneva Committee was to agree on ways of emptying the powder kegs. This situation could be improved in three ways. The first was by diminishing the risk that an accident might mistakenly be taken as heralding an all-out attack. The second was by diminishing the risk of war being started by miscalculation because of a wrong appreciation of the other side's interests involved or the other side's resolve and ability to defend them. Thirdly, it was important to reduce the risk of a preemptive strike by one side on the belief that it could secure an initial or limited advantage.

The system of observation posts could help a great deal in the reduction of these risks of ignorance of each other's intentions and capabilities. A detailed examination of various schemes of observation posts was suggested by the United Kingdom so as to judge all the interrelated factors which could affect the decision of the Committee. Such questions could be like whether a rapid knowledge of even every minor movements are needed or not; what kinds of movements need to be observed and how it could be done economically and with the minimum of intrusion; what was the size and shape the system should take if it was to fulfil the agreed purpose; how



should the posts be organized, manned and supervised; what facilities would be needed and how could abuse of those facilities be avoided, etc. To this end the United Kingdom delegation circulated a working paper which outlined in general terms matters on which it considered agreement would be necessary for an efficient and effective but not unnecessarily obstrusive observation post system to be established.<sup>43</sup> The United Kingdom paper was drafted in general terms which could apply to an observation post system in any part of the world where the need for it might arise. But it was specially formulated after taking into account the situation along the border between the Warsaw Pact and the NATO countries in Europe. The paper stated that as the area of the world covered by the two sides are immense, the system should be similarly wide.<sup>44</sup> At the same time it emphasized that the number of posts should be based on considerations of balance and mutual interest. It implied negotiations elsewhere as well as in Geneva, among the interested governments of the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries both.

The view of the Soviet delegation on this question was that the establishment of observation posts could prove useful only in conjunction with other concrete measures for lessening the tension in the danger zones where the armed forces of the

43 ENDC/130, ENDC/PV. 178, 26 March 1964, pp. 10-13.

44 ENDC/130, para 13.

opposing groups are facing each other.<sup>45</sup> The USSR opposed the consideration of the British proposals in the Committee and described it as a measure "completely divorced from measures for reducing international tension...the adoption of such a proposal can only foster baseless illusions and do harm...to the cause of disarmament; it can only strengthen suspicion and mistrust between States."<sup>46</sup>

(iii) Cut-back in Fissionable Material

In the beginning of the ENDC sessions, the British delegate had warmly lauded the U.S. proposal that 50,000 kilograms of fissile material should be handed over to some international agency.(ENDC/PV. 5). Side by side with the technical research in the field of cut-back in fissile material production, which was being carried on in the U.K., R.A. Butler, the British Foreign Secretary announced in the ENDC that the United Kingdom had ceased production of uranium 235 for military purpose and that military plutonium production was also being gradually brought to an end.<sup>47</sup> He welcomed the U.S. proposal that the transfer of nuclear material for peaceful purposes should take place under effective international safeguards assuming that if there was an agreement it would apply to all concerned and

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45 ENDC/PV. 178 (Soviet speech), p. 53.

46 Ibid., p. 54.

47 ENDC/PV. 169, p. 11.

and also the idea that the major nuclear Powers should submit some of their peaceful nuclear activities to the same inspection as was recommended for other States.<sup>48</sup> The United Kingdom considered the increasing diversion of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as an essential item in collateral measures. Two weeks before the opening of the 1964 Geneva Conference of the ENDC, President Johnson announced that the United States intended to reduce production of fissionable material for weapons purposes by 25 per cent, by closing four of its fourteen plutonium plants. Simultaneous announcements coordinated through ENDC in April 1964, made it known that the United States would decrease its plutonium production by 20 per cent and of enriched uranium by 40 per cent, while the Soviet Union would stop the scheduled construction of two new atomic reactors for producing plutonium and would also "during the next few years" reduce substantially the production of uranium-235 for weapons purposes. The Soviet Union which had been producing fissionable material for a shorter period and had lesser plants than the United States, was thus less precise in its undertakings and the United States agreed to a smaller ratio for the USSR. The U.K. agreed to a cut in its fissile material production to be verified under IAEA safeguards, if the other nuclear Powers agreed to it. It was one of the important

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48 Ibid.

"follow-on" measures after the partial test ban treaty.

(iv) Physical Destruction of Armaments

Another collateral measure to which the United Kingdom attached great importance in the ENDC discussions was the physical destruction of armaments.<sup>50</sup> It was put as an effective way to pave for a comprehensive disarmament agreement. The British Foreign Secretary in his speech at Geneva referred specially to the nuclear delivery vehicles and said "Our Prime Minister has frequently urged such a step, and I should like to commend the idea to you once more."<sup>51</sup> The British nuclear capability had failed (after the cancellation of the Blue Streak Missile Programme) to have an independent delivery system of its own and though assured by supply from the USA, it constituted a serious lacunae in the British nuclear weapons system. On the other hand, the Soviet lead in missiles was a well-known fact and keeping in mind the vulnerability of the British isles being<sup>increasingly</sup> made more pronounced, it was not difficult to comprehend the British interests to reduce the Soviet strength. So far as the United States was concerned, its overwhelming number of nuclear warheads made the equation more than balanced and it was easy to understand why the United Kingdom reiterated that in a scheme such as this "it may be

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50 ENDC/PV. 169, p. 12.

51 Ibid.

advisable to consider how, at some stage in the disarmament process, it would be possible to counter balance certain categories of weapons in which one side has superiority against those in which the other has a lead."<sup>52</sup> The British Government wished to contribute on an appropriate scale to such a process.

The British delegation saw a great value in the US proposal for a "bomber-bonfire" which implied the destruction of some aircraft on either side, as a useful step in the process. The Soviet proposal to extend it to cover all the bombers or the provision for the destruction of all nuclear delivery vehicles (The Gromyko proposal, ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1) in the initial stage of disarmament was considered impractical by the U.K. delegation. In its opinion a second round of destruction might include other armaments, such as, tanks and some at least of the more modern types of delivery vehicles - missiles as well as bombers.<sup>53</sup>

(v) Freeze on Nuclear Delivery Vehicles

The U.K. delegation welcomed President Johnson's proposal for a freeze on nuclear delivery vehicles at the onset of 1964, as the most important collateral proposal after the Moscow Test Ban Treaty of 1963.<sup>54</sup> The British delegation

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., p. 13.

54 ENDC/PV. 169, 25 February 1964, pp. 11-12.

specially endorsed the view of Washington that the freeze should cover limitation both in numbers and characteristics of the strategic delivery systems for, a freeze on the strategic delivery systems without a freeze on anti-missile systems would be destabilizing. The British representative pointed out that under Gromyko's proposals both sides would retain agreed numbers of such anti-missiles as had been developed before the start of the disarmament process. "However given the nature of modern technological development, there could be no guarantee whatsoever that both sides would have developed by then equally effective anti-missile defence systems...there is always a potential danger that one side but not the other would have developed such a system by the end of Stage I."<sup>55</sup> He further argued that under the Soviet proposals, the side which had both ICBMs and anti-missiles would be free to do what it liked with its ICBMs against the side which had only ICBMs. The British delegation took a very strong stand on the issue for obvious reasons related to their own special position, where the British Polaris missiles would have no chance of penetrating the ABM defence deployed in Soviet territory.

(vi) Nuclear Free Zones

The U.K. delegation warmly endorsed the idea of setting up a nuclear free zone in Latin America. On the question of a non-aggression pact proposed by the Socialist side between the

Warsaw Pact and NATO countries<sup>56</sup> and on the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe, Britain, however, felt that "the propositions were not characterized by due regard for the principle of the balance of security so essential to any plan of arms control."<sup>57</sup> The West declined to accept "the situation in which the West would be left under the proposals made by the Soviet delegation if all the U.S. forces and especially all US missile forces were withdrawn from Europe, and the vast range of Soviet missile forces remained in tact on Soviet territory directed at the heart of Western Europe".<sup>58</sup> The British position on the Polish proposal (ENDC/C.1/1) in accordance with the Rapacki plan for force reductions and denuclearisation in Central Europe,<sup>59</sup> was spelt out by Godber. According to the U.K. delegate the fundamental difficulty with such a plan was that nuclear weapons are already very much in existence in Europe thereby forming an essential part of the defensive arrangements of both the Power blocs involved there. Also, though geographically Europe is a small continent, keeping in mind the global effect of nuclear weapons the United Kingdom did not believe that "Central

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56 ENDC/PV. 125, 26 April 1963, pp. 35-36.

57 Ibid.

58 ENDC/C.1/PV. 1, p. 34.

59 ENDC/77.

Europe could isolate itself from the effects of nuclear war should this, unhappily, break out. It could not do so by constituting itself in advance a nuclear free zone.<sup>60</sup> Denuclearization of Central Europe as a collateral measure to be pursued ahead of any agreement on general disarmament was thus ruled out by the United Kingdom. With regard to a non-aggression pact as proposed by the Soviet delegation, the United Kingdom was of the same opinion with Canada that such a pact might possibly be appropriate at some point in the context of an East-West understanding on the broader question of security arrangements in Central Europe and could form, as it were, a coping-stone to those improved relations.<sup>61</sup>

(vii) Cut in Defence Expenditure

Reduction in military expenditure was another important collateral measure discussed in the ENDC. The Soviet delegate Tsarapkin attacked the U.K. Government for increasing its military expenditure,<sup>62</sup> and proposed the reduction of military budgets by 10 to 15 per cent in January 1964.<sup>63</sup> The British Foreign Secretary defended this increase on the grounds of extensive peace-keeping commitments of Britain all over the

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60 ENDC/PV. 128, 6 May 1963, p. 26.

61 ENDC/PV. 127, 3 May 1963, p. 18; ENDC/PV. 130, pp. 16-17.

62 ENDC/PV. 167, 18 February 1964, p. 31.

63 ENDC/PV. 160, 28 January 1964, p. 7.



world. He stated, however, that while in 1952 Britain's defence expenditure was 9.8 per cent of its gross national product, in 1964 it was only 7 per cent, and said at the same time that between 1960 and 1964 the Soviet defence expenditure as itemized in its budget has increased by about 43 per cent. He further said that while Soviet Union spent 13 per cent of its gross national product on defence, that of the U.S. was 9 per cent and of U.K. 7 per cent.<sup>64</sup> The Soviet delegate countered that this figure was incorrect and referred to the percentage of annual budget spent on military needs. The British delegate was of the opinion that the best basis for comparison was to work out defence spending as a percentage of gross national product, taking account of the uncertainties involved in the pricing of capital goods in the Soviet Union, which according to the West were underpriced. It should also include other items of expenditure, such as that spent on science. For all these reasons the U.K. insisted on technical examination of the problems involved in military expenditure especially on the verification of budgetary agreements.<sup>65</sup> The Soviets reminded the Committee of such technical studies in the League of Nations as proving just wastage of time.

The U.S.S.R. persisted in the cut of military budgets

64 ENDC/PV. 169, February 1964, pp. 14-15.

65 ENDC/PV. 172, 5 March 1964 (U.K.); PV/178, op. cit.

and argued that this would not result in destabilizing the military balance since each state would determine for itself which portions of its defence forces would be cut. The U.K. and the U.S.A. were not ready to accept the proposal without further technical studies and agreement on the precise methods of policing the measure. The West did not consider budgetary inspection a reliable method of verification. However, in 1964 both the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. announced reductions in their defence expenditure to a small degree.

#### Conventional Weapons

##### "First Look"

On the conventional side, with growing easing of tension between the two blocs, regional arms control measures were discussed in the ENDC by the British delegate. The U.K. delegation extended invitations to other member nations to visit the conventional arms control verification exercise, "First Look", which the U.K. was carrying on jointly with the U.S. in Southern England in order to examine the various modalities of verification, on-the-spot inspection, etc.

#### Chemical and Biological Weapons

In the ENDC, on the conventional side of disarmament, the British delegates put much emphasis on the question of chemical and biological warfare. In his statement of 16 July

1968, the British representative Fred Mulley took the initiative in Geneva by calling for the negotiation of additional instruments to strengthen the provisions of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, while keeping that instrument in being, and stated the significance of early conclusion of a comprehensive ban on biological methods of warfare.<sup>67</sup> The U.K. delegation also suggested that the United Nations Secretary General should be asked to prepare a detailed report on chemical weapons, which would provide a scientific basis for further work in this field by the ENDC.<sup>68</sup> A United Nations report, which was prepared by consultant experts from fourteen countries, including Sir Solly Zuckerman from the U.K., was published on 1 July 1969. It concluded that further arms control measures are necessary to check the production, use and spread of chemical and biological weapons. There are several reasons why the U.K. Government considered it necessary to go beyond the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

First, among the States that are parties to the Protocol, not all have undertaken identical obligations. "Many of them including the U.K., have reserved the right to use chemical and biological weapons against non-parties, violators of the Protocol and their allies". Among the States that have not adhered to it, the principal ones, are the U.S.A. and Japan.

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67 ENDC/PV. 381, 16 July 1968.

68 Ibid.

Second, even if all States were to accede to the Protocol, there would still be a risk of large-scale use of the proscribed weapons so long as States claimed a right to manufacture such weapons and to use them against violators. Third, opinion is not unanimous on the meaning of the term "gases" in the phrase "asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases and all analogous liquids, materials or devices". The French and English versions of the Protocol do not correspond exactly and consequently there has been disagreement on whether non-lethal gases are covered by the Protocol. Furthermore, it is also argued that the term "bacteriological" as used in the Protocol is not comprehensive enough to cover the whole range of the possible agents of biological warfare especially keeping in view the immense developments that have occurred in this field in the forty-three years since the Protocol was signed. Fourth, there is uncertainty as to whether the norms laid down by the Protocol are customary or simply conventional and lastly that the terminology of the Protocol leaves in doubt the legality of using the banned weapons in the event of hostilities not equivalent to a war in the technical sense of the term.<sup>69</sup>

In trying to negotiate additional instruments for the Geneva Protocol, the British Government was of the view that

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69 Ibid.

considering the fact that the biological means of warfare were still at an early stage of development, were unproved and more abhorrent, it would be better to conclude an early agreement on its prohibition which should be fairly simple, would be acceptable to great number of States and would ensure a complete halt to the development. An instrument on chemical weapons which have already been used with a terrible effect, would be much more complex and the British representative observed: "As far as chemical warfare is concerned I think we must rest content for the moment with the Geneva Protocol."<sup>70</sup>

Accordingly, on 6 August 1968, the British delegation to the ENDC put forward a working document which was formulated along above lines.<sup>71</sup>

The new Convention would also ban the production of microbiological agents for military purposes and the attendant research on it. Existing stocks would be destroyed. "All interested civil medical and health services will have access to all research work giving rise to allegations that the duties imposed by the Convention are not being respected. This research work ought if necessary to be made the subject of an international enquiry and the public ought if necessary to be admitted as observers, in so far as this is compatible

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70 Ibid.

71 ENDC/231.

with national security and the protection of industrial and commercial processes." It was also laid down "that a group of competent experts, created under the aegis of the United Nations, should carry out an inquiry into the allegations of a party to the Convention claiming that another party has infringed the duties laid down by the Convention. The Convention would include a provision under which Parties would unreservedly promise to cooperate in an enquiry, and any failure to respect this duty or any other duty imposed by the Convention would be communicated to the Security Council". The British draft may be considered as a very important initiative taken for its ban on the development, testing, manufacture and stockpiling of weapons. At the same time, it was criticized for unnecessarily duplicating the ban on biological warfare already covered by the Geneva Protocol of 1925, thus weakening the scope of the said agreement; and it adds very marginally to the rights already enjoyed by member States and organizations of the U.N., with the exception of the general authority given to and the duty imposed upon the Secretary-General to order an inquiry upon receipts of complaints from a State. Furthermore, the draft provides that nothing it contains limits the duties enjoined upon States under the 1925 Geneva Protocol and that each Party undertakes never to use biological means of warfare "provided that it has not already made undertakings to this effect by Treaty or other instruments in force banning the use of chemical and biological methods of

warfare." This may have introduced uncertainties into the import of the Geneva Protocol and as Fischer points out "its adoption might lead to a multiplication of undertakings by States on the same subject, which would raise doubts about the similarity and exact meaning of these undertakings."<sup>72</sup>

Also, by separating Chemical weapons from biological ones it ignored the possibility that an exclusive convention on B-weapons may spur on an arms race in C-weapons. The report of the United Nations experts shows that it is very difficult to distinguish between B and C weapons and these are linked together in international instruments like the 1925 Protocol, the Paris Treaty of 23 October 1954, the Austrian State Treaty of 15 May 1965, in Disarmament proposals submitted by the Soviet Union and the U.S.A., and also in U.N. General Assembly Resolutions. A corresponding ban on the manufacture of C weapons would have greatly enhanced the sense of security against this chilling fear of a kind of weapons which once released cannot be controlled any more. The evolution of the British attitude on the C and B methods of warfare reflects an interesting example of a treaty or an international agreement being brought back to the political arena for either political or military reasons and this is done by using escape clauses and re-interpretations.<sup>73</sup> According to the interpretation offered by some academics there was a desire to influence

72 G. Fischer, op. cit., p. 175.

73 Leonard Beaton, op. cit., pp. 136-37.

the U.S. policy of using in Vietnam some agents which were banned by the Geneva Protocol. The British proposal, nevertheless, also aimed at pacifying public indignation on the activities of the microbiological research centre at Porton Down which carried out research in secret and passed on the information to the United States.<sup>74</sup> British attitude evolved further when the CS gas highly effective as a riot control measure was decided to be used in Northern Ireland and when the United States had used it in Vietnam with attractive military benefits. Accordingly a new definition was offered. In the House of Commons Debates, the Foreign Secretary said: "Modern technology has developed CS smoke which, unlike the tear gases available in 1930, is considered to be not significantly harmful to man in other than wholly exceptional circumstances; and we regard CS and other such gases accordingly as being outside the scope of the Geneva Protocol."<sup>75</sup> A revised Draft Convention for the Prohibition of Biological Methods of Warfare and accompanying draft Security Council Resolution, was tabled at the ENDC, on 26 August 1969, by the United Kingdom.

74 The Times (London), 6, 7, 8, 27, 28 June 1968; The Observer, 16 June 1968; The Economist, 20 July 1968.

75 House of Commons, Debates, 2 February 1970, cols. 17-18.



## Chapter VII

## CONCLUSION

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### CONCLUSION

Looking back it appears that in spite of their passion for non-proliferation, the British had perhaps helped more than not the spread of the atom. It is true that the CND movement, the non-nuclear club proposal, the unilateralist stand and the great nuclear debate before the general elections of 1964 - all these did show some concern at the growing nuclear menace. But put against the larger base of the British electorate and on the hard rock of political expediency this moralist dissent soon withered away. Once a great opponent of the Conservative Government's nuclear policy, Labour's Minister for Disarmament Lord Chalfont observed in 1966, "In the pursuit of peace, unilateralism and patriotism are equally irrelevant",<sup>1</sup> and in presenting British arms control policy in the U.N. General Assembly in 1966 he asked who would follow suit and how would it affect the policies of other countries if Britain decided to "abandon its nuclear capability and throw all its nuclear weapons into the sea."<sup>2</sup>

Shed of its role as the opposition, Labour realized that the problem of proliferation has vastly been changed by 1964. France refuses to be drawn into the folds of any non-proliferation agreement. Furthermore, with the atomic

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1 Lord Chalfont, Politics of Disarmament, op. cit., p. 343.

2 General Assembly, First Committee, UN Doc. A/C.1/PV. 1432, 26 October 1974, p. 18.

detonation of China and its possible effect on the security of the Asiatic nations, the construction of atomic reactors in Israel and its possible effect on the countries of the Middle East, the problem of proliferation has gone beyond the periphery of the Western world and has to be seen in its global context. Lord Chalfont expressed concern that "progress of nuclear disarmament among nuclear powers...would also make it difficult for the nuclear powers to extend a guarantee to a non-nuclear power against the possibility of attack or blackmail by a nuclear power that had not signed the non-proliferation treaty".<sup>3</sup> This approach to the problem of non-proliferation is in rapport with the theoretical formulations by academicians in Britain. Hedley Bull suggests that in managing the problem of proliferation the nuclear powers should not try to adopt either too low a posture that appreciably narrows down their gap from the lesser Powers or too high a posture that makes all questions of arms control purely academic.<sup>4</sup> The question is that in maintaining this delicate balance of power, how much further is "further" and what is the yardstick to decide where the threshold should lie. From the point of view of the security of the non-nuclear powers, a system of collective assurances may not come to much in the

3 Lord Chalfont, Politics of Disarmament, op. cit., p. 348.

4 Hedley Bull, "The Role of the Nuclear Powers in the Management of Nuclear Proliferation" in Arms Control for the Late Sixties, op. cit., pp. 143-50.

end. But nevertheless, this was put forward as a big safeguard to the signatories of the NPT quite often by the British delegation.<sup>5</sup> The best hope for non-dissemination perhaps lay in the years between 1945 and 1952 when by not deciding to acquire nuclear weapons of her own Britain could have helped to keep the nuclear gun confined to the bottles of the USA and the USSR. It is not wrong to assume that London, by her actions had substantially influenced the subsequent French decision to build a bomb. The strategic and political justification put forward to support the creation and continuation of the British nuclear force and the amendments carried out in the American Atomic Energy Law in 1958 in favour of the British development was a lesson and an incentive for France. The examples of Britain and France inspired West Germany to desire a share in the nuclear control of the NATO. An unsubstantiated report quoted some Russian officials' view that before 1960 one faction in the Soviet Union had thought in terms of setting up China as the second nuclear weapon State in the Communist bloc to counterbalance the British role in the Western deterrence.<sup>6</sup> Thus it is tempting to conclude that Britain might have helped more than any one else to spread the bomb among other medium level powers of the world.

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5 ENDC/PV. 231, 9 September 1965, p. 14.

6 New York Times, 21 May 1965.

For a long time now the United States had been discouraging small deterrents as costly, provocative, lacking in credibility, prone to obsolescence etc. When the NPT was being negotiated in Geneva, George Ball, a former U.S. Under Secretary of State called on Britain to renounce its nuclear power, to facilitate a permanent non-proliferation treaty, and to win over the reticence of some of the non-nuclear countries to the Treaty. Strong opinions were aired in Britain against this idea. "Whatever Ball may say, Britain has also received much American advice that Britain should do nothing which would leave France as the only nuclear power in Europe" and whatever the Government's reservations may be "about its military value (which is nugatory), their reluctance to part company with these weapons denotes that they have some political value in international relations... The Government are contemplating not only improvements and extensions to the life of these existing weapons but the possibility of a new generation of weapons altogether. The nature of these weapons means that such a decision would be dictated more by political factors than by questions of security".<sup>7</sup>

McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the U.S. President for National Security Affairs, 1961-66 said that "...the weight of British influence on the test-ban and on other

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7 "Keeping the Bomb", The Times (London), 5 May 1967.

nuclear issues has never been significantly affected by the weight of British nuclear forces...British influence...has rested in persistence, eloquence and persuasiveness, not on megatons".<sup>8</sup> In spite of such statements, Britain continued in her stance as a nuclear power of standing and forged a link of complete identity of interests with the U.S. and the Soviet Union in Geneva.

In retrospect it is evident that Britain's role in the ENDC constituted mainly in lending a little extra weight to the U.S. elbow, and even if there were occasional divergences, they did not show up. Strategic as well as economic dependence on the United States, especially in regard to problems of balance of payments put natural constraints on a note of dissent. On the problem of verification for example, in 1966, Lord Chalfont wrote elsewhere that measures for disarmament "are entirely a matter of political will" and "if there were ever purely technical, as opposed to disguised political, obstacles in the way of general and complete disarmament - for instance, because of genuine belief that the means of verification would prove inadequate - these obstacles have now largely disappeared."<sup>9</sup> It is clear then, that the British unofficially did not fully conform to the standard of verification demanded by the United States; and believed something

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8 Ditchley Foundation Lecture, 18 July 1969.

9 Lord Chalfont, op. cit., p. 344.

close to the Russian view that inspection could be minimal. In the light of advanced techniques of satellite intelligence, improved radar system, sonar arrays, etc. on-the-spot international inspection is no longer necessary today. Even on comprehensive test ban, the Swedish delegation showed in a detailed technical study, that with the aid of interchange of seismic data and with a system of 'verification by challenge' the technical barriers to a comprehensive test ban treaty could be easily done away with. Britain thought it a useful procedure, but joined hands with the U.S. in raising other technical and political objections to forestall a final agreement on a concrete treaty on this basis. The fact remains, so long as China and France continue in their right to improve nuclear weapons by means of atmospheric tests, the Soviet Union and the United States would not agree to give up their right to undertake underground tests. The United Kingdom considered the emergence of Communist China as a great element of instability in the precarious strategic balance prevalent today.<sup>10</sup> It should be remembered that among the three nuclear Powers represented in the ENDC Britain was the only one to have a tolerable diplomatic exchange with Peking, and was in favour of bringing China into the vortex of international negotiations. Apart from American support for Hongkong, the war in Vietnam made this prospect bleak. The British Minister for

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10 ENDC/PV. 265, 16 June 1965, pp. 4-5.

Disarmament writes, "it is indeed doubtful whether Peking is seriously interested in the U.N. while the United States maintains its present military and political posture in Asia. The very least the rest of the world can do is to find some way of removing the obstacles to Chinese admission."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the British may not have seen eye to eye with the U.S. on the Vietnam war and considered it as a 'cloak of inhibition' cast upon disarmament negotiations. It is said that one of the important motives behind bringing up the issue of chemical and biological weapons on the Geneva Conference was to discourage the U.S. use of prohibited agents of C and B weapons in Vietnam. That Britain also had her own axe to grind in quelling rebellious Northern Ireland is, of course, beyond question.

Over the MLF issue and its consequences on NPT, the British anxiety had become quite visible, and is betrayed in sentences such as the British Foreign Secretary uttered in order to persuade the Soviet Union to agree on NPT as early as possible: "The existence of a formal agreement which we had all signed would itself constitute a safeguard against a multilateral force which involved the dissemination of nuclear weapons."<sup>12</sup> This was as early as 1964 when the NPT was yet to be brought on to the conference table for discussion by the Committee. Not being able to refuse the U.S. scheme for an

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11 Ibid., p. 347.

12 ENDC/PV. 169, p. 11.



MLF straightaway and being pressed for an early decision on it, around 1964, the British Government under Labour, proposed the ANF alternative as a lesser evil and when both these proposals were packed off in favour of an NPT agreement from the Soviet Union, Britain evidently sighed relief.

At first muted but lately much more pronounced was the British fear of successful development of Anti-Ballistic Missile system by the Super Powers. The dangers of this were widely discussed in the press, in diplomatic exchanges and in disarmament negotiations.<sup>13</sup> The British representative pointed out that apart from doubts whether the ABM system could ever be fully effective, the result of its deployment "would be to upset the strategic balance, to lift the arms race into new and ruinously expensive dimension and to create political and strategic problems that might well entirely disrupt the existing systems of collective security", and it might introduce into nuclear strategy the "destabilizing element of automatic response". So far as the "collective security" system of NATO is concerned, a wide deployment of ABM defence in the Soviet territory would truly not be to its interest and it would reduce the value of the <sup>said</sup> second strike capability of Britain to zero. In a House of Lords debate in 1967, Lord Chalfont welcomed the fact that the Soviet Union had agreed to

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13 ENDC/PV. 165, 16 June 1966; ENDC/PV. 286, 25 August 1962; ENDC/PV. 173, op. cit.; ENDC/PV. 177, 24 March 1964.

enter into talks with the United States with regard to both offensive and defensive missiles and said that the Geneva Conference was kept in touch with these developments. He further said that "we have been in touch with the United States and Soviet Governments in this matter and they are fully aware of our misgivings and of the fact that we subscribe to the belief that the deployment of ballistic missile defences would be the beginning of a dangerous new dimension in the arms race." Behind all the window dressing of concern for arms race, etc., the real stake for the U.K. in it was the so-called viability of the British deterrent and thanks to SALT, it has been continued to some extent for some time more. The British may have had some marginal influence over the American decision to come to terms with the Soviets on this issue.

An important trend in the views expressed by the British delegation seems to have been suggestions in favour of partial solutions to any given problem. "One of my own themes at this Conference has been that if we can have agreement in some areas it helps us on to agreement in others"<sup>14</sup> this statement by the British representative is a typical illustration of the U.K. approach. It supported taking out underground test from a treaty on test ban; favoured vertical proliferation to be

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14 ENDC/PV. 113, 25 March 1963, p. 22.

tackled later than horizontal proliferation and advised chemical weapons to be dealt with subsequent to a convention on biological agents of warfare.<sup>15</sup>

Another noticeable trend in the evolution of British attitude was a marked erosion of mistrust and suspicion towards the Eastern European countries, and with it came a concurrent desire for reduction in its commitments to continental defense for which there were strong economic pressures in Britain. However, this British approach was common with that of West Germany in favouring a negotiated settlement and there was no <sup>desire for a</sup> unilateral reduction in that process.

The most substantial contribution that the British offered to the disarmament negotiations seems to be in their technical studies circulated as working papers to the ENDC. The painstaking and detailed research undertaken in fissile material production, the suggestion for a workable agreement on the modalities of a comprehensive test ban treaty, and more recently the U.K. working paper on a convention on C and B weapons, - are especially noteworthy in this connexion.

The U.K. delegation also made important suggestions on methods of procedure in the Committee to ensure progress with dispatch. From the very beginning the British representatives insisted on getting the scientific experts together and were

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15 ENDC, 10 July 1969 (U.K.).

of the opinion that it was the lack of official collective scientific discussion which has hampered work<sup>16</sup> and that an examination of the technical issues involved in nuclear disarmament perhaps in smaller forums than the plenary sessions of the ENDC was most urgently needed for a better understanding between the two groups.<sup>17</sup> The British Foreign Secretary said that we "should leave the platform for the laboratory"<sup>18</sup> but this approach of taking the discussion away into smaller forums was not liked by the Soviet Union. Lord Chalfont suggested holding more than the customary two meetings a week, informally, so as to improve the method of work and "inject a greater sense of urgency into the deliberations."<sup>19</sup> He also suggested that the co-Chairmen could be invited to report from time to time and give the Committee some guidelines for future progress.<sup>20</sup> In 1968, in accordance with the British suggestions the ENDC decided to have one extra informal meeting in addition to the two plenary sessions.

Politically she wanted 'a ticket' of admission to summit level talks, a leading role in bringing the two giants

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16 ENDC/PV. 113, p. 26.

17 ENDC/PV. 151, 14 August 1963, p. 9; ENDC/PV. 153, 20 August 1963, p. 5; ENDC/PV. 237, 3 February 1966, p. 11.

18 ENDC/PV. 169, p. 9.

19 ENDC/PV. 237, 3 February 1966, p. 11.

20 Ibid.

together to cooperate and to make available to the international community her reserve of superior diplomatic wisdom. These expectations might have in part been fulfilled in the beginning but very soon a situation arrived when the British voice was heard but not counted. At the beginning of the ENDC discussions on GCD Godber, the British delegate used persistently to suggest the formation of a small drafting sub-committee to help the two co-Chairmen in the work of drafting a treaty. However, it was decided that the Soviet Union and the United States as co-Chairmen should consider the draft. The British representative remarked "I would have thought, both from the point of view of expedition of the work and of making all the States here feel that they were fully connected and fully engaged in this important task, there would be advantage in bringing one or two other representatives into the drafting work."

Participation in major consultations became rare and her role in the NPT was much less significant than that on the Partial Test Ban Treaty earlier. Even the speeches in the ENDC became few and far between till a time came when in an explanatory vein Lord Chalfont said "in disarmament negotiations...it is best, if one has nothing new to say, to say as little as possible."<sup>21</sup> If the U.K. had expected that it would be associated with the SALT talks between the U.S.A. and the

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21 ENDC/PV. 262, 5 May 1966, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup>  
U.S.S.R., it was not fulfilled. Great issues of war and peace are now decided in bilateral talks between the Big Two. The diminutions in British power and its growing dependence on the United States has a lot to explain; besides, as the bipolar world saw a transition from confrontation to cooperation between Russia and America, the usefulness of the middleman, an honest broker was, understandably, disposed off.

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22 Lord Chalfont in Lord's Debates, op. cit., said: "I believe that when the talks are a little further advanced there will certainly be a role for other countries to play in this matter."

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