

In the course of the discussion, which lasted several days, Mr Bevin stated the position of the United Kingdom.

He reminded the Committee that when the matter had first been brought up in the Security Council it had been justified on the ground that the presence of troops in foreign territories might constitute a danger to the maintenance of peace. This allegation had not been repeated in the Committee, but the United Kingdom delegation were anxious to know whether it was not in some way embodied in the draft resolution of the Soviet Union. The disarmament problem could not be solved in a hurry. The lessons of the 1919-1939 experiment were not to be forgotten, and there had to be a thorough study before measures could be adopted which would expose the United Kingdom to attack and endanger the lives of her citizens, and of those of the British Commonwealth, unless they could be assured that the instrument forged by the United Nations was going to be effective and would really work.

He thought the question raised by the Soviet draft resolution did not come within the scope of Article 43 of the Charter. The United Kingdom, in common with all other members of the United Nations, would give information on its military forces when the United Nations put into effect the principles laid down in Article 43. In these circumstances the United Kingdom proposed that the Committee should examine this problem not from the narrow viewpoint of the proposal of the Soviet Union, but in relation to the disarmament problem.

The representative of India (Mrs Pandit), referring to the many fields in which Indian troops had fought, said that the vast majority of such troops had been withdrawn. Indian troops would be withdrawn immediately from Indonesia, where they had been used "as an instrument of pressure on Indonesian nationalists struggling for freedom." Mrs Pandit supported the Soviet resolution.

Of the speeches of the smaller delegations, one that aroused attention was that of the representative of Panama (Dr Alfaro), who referred to an agreement concluded between the United States and Panama in 1942 authorizing the establishment of some hundred military bases on the territory of Panama. Almost all of these bases had been handed back to Panama, but a few were still occupied, and there were discussions in progress between the United States and Panama as to the meaning of that part of the agreement which prescribed the time-limit for the evacuation of the bases. Panama had not been subject to any pressure by the United States, but if negotiations were not brought to a conclusion satisfactory to Panama she would certainly appeal to world opinion.

Throughout a long debate the position adopted by the chief powers changed little. The Soviet Union continued to make much of the fact that, out of deference to the wishes of the United States, the original Soviet proposal had been enlarged so that information would now be called for concerning troops stationed not only in territories of members