

One of the most important points of substance on which the views of the West and East have come together is on the levels to which conventional forces and armaments should be reduced in the second stage. The plans of both sides now agree that at this stage the armed forces of the United States and the Soviet Union should be reduced to the level of 1.7 million effectives, and that their armaments should be reduced in relation to force levels. The armed forces and armaments of other militarily important states would be reduced proportionately.

As the two sides have reached agreement in this extremely important area, there seems to be every reason to continue to develop this agreement in detail--to work out the measures and procedures for effecting the reduction of forces and armaments, and for verifying the reduction when it takes place. This line of negotiation should yield fruitful results if pursued by the 10-Nation Committee through joint studies; that is, by detailed negotiations of sub-committees of experts.

I do not wish to give the impression that these detailed negotiations would not be without difficulties. However, since there is agreement on the objective of 1.7 million, it should be possible to find the means and methods of reaching it.

West and East are agreed on the principle that the production of nuclear explosives for making nuclear weapons should be stopped, under international control; and that existing stocks should be destroyed or converted to peaceful purposes. It is agreed also that there should be preliminary joint studies of how exactly this is to be carried out. Why not begin these joint studies at once?

No Cause for Delay

It is unreasonable to say that there first must be agreement on all the details of the programme of general and complete disarmament, from beginning to end. After all, negotiations on the control of the stopping of nuclear tests have been going on at Geneva. There does not seem to be any barrier in principle to beginning similar negotiations on these other aspects of the vital problem of preventing the use of nuclear power for the destruction of civilization.

The ideas of East and West, as expressed in the latest disarmament proposals, have come closer together in regard to the need for some kind of international force to maintain peace and security in the world when general and complete disarmament of the nations is attained. It is also agreed that this force should operate according to the principles of the United Nations Charter. This is a very important principle agreed upon.