

We know that the political and moral values which we cherish and the political system on which we rely do not thrive in conditions of war or continued tension. Our preparations are made for defence only, and war is for us not a means of combatting ideologies which we do not like. Therefore any genuine Soviet move to lessen tension, even if it affects only a limited area of international relations, should be welcomed by us, and we should be willing to go half way at any time to meet it.

There is, of course, the constant danger of conflict from a misunderstanding on both sides of each others motives. In the West we remain with good reason alarmed by the threatening and aggressive policies of the U.S.S.R. in recent years. In turn I think it is not inconceivable, given the atmosphere of totalitarian isolation and ignorance in Moscow, that the Soviet people, and even certain Soviet leaders, may at times consider -- sincerely consider -- that they are threatened by the West. One of the great tasks in the next few years in diplomacy is to try somehow to bridge this gap in misunderstanding, to build what His Holiness the Pope recently so aptly described as "a bridge of truth" between East and West.

I wish in closing to reaffirm my confidence that we are on the right path, and that the agreements we drew up in London and Paris will make an important contribution to security and peace. From the foundations of defence strength and constructive unity, which they will provide the West, I sincerely trust that it will now be possible to convince the Soviet leaders of our firm intention, and indeed determined resolution, to defend ourselves without in any way menacing them, or without rejecting any opportunity to ease a state of international tension which is both sterile and dangerous.

For all these reasons I hope this House will give strong support to the resolution which is before it.

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