

Mr. Prud'homme first indicated that the Political Committee had met in Lagos under the chairmanship of Mr. Andreotti. Forty-seven speakers had contributed their views on what parliaments could do to further disarmament. The presentations highlighted the arms race, the need for real progress at the U.N. Second Special Session, and the necessity for a shift from expenditures on armament to the provision of development funds for the Third World.

He said that the Political Committee had received fifteen draft resolutions from different countries. In order to draft a single text, the Committee had set up a group consisting of members of various delegations which had appointed him Rapporteur.

Mr. Prud'homme stated that the drafting group had produced a joint text in a day, which was a considerable achievement. The Preamble described the key issues in the field of disarmament; substantive Part A set out the views to be expressed in the U.N. Second Special Session while substantive Part B concentrated on general questions. The document called for comprehensive disarmament and negotiations and arms reductions as soon as possible, a successful outcome of the Geneva talks between the U.S. and U.S.S.R., and a new Convention on the military uses of space.

A number of proposals were excluded because they did not receive unanimous support. It was agreed to defer them for consideration at the Rome Conference. The draft text so produced was adopted by the Political Committee and by the I.P.U. Council at Lagos.

On 23rd June 1982 Mr. Andreotti presented their conclusions at the U.N. He received special consideration at the Session as a representative of the I.P.U.

According to Mr. Prud'homme, the task before the present Conference was to re-examine the Lagos text in the light of subsequent events and developments in the disarmament field. He believed that the Political Committee, the drafting group and the Inter-Parliamentary Council were aiming for a general statement of disarmament issues, rather than concentrating specifically on a text to put before the U.N. He felt, therefore, that the present text should be interfered with as little as possible.

In addition to Mr. Prud'homme, who was acting as Rapporteur, two other Canadian parliamentarians took part in this debate: Hon. Allan Lawrence, who was jointly responsible for this subject for the Canadian Group with Hon. Peter Bosa. Mr. Lawrence played an active role in preparing the draft resolution in Lagos.

During the debate Mr. A. Lawrence said that since the Lagos meeting the world had seen the terrible ruthlessness and efficiency of modern conventional weapons in South America and the Middle East. From the human point of view, how could a sensible arms reduction agreement be delayed any longer? The world was in economic recession and Governments felt that they were spending and taxing too much. There had to be reductions in Government expenditure throughout the world, at least in western countries. What could not be done with the money saved by reducing expenditure on armaments?