

"if it would provide opportunity for conducting serious discussions on major problems and would be an effective means of reaching agreement on significant subjects". At the same time, the statement called for preparatory work on the summit meeting to begin through diplomatic exchanges in Moscow in the second half of April leading to a meeting between foreign ministers. The main purpose of this preparatory work should, it was pointed out, be to examine the major questions at issue and so draw up a suitable agenda.

The Russian reply of April 11 was disappointing in that it still insisted that preparations should be confined largely to procedural arrangements and contended that a summit meeting should be held whether or not preparatory work gave promise of success. Nevertheless, in a spirit of accommodation, the Western powers, with the approval of NATO, decided that the qualified Soviet acceptance of diplomatic discussions should be followed up. They have told the Russians that differences on preparation should be the first subject of the diplomatic talks, and that opposing positions on major issues must be examined to determine whether possibilities of agreement exist. The results of this examination must be satisfactory before a worthwhile summit meeting can be held. The present talks in Moscow should demonstrate whether the Soviet Union wants an effective conference or is chiefly interested in propaganda gains. And I may add in this regard that the recent Soviet accusations against the United States are hardly encouraging.

In the event that agreement can subsequently be reached on satisfactory preparatory work, the selection of the agenda will still not be an easy task. A number of items, most of them dealing with various aspects of disarmament, have already been suggested in the correspondence between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the West. The gap between the proposals made by either side is considerable and unfortunately there has been a tendency, as I mentioned earlier, for some of the agenda items to be submitted in the form of prejudged proposals. If we are to approach the summit with an open mind and a desire to reach agreement, we will have to settle on objectively formulated topics. I believe that agreement on this delicate question will be facilitated if the diplomatic negotiations consider the agenda in somewhat more general terms. Such broad subjects as disarmament or European security could surely first be accepted, and then the range of sub-topics under these headings, which both sides could agree to discuss, could be explored.

I conclude with a word of caution. A summit meeting will not, I feel sure, produce any magic solution for all the problems that beset our troubled world, but I believe that a start can be made in decreasing tension and settling some problems or at the very minimum in setting up the machinery for this active and positive consideration. You will recall that on the initiative of the West we had one of these summit meetings in 1955 when the