

Each one of us here is under a moral obligation to our own and to future generations to find a speedy and a lasting solution to this vital question of disarmament. It involves not only reducing arms and eventually getting rid of them, but it also involves putting a stop to the development of new and more deadly weapons. There are two angles to it: disarmament and, at the same time, stopping the arms race.

I do not believe we should be discouraged. The United Nations is no place for a pessimist. Coming from Ottawa, it is very easy for me to come down here in a matter of an hour or an hour and a half; sometimes it takes longer to get from Idlewild Airport to the United Nations Building than it does to get from Ottawa to the airport. It is therefore possible to come down frequently.

I believe that the meetings of this Committee and the meetings of the General Assembly and the meetings of the other Committees at the sixteenth session have already accomplished a great deal. Do you remember, Mr. Chairman, what terrific tension there was when we came here (was it on 19 September?) and everyone was afraid that a nuclear war might break out overnight or over the week-end? Tension could not have been much greater than it was at that time. The very fact that the United Nations General Assembly met started the reduction of that tension.

As the debates have gone on in the weeks which have followed, I believe there has been a steadily-decreasing amount of tension, and we should not be discouraged. I think we are really getting something done which is very much worth while.

Here, today, we are discussing what is really the key problem facing the United Nations: disarmament and stopping the nuclear weapons race. If we can succeed in that, then we can get on to the dozens of other things there are to do to help people build up their countries, to improve the lot of humanity -- all these things that are worth while and that are not destructive but are constructive. This, of course, is what we all really want. No one here wants to be wasting a lot of time talking about weapons and disarmament and all that sort of business. We have to do it because of existing conditions.

Here, now, we have a chance on this disarmament question to get something really worth while under way and I hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will agree on a forum. After all, there is not much difference between 13 and 18 or 20 -- it is really a numbers game. Let them agree on that and let the rest of us offer our full co-operation. Some of us would be on the negotiating body, others would not, but they could perhaps work on a committee which was studying some particular subject; in any event it is important that whatever countries are going to do the negotiating will have