

international situation could be more fully assessed in Washington and Moscow. Delegations of both of the great powers were obviously under instructions to maintain their previous positions until the end of the year. The statements which Tsarapkin made at the opening and at the closing of the third session were almost identical in placing the emphasis on general and complete disarmament as the primary objective of the conference, and in playing down the urgency and flexibility of an agreement on the cessation of nuclear tests and adopting collateral measures. USA held to its well-known positions and made no repeat no new moves except to submit its paper on the reduction of the risks of war by accident, stimulated perhaps by the Cuban crisis. USA delegation eventually said they were willing to consider an interim arrangement on the cessation of underground tests, as advocated by the non-aligned members, but it did so with marked reserve and only after it had become clear that USSR was not repeat not prepared at this time to agree to anything other than a final comprehensive treaty on its own terms. This negative attitude of the two great powers left the non-aligned members feeling frustrated and helpless, and they were saying so more openly on the eve of the recess.

3. Nevertheless, there were encouraging circumstances. USA and USSR delegations throughout the session kept in close and continuous touch with each other. The tone and the atmosphere at the meetings were correct and on the whole exempt from recriminations. The co-chairmen agreed to resume the Conference on January 15 although they may have preferred a later date. Even if the Gromyko proposal for the retention by USA and USSR of a minimum deterrent until the end of the second stage of disarmament was not repeat not clarified, it was expounded energetically by Soviet delegation and when the Conference resumes will still be on the table for further examination. Furthermore, USSR, in recognizing that international scientific observers could play a role in the installation and operation of the so-called "black boxes" seem to have eased their rigidity on verification in this context, and it may be a significant step towards the conclusion of a test ban agreement. By clarifying their joint memorandum of April 16 in relation to the possibility of an interim arrangement, in a sense which recognizes the need for some form of on-site inspection, the eight non-aligned members may also have set the conditions for progress when the international situation becomes more propitious.

4. One may hope that when the Conference resumes in mid-January USA and USSR in their reassessments of the international situation will have decided to follow a policy of *détente* and that their delegations will return to Geneva with a renewed determination to negotiate effectively on disarmament. Perhaps, the situation will remain substantially as it is now. On the other hand, the reassessments might result in decisions by either USSR or USA, or by both, to increase their military preparedness with a consequent negative effect on serious disarmament negotiations. It seems probable however that the implications for the disarmament conference of the eventual decisions of the great powers would become apparent only gradually, possibly not repeat not until March. If no repeat no firm decisions have been taken by USA and USSR at the time of resumption the attitudes of UK, Canada and the eight non-aligned members may exercise an important influence on the formulation of those decisions and on the future of the conference.

5. With these considerations in mind, we intend during the recess to review positions on various aspects of our work.

(a) No repeat no doubt you have had under review the memorandum to Cabinet of February 13/61, which constitutes our basic instructions, to see if it still fully meets the present requirements of the conference.<sup>59</sup> We shall also be thinking of this, and may offer comments later.

<sup>59</sup> Voir/See Cabinet Document 67-61,† February 13, 1961, PCO/C-20-5; Volume 28, document 331.