

General Disarmament

I turn now to the task of reaching agreement on general and complete disarmament; in my view, a special effort is needed in the following main areas of the two plans before the Conference:

- (1) conventional armaments and armed forces;
- (2) chemical and biological weapons;
- (3) fissile materials and nuclear weapons;
- (4) nuclear weapons carriers.

Although serious differences have emerged with regard to some of these questions, on others there are elements common to the proposals of the United States and those of the Soviet Union which I believe can be built up into significant agreement. I deal first with those items where the chances of early agreement are the greatest.

The proposals of the two major powers on conventional disarmament lead to the same goal - the elimination of all arms and of all forces except those needed for the maintenance of internal security and international peace. The differences separating them have now been reduced by the Soviet acceptance of the idea of percentage reductions in this field. We consider that percentage reduction is the most logical and equitable method of achieving the goal and we are glad that the U.S.S.R. has accepted the principle. We hope it will come to recognize the virtue of extending this principle to the elimination of other means of waging war.

Conventional Arms Agreement

The United States and the U.S.S.R. now agree that conventional armaments will be reduced by a total of 65 per cent in the first two stages of disarmament. With regard to armed forces, there is a continuing difference over levels which should apply at the end of stage one. However, there is virtual agreement on a level of about one million men at the end of Stage II.

Here is a large and important area where the two sides are now very close together. This is an extremely significant development, for it means that agreement on the whole question of conventional disarmament has come within the reach of the Conference. Surely, Mr. Chairman, further negotiations can remove remaining points of difference. The co-chairmen, I suggest, should as soon as possible work out agreed articles.

Taken together, the other three points I have mentioned comprise the whole field of mass destruction weapons, namely chemical and biological weapons, nuclear weapons, and the means for their delivery. How to deal with these weapons is the most crucial issue in the whole disarmament problem. Where do the two major powers stand in this?