

their presence is one of the main assets of this Conference. I hope, and I am sure, that they will not lose heart but will continue the work they have been doing.

What we must consider is how the Conference can continue to work without interruption and avoid stalemate. I suggest that we concentrate in the next eight weeks on those areas in which progress can be registered so that we may have some concrete achievements to report to the General Assembly. This Conference must not simply mark time.

The course of events since we began our work last March has more than ever convinced me of the urgency of our task. The spiralling arms race, to which Mr. Menon has referred, which becomes more dangerous and more costly every day, makes the continuing efforts of this Conference imperative.

Sheer Madness

At the top of the list of questions where agreement should be within reach is the cessation of nuclear tests. The announcement of the regrettable decision of the Soviet Government to resume tests points up that this is the most pressing issue which we have to resolve. The Canadian position has been and is that we are against all nuclear weapons tests. Mr. Chairman, all this testing is sheer madness - polluting the air human beings must breathe, endangering the lives of generations yet unborn, and possibly leading to the destruction of civilization.

The members of this Conference, and particularly the nuclear powers, have a responsibility before the world to make a further all-out effort to find a solution. The Canadian Government has been deeply disappointed by the lack of progress in the discussion thus far in the sub-committee on the cessation of nuclear-weapons tests. There is no doubt that the action which the nuclear powers take to deal with tests will be the criterion by which their intentions and their good faith will be judged in the whole field of disarmament.

The difficulty of finding a satisfactory verification system has been the main obstacle in the way of an effective test-ban agreement. A major contribution to overcoming this obstacle has been the compromise proposal tabled by the eight uncommitted members of this Conference.

It is, of course, encouraging that the nuclear powers have all indicated their acceptance of this neutral proposal as a basis for further negotiations.

But in my view, Mr. Chairman, the nuclear powers have not exploited sufficiently the possibility for progress which the eight-nation memorandum affords and have been engaged in a largely fruitless debate over how it is to be interpreted. The time is overdue to enter upon real negotiation based on this memorandum.