

support and co-operation of all the governments concerned.

A significant factor in the successful negotiations on Laos was the business-like procedure evolved. In particular, the device of co-chairmanship proved its worth and the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union deserve much of the credit for the result.

DISARMAMENT

Furthermore, after a year of inactivity, steps forward were also taken in the field of disarmament. The United States and the Soviet Union reached accord on a Joint Statement of Agreed Principles and laid it before the General Assembly on 20 September 1961. This was followed by another major advance - the establishment of the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee which began its deliberations in March of this year in Geneva.

This Committee has two important advantages over previous disarmament forums. First, following the precedent of the Laos Conference, it has the United States and the Soviet Union as permanent co-chairmen and they meet together frequently to arrange agendas and try to resolve differences. Secondly, it has as members eight non-aligned nations - Brazil, Burma, Ethiopia, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Sweden and the United Arab Republic. By their impartial and constructive approach to the intricate problems of disarmament, these eight nations have helped to advance the work of the conference.

For the first time since nations began to debate this all-important question, the two major powers have put forward comprehensive treaty proposals. The Committee has been examining these proposals for the past five months. One thing shown conclusively is that the dangers caused by the vast array of modern armaments cannot be removed at one stroke or by adopting some simple formula. To reach agreement on general and complete