

We have also noted with interest the statement on January 15 of the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, who indicated that while his Government stands by the comprehensive Anglo-French plan, it is also prepared to consider measures of partial disarmament as a first step to enable disarmament to get underway.

The distinguished representative of Yugoslavia reiterated in his statement the view of his Government that pending agreement on general disarmament we should seek early agreement and implementation of such initial measures as are now feasible. This is a point of view which has been advanced with some frequency in the last year or so and I believe that it has considerable merit. While disarmament cannot be dissociated from other international political problems which we face, it is true that large scale armaments are themselves an important source of international tension, particularly in view of the terrible destructiveness of modern nuclear weapons. I therefore agree that some start towards disarmament, however limited, might well have a salutary effect both on the international situation and the prospects of further disarmament.

We are certainly not all in agreement, Mr. Chairman, on the substance of our disarmament programme. Nevertheless, I am sure we all agree that the United Nations must carry on with its negotiations for such an agreed programme. We shall therefore shortly have before us a draft resolution, jointly sponsored by a group of countries including Australia, Canada, El Salvador, France, India, Japan, Norway, United Kingdom, United States and Yugoslavia.

This resolution does not seek to impose on any government, any policy or programme with which it is unable to agree. It is based on a realistic acceptance of the fact that disarmament can be achieved only by negotiations and willing agreement. It cannot be legislated or imposed, however impressive the majority in votes may be for any particular plan.

The resolution which I recommend to the Committee, therefore, does not discriminate against any particular proposals in favour of others. It commits us only to renew the negotiations in the established United Nations disarmament bodies, and to carry them forward with persistence and good faith. It embraces all the proposals which have been made since the 10th session of the General Assembly, whether here in the Assembly or in the Disarmament Commission or its sub-committee, and a report, by a stated time, to the Commission which will then, of course, report back to this Assembly.

I trust, Mr. Chairman, that this resolution will receive overwhelming support; indeed that it will be unanimously adopted. This would give us the best possible basis on which to continue the desperately urgent effort to reduce the arms burden, and, eventually, we hope, to eliminate the terrible threat of thermonuclear war.