

MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

FROM THE WORLD CONGRESS OF GENERAL DISARMAMENT AND PEACE

9th - 14th July 1962

We have come to Moscow from the four corners of the earth. We have various professions and differing convictions. We have for week discussed with the utmost frankness the question arising from the danger of nuclear war that hangs over mankind. This has helped us to know one another better and we are convinced that it is possible to find a way out of the situation that today threatens every country and every people.

The arms race increases tension and mistrust between nations. The tension and mistrust between nations promotes the arms race. A vicious circle has been created. The destructive power of weapons grows more and more frightful, yet voices are heard demanding the unleashing of a preventive war.

Nevertheless, we firmly believe that disarmament is not only imperative, it is possible. No longer is it a dream only of the best minds of humanity. For the first time in history it has become a practical task facing each and every one of us.

Lifting the burden of the arms race would bring benefit to all. Disarmament would release resources that could be applied to raise the standard of living in all countries. Disarmament would save funds that could be applied to increase the rate of development of countries so far economically underdeveloped. Disarmament would involve the disappearance of all foreign military bases and the withdrawal of all foreign troops, thus aiding the people struggling for national independence. Disarmament must be general, complete and under strict international control. There can be no disarmament without control, no control without disarmament.

We have thoroughly studied the obstacles that hinder its realisation, and we know that its achievement will be hard. There are those who oppose even negotiations, some from blindness and inertia, others from private interest or from military ambition. We are convinced, however, that all obstacles can be overcome. In every disarmament plan weak aspects can be pointed out, but we hold that it is better to agree on a compromise acceptable to all than to pursue the arms race.

However, experience has shown that it would be a dangerous illusion to believe that disarmament can come of itself. It is impossible to rely only on the diplomats and military specialists who prolong discussions from year to year. Only the efforts of the people of all lands can compel the statesmen to find a solution. Divided protests are not sufficient. It is time for a mighty movement of resistance to the arms race and all war preparations.

If humanity has escaped being plunged into nuclear war during the past seventeen years, this is due above all to the tireless efforts of the peoples for peace. But we must openly recognise that there are still many who stand aside from active struggle against the arms race.

There are still many not alert to its dangers, many who have not yet realised the full seriousness of its threat, nor their responsibility for saving peace. And to all these we say: 'Realise the dangers of the days in which we live, rally to the ranks of those who are fighting for disarmament and peace!'

Time does not wait. Thermo-nuclear weapons may soon be found in the arsenals of dozens of countries, and the improvement of means of delivering such weapons may make control impossible.

We are firmly opposed to all testing of nuclear bombs and similar devices, firstly because of their threat to life and health of this and future generations, and secondly because they increase the tempo of the arms race. We earnestly appeal to the government of all the nuclear powers. We call on them to reach, without delay, agreement on nuclear power. We call on them to reach, without delay, agreement on renunciation of all tests of nuclear weapons and conclude a treaty banning forever all such tests everywhere - in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.

This would be a first step towards the complete prohibition and elimination of all nuclear arms and means of delivering them. Our chief and urgent task is the conclusion by the government of a treaty of general and complete disarmament under strict international control. We therefore call for business-like and practical discussions on all the plans put forward, enabling the swift conclusion of the treaty.

Under the pressure of public opinion, and thanks to the action of the uncommitted countries, the positions of the chief negotiating powers in respect to the principles of disarmament have to a certain extent grown closer. But serious differences of opinion are still producing deadlock. Only if the peoples intensify their pressure can a treaty be secured.

It is for the forces of peace to set an example towards bringing about better understanding and dissolving mistrust. To this task we believe our Congress has made a powerful contribution. Ways must be found, appropriate to every organization to continue this beginning. Passivity harms the cause of peace. On us all depends the dawn of the day when mankind will be liberated from the threat of nuclear death. We who want peace are many. If we all should act, and if all who act should act together in friendship, we could clear the road to our common aim, enduring peace.

Moscow, 14th July, 1962