U. S. Must Act To End Spiral

By SHIRLEY JONES

The featured speaker for the Political Union discussion of unilateral disarmament was Mr. Ronnie Dugger, contributing editor for the Texas Observer.

Supporting the affirmative side, Dugger pointed out the barbarism of modern weapons and illustrated the way they cause the West and the Communist nations to be suspicious and fearful of each other. He then observed that both sides have stated preference of economic competition to military conflict; however, all are caught in a spiral of building tension resulting from ever-increasing arms build-up.

IF BOTH groups wait for the other to make the first move, then the spiral will continue upward until something snaps. Only if one side is willing to take unilateral action to show its good faith can a third world war be averted.

Although Mr. Dugger did not make specific reference to the school of thought that believes both the United States and Russia have “overkill” stockpiles—more than enough weapons to annihilate the enemy—he did assert that the first step in unilateral disarmament could be to destroy surpluses so that our defense would not be materially weakened. Only if the Russians would take the next step would we continue to disarm.

THE FIRST speaker for the negative was Eddie Price. Russia’s avowed goal, he said, is and always has been world domination by any means. We can protect ourselves against such an aggressor only by increasing our reserve strength. “Russia must realize by now that we will not use atomic weapons first, but knowing that we have them could deter her from starting a war.”

Jack Clopton added support to the negative side. “There is no difference between the effect of your unilateral disarmament policy and what we are now doing. You assume that we would not take further steps unless Russia first follows our actions. As shown in the last moratorium, if we say that we are no longer testing bombs, we are no longer testing, but Russia’s word of honor cannot be trusted.”

“BEFORE WE could take a second step to disarmament, we would have to be sure that Russia had done what she promised—this would require an inspection system which we would have to decide upon through negotiations. This is what we are working for now.”

Raymond Wilson, speaking for the affirmative, asserted that there would be a difference in the effect of our disarmament policy if the U.S. adapted unilateral action—neutralist nations would be favorably impressed.

“Russia must then either completely refuse to disarm and make up some flimsy excuse or try to recoup the propaganda advantage by outdoing us.”