



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON KOREA

SIXTH INFORMATION REPORT**

(Period 15 May - 4 June 1949)

Note by the Secretary-General: The Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the Members of the General Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5 (f) of General Assembly resolution 195 (III) of 12 December 1948, the sixth information report of the United Nations Commission on Korea.

Seoul, 10 June 1949

- I. ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION
- II. MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES
- III. OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION

(a) Meetings of the Commission and Sub-Committees.

1. During the three-week period covered by this report, the Commission held five plenary meetings (twenty-eighth through thirty-second). An ad hoc Committee of the Whole on the Question of Observer Teams met once. Sub-Committee I held five meetings (twenty-eighth through thirty-second), including three hearings. No meetings of Sub-Committee II were held during this period.

(b) Office of the Chairman

2. The representative of France, Mr. Henri Costilhes, continued as Chairman of the Commission.

(c) Membership of the Commission

3. The representative of the Philippines, Mr. Rufino Luna, returned to Seoul from the Philippines on 16 May.

II. MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES

(a) Plenary Meetings of the Commission

(1) Composition of the Commission

4. At the twenty-eighth meeting on 18 May the Commission adopted a resolution urging on the Government of Syria the importance of appointing a

* First issued at Seoul as A/AC.26/28.

** For the last report see A/906.

/representative to

representative to the United Nations Commission on Korea and requesting the Secretary-General to facilitate his arrival at Seoul (Annex 1).

(ii) Report of Sub-Committee I: Persons to be heard and contact with North Korea

5. At the twenty-eighth meeting on 18 May, the Commission approved the second part of a report of Sub-Committee I, stating that pending the receipt of a reply to the letter transmitted to North Korea, the Sub-Committee would pursue other possible courses of action in contacting North Korea (Annex 2, A).

6. It deferred action on the first part of the report, recommending inter alia a hearing of Kim Koo, Chairman of the Korean Independence Party. This part of the report was approved at the thirtieth meeting on 23 May after the Commission had been informed by its Chairman of his impressions regarding possible repercussions of the hearing, with one addition to the list of persons to be heard (Annex 3).

(iii) Publicity concerning letter to North Korea

7. At the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth meetings the Commission considered what steps were to be taken in view of recently published press comments and speculations occasioned by the trip made by a member of the Secretariat to Hong Kong.* It had given rise to incorrect interpretation of the purpose of the trip, which in turn had provoked some concern in the minds of members of the Government of the Republic of Korea.

8. Some members of the Commission felt that the release of the text of the letter to General Kim Il Sung, along with a statement of the circumstances of its dispatch, would clarify the position of the Commission and put an end to erroneous interpretation. Other members favoured the release of a summary of the letter rather than its full text, as the Commission had not yet received an acknowledgement of its receipt. At the twenty-ninth meeting on 19 May the Commission decided, in order to avoid any further misinterpretation, to issue a press release containing a statement of the manner in which the letter had been transmitted, as well as its full text. (Annex 2, B).

(iv) Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea to the Chairman of the Commission

9. At the thirty-first meeting on 26 May the Commission agreed on the contents of a communication to be addressed by the Chairman to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in reply to his letter (Annex 2, C).

* See A/904, Section II (a) (i).

10. In his communication the Chairman informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that in the opinion of the Commission the question which had prompted the dispatch of his letter had been answered in Press Release No. 17 (see Annex 2, B). He assured the Minister that the Commission had always highly appreciated the help and cooperation, and kept in mind the status, of the Government of the Republic of Korea.

(v) Troop withdrawal

11. At the twenty-ninth meeting on 19 May the representative of the Philippines introduced a draft resolution to the effect that as long as the Commission is unable to observe the withdrawal of USSR occupation forces, and while the problem of troop withdrawals remains "a problem of the United Nations, the United States may not withdraw unilaterally its troops in South Korea without previous consultation with the General Assembly or its Interim Committee". In the discussions which followed, the question was raised whether under General Assembly resolution 195 (III) of 12 December 1948 the Commission had to assume any responsibility for either the timing or the facilitating of the withdrawal of troops, and both positive and negative views found expression.

12. The debate was continued at the thirtieth meeting on 23 May, when the representative of the Philippines presented as a compromise an amended draft resolution expressing the opinion that the Commission assumed no responsibility regarding the timing or the facilitating of the withdrawal of forces of occupying Powers.

13. The resolution was adopted with some changes (Annex 4) by three votes to one, with two abstentions. Members who abstained felt that there was no need for such a resolution, while the dissenting member did not agree that the Commission could be absolved of all responsibility in the matter of withdrawal or non-withdrawal of troops.

14. The question of troop withdrawal was again discussed at the thirty-second meeting on 2 June, in connection with unofficial reports of withdrawals of United States forces. It was agreed that a meeting between the Commission and the Ambassador of the United States would be desirable, in which practical aspects of the Commission's observation duties could be discussed.

15. One such practical question, that of the need for military experts, and of their nationality, was also discussed at the twenty-second meeting, but no decision was reached.

(vi) Observer teams

16. Discussion of this question* was resumed at the thirty-first meeting on

* See A/906, Section II (a) (ii).

/26 May.

26 May. Two representatives stated their opposition to the proposal of the representative of El Salvador, while others felt that the question required further consideration. It was decided to establish an ad hoc Committee of the Whole, under the chairmanship of the representative of El Salvador, to study and report to the Commission within two weeks whether observer teams were authorized under the General Assembly resolution of 12 December 1948, and what their functions and usefulness would be. No publicity was to be given to the establishment of the ad hoc Committee or to its terms of reference.

17. At the thirty-second meeting on 2 June, the Commission adopted the report of the ad hoc Committee of the Whole on the Question of Observer Teams (Annex 5), which expressed the view that "it would not be useful at the present time to continue the consideration of the question".

(vii) By-Election, Chenan, Chung Cheng Namdo

18. At the twenty-eighth meeting on 23 May the Commission decided to accept an invitation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to visit Chenan on the occasion of a by-election to be held there on 10 June. This visit would be for the purpose of general observation and no report would be made on the election.

(b) Work of the Sub-Committees

(i) Ad hoc Committee of the Whole

19. The ad hoc Committee held one meeting on 31 May and adjourned sine die after adoption of its report (see II (a) (vi) above).

(ii) Sub-Committee I

20. Sub-Committee I held three hearings and two business meetings during the period.

The following persons appeared before the Sub-Committee:

KIM Koo, Chairman, Korean Independence Party

KWON, Yun Ho, Protestant leader

General LEE, Chun Chun, member of the National Assembly

21. At the twenty-eighth meeting on 12 May, the Sub-Committee agreed on persons to be heard and on pursuing possible courses of action in contacting North Korea (see II (a) (ii) above).

22. The Sub-Committee deferred a decision as to the dates of further visits to industrial centres.

23. At the thirty-second meeting on 3 June, the Sub-Committee agreed that it had completed its formal hearings and would recommend a press release to that effect. It was further agreed that the Chairman would prepare the draft of a radio broadcast to North Korea.

/24. The future work

24. The future work of the Sub-Committee was also discussed during the meeting.

III. OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

25. The Chairman of the Commission, the representative of Australia, and the alternate representative of El Salvador visited Korean army installations along the 38th parallel on 25 May.

ANNEX 1*

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION

Resolution Adopted by the Commission at its twenty-eighth
meeting, 18 May 1949

The United Nations Commission on Korea,

Considering the importance to its work of representation of all the States members of the Commission,

Considering that such complete representation is indispensable as the Commission enters the most important stage of its deliberations,

Conscious of the important contribution made to the work of the Commission by the Syrian delegation, and

Noting that Syria has not participated in the work of the Commission since the departure of the Syrian representative on 26 March and that his successor has not yet been designated,

Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convey the present resolution of the Commission to the Government of Syria and to urge upon the latter the importance of appointing with the greatest possible dispatch a representative to the United Nations Commission on Korea, and further

Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to facilitate the arrival of such Syrian representative at the seat of the Commission in Seoul Korea, with all possible speed.

* A/AC.26/21

ANNEX 2

CONTACT WITH NORTH KOREA

A.*

Report of Sub-Committee I adopted by the Commission
at its twenty-eighth meeting,
18 May 1949

The following report of Sub-Committee I has been adopted by the Commission:

Pending the receipt of a reply to the letter transmitted to North Korea, as approved by the Commission at its twenty-first meeting on 18 March, the Sub-Committee to pursue other possible courses of action in contacting North Korea, including the use of broadcasting facilities and alternative methods of transmitting a written communication.

B.

Press Release No. 17, 19 May 1949

On 18 February 1949 the United Nations Commission on Korea sent a telegram to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for transmission to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics requesting that Government to lend its good offices for establishing contact between the Commission and North Korean personalities. No answer was received to that request. On that occasion it was stated that this attempt was only one of the endeavours made by the Commission to establish contact with the North. It was understood that the Commission would continue its efforts.

In this connection enquiries were made as to various possible channels of communicating with the North. At the tenth, twelfth and fourteenth meetings of Sub-Committee I., the Secretariat of the Commission presented a report upon its technical enquiries at various places concerning possible links with North Korea. The only practical method of communication was reported to be via ship from Hong Kong to a North Korean port. In the light of these considerations and upon the recommendation of Sub-Committee I., the Commission decided, at its twenty-first meeting on 18 March 1949, to instruct the Principal Secretary, to dispatch a letter, over his signature, to General Kim Il-sung, for the purpose of effecting technical arrangements for the Commission, or members of the Commission, to visit North Korea.

A member of the Secretariat left for Hong Kong the same day to

carry the letter. The text of the letter sent to General Kim Il-sung is reproduced hereunder:

"As you are aware, the United Nations Commission on Korea, established by the General Assembly of the United Nations under a resolution adopted on 12 December 1948 (copy attached), has been desirous since its inception of making contact with the North. It gave expression to this desire in a resolution adopted on 9 February 1949 establishing two sub-committees.* Having been charged to lend its good offices in bringing about the unification of Korea and to seek to facilitate the removal of barriers to economic, social and other friendly intercourse caused by the division of Korea, as well as to be available for observation and consultation in the further development of representative government based on the freely expressed will of the people, and to observe the actual withdrawal of the occupying forces and verify the fact of withdrawal when such has occurred, etc., the Commission felt that it could not implement these instructions without being in a position to inform itself of the situation north of the 38th parallel. As a first step in the implementation of the instructions received from the General Assembly, the Commission, on 18 February 1949, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations requested the Government of the USSR to lend its good offices for the establishment of the desired contact.

"In view of the lack of normal communications, including the impossibility of getting in touch with you directly by mail or cable, I am choosing rather reluctantly this way of approaching you with the request to facilitate such a visit. This visit should take place at the earliest possible date. The Commission is informed that there are practical means of travel to North Korea via ship from Hong Kong without undue delay. However, it feels that you might suggest a more direct means of access.

"For your information, I am attaching a list of the Commission with indications of the membership of Sub-Committees I and II as well as a list of names of the members of the Secretariat who might accompany them. The latter are international officials who have sworn their allegiance exclusively to the United Nations and who are not allowed to accept any instructions from their own or from any other Government.

"In view of the absence of normal means of communication, your reply may be sent through the same channels as this letter is forwarded in its original. The necessary arrangements have been made in Hong Kong for any message of yours to be transmitted to me without delay. I shall, however, be glad to receive any authentic reply from you in any other manner you might prefer."

* See A/822, Annex 1.

C.*

Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic
of Korea, Mr. B. C. Limb, to the Chairman of the Commission, Mr.
Henri Costilhes

Office of Foreign Affairs, Seoul
19 May 1949

There is considerable speculation over the recurrent reports that the United Nations Commission is planning to negotiate or confer with certain representatives of the Communist organization in North Korea regarding the re-unification of Korea. In order to put this speculation to rest, this Government desires to know directly from you whether or not such reports have a foundation in fact; and, if so, whether this plan has been officially approved by the Commission. It will be highly appreciated by this Government if you may be so good as to enlighten us on this question at the earliest convenient date, for the consequences from such a plan to open negotiations would be most serious.

You will recall the first conversation held between some of your distinguished members and the Ministers of this Government soon after your arrival in Seoul early this year. The question of the desirability of your dealing with the Korean Communist leaders of the north was brought up at that time. As you know, we made clear our feeling that many disadvantages and no advantages would result from any such plan.

The fact is that we are fighting the Korean Communists for the very life and freedom of our country as an independent democratic State, which the Korean Communists are avowedly, deliberately and violently endeavouring to destroy. As we have said before, we had no Communist problem in this country before the liberation, but the compromising policy of the Joint Commission encouraged and increased the Communist agitators who infiltrated from abroad. Under the handicap of these circumstances, the United States Government did everything it could to remove the dividing line between north and south through negotiations over a period of two years, but the efforts were all in vain.

Later, at the request of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea we opened a way for the leaders of north and south together for a joint conference. The result was injurious to the cause of freedom and

* A/AC/25/23

democracy, succeeding only in strengthening the Communist position both north and south. We endured all this to satisfy the desires of those who were convinced they should experiment with the possibility of winning reasonable co-operation of the Communists. It has been our hope that there would be an end to these attempts, since it has been clearly evidenced that such experiments must end in failure and disadvantage to the cause of representative democratic government in Korea.

It is quite a surprise to us that you express a desire to deal with these people once again, in spite of the demonstrated failure of this experiment. Consequently, we remind you of this failure. It was disappointing to us to hear the feeling expressed that the Korean Government was not co-operating with the United Nations Commission. We regret exceedingly if we have appeared unable to co-operate in a manner wholly to your satisfaction. We are fully aware of the role of the United Nations in the re-establishment of Korean sovereignty and we intend to co-operate in the fulfilment of the United Nations' responsibilities in the problems of re-unifying our country and making possible the extension of representative democratic government into the area from which the United Nations Commission has thus far been excluded. We are certain that you gentlemen would not wish us to condone any experiment that endangers the very life of our nation by exposing it to the same dangers we are jointly trying to overcome.

This Government would appreciate an explicit statement from you as to just what you would hope to accomplish by such negotiations. If you tell us how Northern and Southern Korea might be united as a result of a meeting with the Soviet puppets in the north, we would examine such a proposal closely. Without knowing what methods you intend to pursue, or to what ends they might lead, our sincere efforts toward co-operation are rendered more difficult.

As we have said before, it is not the Koreans in the north who are preventing reunion of Northern and Southern Korea; it is their Soviet overlords whose orders they obey. These are the real authorities with whom you must deal. We are sure that our position in this matter will be understood by the representatives of all free nations, represented both on the Commission and in the General Assembly of the United Nations, many of whom are themselves confronted with this same problem of survival against Communist aggression. We are confident that you will have no disposition to proceed with any plans that would harm our cause rather than helping it.

(Signed) Ben C. LIMB
Minister of Foreign
Affairs

ANNEX 3*

PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Report of Sub-Committee I adopted by the Commission at
its thirtieth meeting, 23 May 1949

The following report of Sub-Committee I has been adopted by the
Commission:

The Sub-Committee to hear the following persons at an early date:

KIM, Koo, Chairman, Korean Independence Party

KWON, Yun Ho, Protestant leader

A representative of the Democratic Nationalist Party (to be selected).

* A/AC.26/26.

ANNEX 4*

WITHDRAWAL OF OCCUPATION FORCES

Resolution adopted by the Commission at its
thirtieth meeting, 23 May 1949

The United Nations Commission on Korea,

Having in mind the provisions of section 3 of the resolution of the
General Assembly of 12 December 1948, recommending to the occupying Powers
to withdraw their occupation forces from Korea as early as practicable,

Mindful of the fact that this Commission has not as yet been able to
observe the actual withdrawal of the USSR occupation force from its zone as
announced to the world by radio from Moscow and Pyongyang and by the USSR
delegation in the General Assembly,

Considering that said section 3 of the resolution of the General Assembly
contemplates the withdrawal by both Powers of their occupation forces from
Korea and thus bring about the unification of Korea as a natural sequel of
the abandonment of the 38th parallel by the occupation forces, and

Considering that the problem of the independence of Korea has been a
problem of the United Nations since 1947, when the United States referred this
international question to the United Nations,

Resolves that, while this problem remains a problem of the United Nations,
it is the opinion of this Commission that under the General Assembly
resolution of 12 December 1948 this Commission assumes no responsibility
regarding either the timing or the facilitating of the withdrawal of the
forces of the occupying Powers.

* A/AC.26/25.

ANNEX 5*

QUESTION OF OBSERVER TEAMS

Report of the ad hoc Committee of the Whole

The ad hoc Committee of the Whole on the question of observer teams, which was established by the Commission at its thirty-first meeting on 26 May 1949, met on 31 May to study the functions and usefulness of observer teams and the question of the Commission's authority to establish them.

After discussion, the Committee decided to adjourn sine die and to report to the Commission that in the view of the Committee it would not be useful at the present time to continue the consideration of the question for the study of which it had been created.

* A/AC.26/SC.3/2.