



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON KOREA

NINTH INFORMATION REPORT**

(Period 31 July - 27 August 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 ninth information report of the United Nations Commission on Korea.

Seoul, 27 August 1949

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

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION

(a) Meetings of the Commission and its Committees

- 1. (i) Commission: 7 plenary meetings (51st - 57th)
- (ii) Sub-Committee I: 1 meeting (40th)
- (iii) Working Committee: 6 meetings (1st - 6th)

(b) Office of the Chairman

- 2. Mr. A.B. Jamieson (Australia) succeeded Mr. Rufino Luna (Philippines) in the Chair on 9 August 1949.

(c) Membership of the Commission

- 3. Mr. Yorguy Hakim (alternate, Syria) arrived in Seoul on 21 August.

* First issued at Seoul as document A/AC.26/46.

* For the last report see A/956.

II. MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION AND ITS COMMITTEES

(a) Plenary meetings of the Commission

(1) Future activities of the Commission

4. The first meeting of the Commission (51st meeting held on 4 August) after the completion of its report* to the General Assembly was devoted to a general discussion of projected activities pending consideration of the Korean problem by the General Assembly.

5. Several members were in favour of continuing endeavours to implement the Commission's terms of reference. The possibility of a supplementary report to the General Assembly was envisaged and various subjects were suggested for investigation.

6. One representative felt that it would be consistent with the Commission's report to the General Assembly to adopt a passive attitude and to enter a period of suspended activities. This representative, however, was prepared to follow the Commission in any course of action it might decide upon, which was consistent with its terms of reference.

7. The discussion was continued at the 53rd meeting on 12 August, at which members of the Commission had before them a Secretariat note containing a digest of suggestions put forward at the 51st meeting. The Commission's intentions with regard to its future activities found expression in the following resolution:

"The Commission,

Having completed its report to the General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the possible need of either writing a supplementary report or of supplying the latest information to the Rapporteur for the use of the General Assembly,

1. Establishes a working committee which shall continue while a quorum of the Commission is present in Seoul;

2. Instructs the Working Committee to study

(a) The course of developments in Korea;

(b) The nature and scope of subversive activities directed against the Republic of Korea and the measures taken to counteract them; and

(c) Conditions in North Korea;

Directs the Working Committee to report to the Commission on the foregoing questions from time to time and to make its final report not later than 1 October 1949;

3. Empowers the Working Committee to travel, observe and consult throughout Korea for the foregoing purposes; and

* See Official Records of the fourth session of the General Assembly, Supplement No. 9 (A/936).

4. Determines that every member of the Commission may participate in the Working Committee and that three members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum."

8. At the 54th meeting on 17 August, the Commission adopted, by 4 votes to 2, the following interpretation of paragraph 3 of the above resolution:

"The Commission authorizes the Working Committee to consult and conduct hearings at its own discretion, except in a case where the Chairman of the Working Committee considers it necessary to refer the matter to the Commission."

The dissenting members felt that the Working Committee should have unreserved authority to conduct hearings within its terms of reference.

(ii) Situation in Ongjin

9. In order to obtain first-hand information on the situation on the Ongjin peninsula, where frequent clashes had been reported, as well as on the military situation along the 38th parallel in general, the Commission heard, at its 52nd meeting on 8 August, Brigadier-General Roberts, Chief of the United States Korean Military Advisory Group, and later at the same meeting Major-General Chai, Army Chief of Staff of the Republic of Korea.

10. Statements made by General Roberts and two officers who accompanied him were to the effect that the magnitude of the operations and casualties involved had been vastly exaggerated. Full-scale operations had not taken place, nor were they anticipated.

11. General Chai stated that the strategy of North Korea was to threaten South Korea by deploying units of the "People's Army" and the "People's Constabulary" along the 38th parallel, and to introduce guerrillas led by trained agents into the south.

12. He considered the reported threat of the north to occupy Ongjin and take Seoul by 15 August as propaganda. For the time being, he anticipated only continuing incidents along the 38th parallel and border raids by guerrillas.

13. The forces of the Republic of Korea could reduce their casualties by launching attacks of their own. But, in deference to the Commission and to the United States Military Advisory Group, they maintained a purely defensive attitude.

(iii) Communication from the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea

14. The 55th meeting was called on 22 August in order to consider the following communication dated 19 August 1949 from the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea to the Chairman of the Commission:

"Two employees of the Russian Consulate in Seoul have recently been discovered with certain documents inimical to the Government of the Republic of Korea, as well as with some weapons. Inasmuch as this matter has a direct bearing on the work of the United Nations Commission on

Korea in its various efforts to aid this Government to achieve reunification of its territory and to maintain peace, I wish to suggest that the United Nations Commission on Korea take charge of these Russians and take whatever action it feels appropriate in this case. This Government will be glad to keep these men under custody for the Commission until it takes final disposition of the case."

15. By 4 votes, with 3 abstentions, the Commission rejected the agenda of the meeting on the ground that the subject matter fell outside its terms of reference.

16. On the basis of the unrecorded discussion which preceded this decision, the Principal Secretary addressed the following reply to the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 19 August 1949, addressed to the Chairman of the Commission.

"In expressing appreciation of your Government's desire to be of help in the cause in which the Commission is engaged, I am to inform you that, in the opinion of the members of the Commission, the suggestions made in your letter do not fall under the terms of reference of the Commission as contained in the resolution of the General Assembly of 12 December 1948."

This reply was released to the Press when it was learned that the Foreign Minister had made public the text of his letter.

(iv) Resumption of Press conferences

17. Following the arrest of Korean journalists assigned to cover its activities, the Commission had announced in a press release that it would suspend all press conferences until further notice (See eighth Information Report)*.

18. At its 52nd meeting the Commission decided to issue the following Press release (No. 39 dated 9 August 1949):

"In view of the information supplied from official sources concerning the arrests of some of the correspondents assigned to cover the activities of the United Nations Commission on Korea, the Commission has taken note that these arrests had no direct bearing upon the press coverage of its work.

"The former practice of holding regular Press conferences will be resumed as from 10 August."

(v) Korean opinion on the reputed contents of the Commission's report to the General Assembly

19. The Commission at its 56th meeting on 24 August dealt with Korean reactions to an American news story published in July, according to which the Commission would recommend to the General Assembly that the Korean problem be referred to the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for settlement.

* A/956, paragraphs 16 to 18.

20. The following Press release (No. 42 dated 25 August 1949) was approved by the Commission:

"It has come to the attention of the Commission that an impression has been created in Korea to the effect that the United Nations Commission on Korea did not consider it possible for the United Nations to solve the Korean problem.

"Such an impression is unfounded. The Commission has forwarded its report to the Secretary-General for consideration by the General Assembly.

"This report will be made public prior to the opening of the fourth session of the General Assembly, in English, French, Chinese, Spanish and Russian."

(v) Radio broadcasts of the Commission

21. At its 57th meeting on 25 August, the Commission was informed that assurance had been given that no censorship of its broadcasts would be exercised by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

22. It was agreed that preparations for a broadcast in accordance with the previously projected, and then suspended, programme should be made (See eighth Information Report)*.

(b) Work of the Committees

(1) Sub-Committee I

23. The 40th meeting of the Sub-Committee on 2 August was a hearing of Mr. Choi, Sang Duk, a journalist who had fled from North Korea. He was questioned on conditions in that part of the country.

(11) Working Committee

24. At its first meeting on 17 August, the Committee elected Mr. A.B. Jamieson (Australia) as its Chairman. This and the following two meetings dealt with the Committee's programme of work. Hearings to be held, materials to be gathered, and the sources from which they could be obtained were discussed.

25. The 4th, 5th and 6th meetings were hearings of Mr. Nam, Choong Chun. Mr. Nam identified himself as having formerly been an active member of the Communist Party, and later of the North Korean Labour Party, of many years standing, who had escaped from North to South Korea in early August.

III. OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

26. On 15 August, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the formal inauguration of the Republic of Korea and of the fourth anniversary of the surrender of Japan, a speech was delivered by the Chairman of the Commission at two public celebrations (Annex).

* A/956, paragraphs 19 to 22.

ANNEX

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMAL INAUGURATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ON
15 AUGUST 1948 AND OF THE SURRENDER OF JAPAN ON 15 AUGUST 1945

Speech delivered by the Chairman of the United Nations Commission
on Korea on Monday, 15 August 1949

Press Release No. 40

The 15th of August is not only a great Korean national holiday, it is a day of international rejoicing. It was on 15 August 1945 that the Japanese surrendered. Three years later that surrender bore fruit in the formal inauguration of the Republic of Korea.

The two events which we commemorate are thus most closely linked. The tie which binds them and the theme which runs through the intervening period, is freedom. On 15 August 1945 the world was freed from the threat to its liberties offered by Japanese plans of world domination. Three years later the people of Korea were sharing with the other peoples of the world the blessings of liberty won at such cost of blood and treasure.

A day on which we commemorate the near escape from the danger of brutal extinction of something so fundamental to the human spirit as freedom cannot merely be one of self-congratulation. It should be a day on which to hold in view not only what was bought at such cost, but the dangers which threatened it. It should be a day of re-dedication to service in the unending struggle to keep our freedom secure and to build it more strongly. It is a day in which to read for ourselves and for our children the lesson that each day's freedom must be won anew and is to be ensured only by eternal vigilance.

The organized international community, the United Nations, has contributed much to the establishment of self-government in Korea on the foundations of freedom. It has taken an active part in laying those foundations and, through the present Commission, has shown its continuing interest in deepening and broadening them. On 12 February 1949 the Commission, in a statement of policy made on its behalf by Mr. Patrick Shaw, declared that it would observe with keen interest and active solicitude the efforts of the people of Korea to improve the representative institutions so happily established on the basis of their will freely expressed in the elections observed last year by the Commission's predecessor. The Commission offered to help in every way possible to make available to the people of Korea the experience in democratic government gained by those with a longer history of the operation of institutions representative of the popular will.
/The Commission has

The Commission has been keenly sympathetic with the people of Korea in the difficulties which they have had to face in seeking to go forward in the ways of freedom and self-government. Neither in Korea nor elsewhere in the free societies of the world have those charged with governmental authority been able to exercise their mandates uninfluenced by anxieties over the threats to internal stability and external security implicit in the many tensions which now govern international relations. The very division of Korea which the Commission has been seeking earnestly to heal is not the least of such factors of international and internal uneasiness.

It is necessary to say, however, that in the current conflict of ideologies, the outcome of which may be so fateful for the cause of freedom, those who live in the hope of freedom must forever be on their guard lest in defending it they employ two-edged weapons. Freedom must be fought for in its own terms. To do otherwise would be to imply that democracy is defenseless. The history of the recent war shows that freedom is the most potent weapon which men can wield. If, therefore, we dedicate ourselves again on this day to the cause of freedom and make ourselves strong in its spirit, we can have continued confidence in the future of the Republic of Korea and in that of free society everywhere.
