



C O N T E N T S

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Agenda item 19:

The Korean question (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea;
- (b) Reports of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea;
- (c) Problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean war 167

Chairman: Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand).

AGENDA ITEM 19

The Korean question (A/2641, A/2941 and Add.1, A/2947, A/C.1/769, A/C.1/L.145, A/C.1/L.146) (*continued*):

- (a) **Report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea;**
- (b) **Reports of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea;**
- (c) **Problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean war**

1. Mr. MARTIN (Canada) said that his delegation was prepared to support the United States draft resolution (A/C.1/L.145).

2. Although his delegation was disappointed that more progress had not been made during the past year towards the unification of Korea and hoped that a solution could be found at the earliest possible moment, it recognized that quick solutions could not be expected after so desperate a conflict. To promote a settlement it was necessary that the Committee should refrain from re-criminations during the debate. However, he wished to make clear that his delegation was convinced that the principal responsibility for delay could be traced, not merely to the attitude of the North Korean authorities, but to their system of government. He would hesitate to say that it was impossible to unify by free elections countries in which one part was under Communist domination, but he did not think it advisable to ignore the basic fact that so long as totalitarian Communist principles obtained in undiluted form, it would be extremely difficult to arrange free elections.

3. An essential part of any possible solution would be to make provisions for impartial international supervision. At the Korean Political Conference, held at Geneva in 1954 and subsequently, the Canadian Government had adopted a flexible attitude on the exact nature of those provisions, while insisting that they should be fair, foolproof and acceptable to the United Nations. While it was not prepared to repudiate in any way the position taken at Geneva, his Government

did not feel that the last word on the subject had been said at the Geneva Conference. If any of those concerned wished to explore other avenues towards a unification procedure that would prove acceptable to the parties, those avenues should be considered with an open mind.

4. His delegation had been impressed by the pleas made by the representatives of India and Yugoslavia, among others, for what might be called a revised approach to the question on the part of the United Nations. As the representative of India had indicated (784th meeting), there might well be a distinction between the attitude adopted towards the two parties in Korea during the period before the aggression had been repelled and the attitude which should be adopted at the present stage. During discussions of the aggression, any suggestion of equality between the Government of the Republic of Korea and the authorities in North Korea had been rightly repudiated. But unification of Korea could be achieved only by negotiations among those who were in a position to bring about unification. The United Nations had accepted that fact from the moment negotiations for an armistice had commenced. His Government did not believe that by participating in the Geneva Conference with all parties concerned it was condoning aggression. It believed that it was starting on the long and complex programme of solving disputes and settling controversies, the primary obligation of the United Nations.

5. His delegation was inclined to think that the prestige of the United Nations would be more seriously damaged by maintaining too intransigent a position than by playing its part as an advocate and promoter of peaceful settlements. Having refused to impose unification on Korea by military means, the United Nations could not presume to impose it by peaceful means. While its sympathies inevitably remained with the victim of the aggression rather than with the aggressor, it did not follow that, because it chose unquestioningly to support one side in 1950, it was forever bound to support all the positions subsequently adopted by that side.

6. He was under no illusion that the time was ripe to urge the parties in Korea to undertake immediate negotiations and did not believe that any useful purpose would be served by immediate discussion in the Committee on the terms of a settlement. However, his delegation earnestly hoped that the time would come before long when the United Nations would be able to make use of the diverse resources at its command to assist in bringing about the unification of Korea, which had been its aim since the subject had been first placed on its agenda in 1947.

7. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that there was no need to dwell on the history of the Korean question; the First Committee was engaged in a search for possible ways and means of reaching a settlement of the problem. It was naturally difficult to

find a successful solution without the participation of the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China.

8. The Soviet Union considered that the severance of natural links between North and South Korea had had most unfavourable consequences. For example, it was quite abnormal for foreign troops to remain on Korean territory. He noted that the proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China for the simultaneous withdrawal of all those troops from Korea were still rejected by certain States which maintained armed forces in that country. The situation was fraught with the danger of all kinds of complications. In the present circumstances, when a considerable relaxation of international tension had been achieved, conditions for a peaceful settlement in Korea were most favourable.

9. In the opinion of the Soviet Union delegation, the solution of the Korean problem was, first of all, up to the Korean people. It was incumbent upon interested States not to impose their will on the parties in Korea, but to help them find the path towards the restoration of national unity on a peaceful and democratic basis. The Soviet Union was prepared, together with other States concerned, to extend all kinds of assistance in the solution of the problem. As before, the Soviet Union considered it essential to ensure the unification of Korea through the carrying out of free, all-Korea elections on the basis of an agreement between North Korea and South Korea. Those elections should be conducted under the supervision of an impartial international organ.

10. It followed from the fact that there existed two Governments on Korean territory that the establishment and development of relationships between North and South Korea, for the purpose of eventually reaching agreement on the reunification of the country, was of primary significance for the peaceful settlement of the Korean problem. The fact must not be overlooked that the partition of the country and particularly the war had given rise to numerous difficulties and obstacles in the relations between the two Governments. It was the duty of States interested in the peaceful settlement of the problem to extend aid in bringing about a *rapprochement* between North and South Korea, using to that end their influence in supporting the initiatives that might be undertaken by the Korean people themselves.

11. In that connexion, Mr. Malik drew attention to the generous initiative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in proposing¹ the creation of an all-Korean committee to seek accord on the establishment of economic and cultural relations between North and South Korea. To that end it had been proposed that a conference of representatives of the two groups should be convened, or that a joint session of the Parliaments of the two parts of the country should be held. Recalling statements by Kim Il Sung on 28 October 1955 on the matter, Mr. Malik stated that it would be unrealistic to expect that the solution of the Korean problem could be brought about in disregard of the rights and interests of North Korea. The people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had achieved great success in reconstruction and were entitled to expect that an agreement for the final settlement of the Korean problem would stipulate conditions which took

into account the particular situation in both North and South Korea,

12. The fact that political unification of Korea had not yet been achieved could not justify the refusal to carry out practical measures for the improvement of the well-being of the Korean people as a whole. Observing that the question of the development of trade and other relations between various countries was currently of great significance, Mr. Malik declared that the Government of the Soviet Union, like the Government of the People's Republic of China and a number of other Governments, supported the initiative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, having in mind that a *rapprochement* between North and South Korea would create an atmosphere of co-operation and mutual understanding which was essential for unification of the country. In that connexion, he recalled a speech to the Indian Parliament by Prime Minister Nehru in May 1954 which was worthy of careful study. In that speech Prime Minister Nehru had suggested, *inter alia*, that North and South Korea should create a common organ of a temporary character for the consideration of common problems.

13. The principal condition for the establishment and development of relations between the two parts of Korea and for a successful solution of the Korean problem as a whole was the maintenance and strengthening of Peace in Korea. Consequently, the Soviet Union delegation considered that it was its duty to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the fact that the campaign conducted in South Korea for the preparation of aggression against North Korea had created a series of obstacles to the settlement of the Korean problem on a peaceful and democratic basis. Inasmuch as that campaign was accompanied by a disproportionate increase in the numbers of troops in South Korea, it was a direct threat to peace in the area.

14. In that connexion, he cited the reports of the Agent General of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (A/2936) and the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (A/2947). The former showed that military expenditures in South Korea more than doubled in the fiscal year 1955, while the latter reported that South Korea maintained twenty active divisions together with ten reserve divisions which were being organized. The Commission's report also drew attention to the demand of the South Korean authorities for the abolition of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and the departure of its inspection teams from South Korea. In the opinion of the Soviet delegation, the Supervisory Commission, which had made a valuable contribution towards the maintenance of peace, should continue to carry out the functions vested in it and should be able to expect support and co-operation from the General Assembly in that matter.

15. Those facts made it clear that the South Korean authorities demanded the repudiation of the Armistice Agreement² which certain circles regarded as an obstacle to the fulfilment of their aggressive designs. In that connexion, Mr. Malik drew attention to the statement of the representative of the United States at the 785th meeting in which he sought to justify the increase in the armed forces of South Korea and to represent it

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Annexes, agenda item 17, document A/2833.

² Official Records of the Security Council, Eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1953, document S/3079.

as being in conformity with the provisions of the Armistice Agreement. It was obvious, however, that that increase in military potential when the Armistice Agreement was in effect, ran directly counter to the purposes of that Agreement and created a direct threat to the maintenance of peace in Korea.

16. The efforts of the States concerned should be focused not only on the maintenance of the armistice, but also on new measures for a further strengthening of peaceful conditions in the country. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea had repeatedly proposed such important measures as the withdrawal of all foreign troops, the reduction of North and South Korean armed forces, and the transfer of the troops of both sides to a peaceful footing. The representative of the United States had ignored those proposals in seeking to justify the increase of South Korea's armed forces. It was quite evident, however, that the implementation of those proposals would in itself be a great contribution to the normalization of the situation in Korea.

17. The Government of the Soviet Union had repeatedly called for the continuation of negotiations on the Korean problem and fully shared the view of the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it was essential to call a conference of the States concerned, with wide participation therein of Asian countries. The representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom had again opposed the convening of a conference and refused to negotiate on the problem other than on previously declared conditions. The USSR delegation, however, stood for negotiations between

States without any unilateral preliminary conditions and for agreement on a mutually acceptable basis.

18. The representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom had made attacks against the North Korean-Chinese side and in particular had charged that the North Korean authorities had failed to repatriate certain numbers of military and civilian persons, in order to divert attention from numerous violations of the Armistice Agreement by the United States Military Command. It was relevant to recall that the United States Command had illegally retained a total of 48,000 Korean and Chinese prisoners of war—27,000 of whom had suddenly vanished from prisoner-of-war camps after an agreement on an armistice had been reached and 21,000 of whom had been transferred to the status of civilians in flagrant violation of the agreement as confirmed by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.

19. He could not fail to note that allegations against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China had been made in the absence of their representatives. Under the abnormal circumstances which had been created in the United Nations when the States most closely concerned were deprived of the possibility of stating their views on the Korean problem, examination of the problem in the First Committee could not lead to favourable results. The necessity for convening a conference of the States concerned became even more evident. Such a conference could aid in the solution of outstanding problems in Korea and, therefore, would help further to reduce international tension.

The meeting rose at 11:45 a.m.