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Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 15 November 1955, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand)

The Korean question [19] (continued)

Statements were made in the general debate on the item by:

Sir Percy Spender	(Australia)
Mr. van Langenhove	(Belgium)
Mr. Blaustein	(United States)
Mr. Belaunde	(Peru)
Mr. Schiff	(Netherlands)

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THE KOREAN QUESTION [Agenda item 19] (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA

(c) PROBLEM OF EX-PRISONERS OF THE KOREAN WAR

The CHAIRMAN: Before we resume the general debate on the Korean question, I shall ask the Secretary to read out the list of speakers.

The SECRETARY: The list of speakers in the general debate was closed at 1 p.m. today. For this afternoon, the speakers are: Australia, Belgium, the United States of America, Peru, and the Netherlands. For tomorrow, 16 November, the speakers are: the Republic of Korea, Poland, China, Thailand, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Turkey, Czechoslovakia, New Zealand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and India.

Sir Percy SPENDER (Australia): I should like to make a few remarks on the item at present before the Committee and in doing so I shall try to place the problem before us in its historical framework so far as the United Nations is concerned. I feel it is important to do this because the Korean question, perhaps more than any other, is a United Nations matter and one in which we must not lose sight of the positions which our Organization -- to my mind to its lasting credit -- has adopted regarding Korea.

With the passage of time there may be a tendency on the part of some to forget these United Nations objectives in Korea. Indeed, I would go further than this and say that there are some around this table -- and I mean those who supported the aggressors in Korea -- who would be only too glad if we did forget those objectives and would declare ourselves willing to patch up some sort of a bargain, weighted in the usual way, to achieve their objectives in Korea.

(Sir Percy Spender,  
Australia)

For the purposes of this debate I think I need go back no further than the Armistice Agreement which entered into force on 27 July 1953. I was myself closely concerned with the debates and negotiations at the General Assembly of 1952, which laid the foundations upon which the Armistice was finally achieved. I think that in itself the Armistice document represented a very fair way of meeting the requirements of both sides and I think there is no doubt it would have worked well enough provided both sides had abided by its terms in good faith.

I shall return later in this statement to a brief review of the ways in which the Armistice Agreement was distorted and abused by the Communist side, as an illustration of the sort of danger which I feel we should be wary of now. However, the Armistice Agreement, so far as the main United Nations objectives in Korea were concerned, said very little and in fact confined itself to the recommendation contained in article 60, that a political conference should be held

"... to settle through negotiation the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, etc."

The Korean Political Conference was held in Geneva between April and June 1954 and the report of the fifteen United Nations Governments which attended was contained in document A/2786. This report stated that the proposals put forward by the three Communist delegations on the subject of elections were, briefly, that, firstly, elections in Korea should be prepared and conducted by an "all Korean Commission" in which North and South Korea would have equal representation and which would function only by agreement between the two, and secondly, that international supervision of the elections must be limited to a "neutral nations supervisory commission" composed of an equal number of Communist and non-Communist nations to be designated by the Conference and operating only by unanimous agreement.

These proposals were not unexpected at the time and indeed they might be characterized as a standard form of Communist policy, designed to take over divided States by political penetration. As the report stated, the Communist proposals repudiated the competence of the United Nations and were inherently unworkable.

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Australia)

On the other hand, the United Nations delegations had sought to reach agreement with the Communists on the basis of two fundamental principles, the second of which, looking towards the future, was as follows:

"In order to establish a unified independent and democratic Korea, genuinely free elections should be held under United Nations supervision for representatives in a national assembly, in which representation shall be in direct proportion to the indigenous population of all parts of Korea." (A/2786, page 4)

I need not remind this Committee that the fundamental principle which I have just quoted is most soundly based upon the aims which the United Nations -- always, I am glad to say, with very large majorities -- has maintained from the outset of its concern with the Korean problem.

The Geneva Political Conference on Korea was a complete failure so far as securing any understanding with the Communists was concerned. To my mind, it was not for this reason insignificant because, first, it made clear for all to see, the considerations which would guide the Communists' approach to the solution of the Korean problem and the reunification of the country and, second, it confirmed in a most public way, at the highest level, the solidarity of the United Nations delegations in support of United Nations principles. In this connexion I need only remind the Committee of the Declaration by the sixteen Powers, dated 15 June 1954, which confirmed the solidarity of those United Nations countries which had fought in Korea in full support of United Nations principles and in particular the principle I have quoted regarding reunification.

Now yesterday, the representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Malik, speaking for his country, set forth the requirements of his Government regarding the Korean problem. He repeated the demand made by the Communists at Geneva for free elections throughout Korea--and I quote his words, I hope correctly:

"to be carried out not by foreigners but by the Koreans themselves under the supervision of an unbiased international organ." (A/C.1/PV.787, page 13)

Incidentally, I for one would be more than a little interested to know what the word "unbiased" means to Mr. Malik. Mr. Malik said that these elections should be a prelude to the reunification of the country which was only possible, he said, "on the basis of an agreement between North and South Korea" (Ibid.).

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Australia)

The representative of the Soviet Union also urged that a conference of the States concerned, including Communist China and North Korea, should be called to try and hammer out a Korean solution.

From what he said I gather that Mr. Malik did not in any way repudiate or alter the proposals which had been put forward by the Communist delegations at the Korean Political Conference.

(Sir Percy Spender, Australia)

So far as I can see, he did not move from these proposals at all. If there has been movement in the Soviet position I should be most grateful to learn what it was. My understanding of the matter is that the Soviet Union is still proposing that the North and South Koreans should get together to arrange all-Korean elections under the usual Communist formula for supervision which would be international in name but completely deadlocked and ineffective in practice because Communist and non-Communist representatives would be equally divided on the body concerned. I must say that by this time the world should have had sufficient experience of how elections, organized in this way under supervision which neutralizes itself by being perpetually deadlocked, can be rigged to produce the results the Communists desire. All I can say is that if this is the best road to reunification that the Soviet Union can now propose it quite plainly won't bear the traffic. It is certainly a road which Australia will not travel along.

No one would blame the United Nations Governments which had forces in Korea for being cautious in their approach to any agreement for a Korean settlement which may eventually be secured from the Communist side. As I have said, we have had considerable experience in recent years of the way Communist ingenuity can destroy arrangements which might have worked satisfactorily if they had, for their part, acted in good faith. The Korean Armistice Agreement is a case in point. This Agreement has been violated by the Communists in many respects and in particular, as was pointed out by the United States representative, in respect of the provisions regulating the introduction of service personnel and weapons of war into North Korea. I do not intend to go into all the details of the lack of Communist co-operation and their obstruction of the bodies set up under the Armistice Agreement, such as the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, but the fact of the matter is that the Communists in North Korea have, in contravention of the Armistice Agreement, increased very considerably the combat strength and combat potential of the forces available to them and at the same time have refused to allow the supervisory organs established under the Armistice Agreement to inspect adequately what has been going on in North Korea, about which, I might add, the Commission has received from the Communists

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very inadequate reports. I don't think more than a handful around this table has any doubt that the Communist side has not acted in good faith with respect to the Armistice Agreement. For my part, I go further and say that they have cynically and deliberately disregarded it. So far as the Communists are concerned, there is no doubt that agreements such as this are merely pieces of paper whose provisions are only honoured if they suit the Communist purpose, which of course, in Korea, as in all countries at present divided between Communist and non-Communist Governments, is the eventual swamping of the non-Communist majority by the Communist minority in a unified state under full Communist control. In the circumstances of what has happened in Korea, therefore, who can blame the United Nations countries for being wary and for insisting first and foremost upon a satisfactory performance by the Communists under the Armistice Agreement before committing themselves to further negotiations? As I see it, until there is movement on the Communist side towards fair observance of the Armistice Agreement and some recognition by them of the principles for which the United Nations fought in Korea, there can be no sense in talking of a further Korean political conference. We have had one Korean political conference which produced the results -- or rather lack of results in the sense of reaching agreement -- which I have mentioned. As far as Australia is concerned, therefore, our position must remain, for the time being and until there is movement on the Communist side towards the United Nations position, as set out in the Declaration by the sixteen Powers of 15 June 1954.

This, of course, does not mean that Australia is wedded for all time to the precise terms of the Geneva Declaration. Settlement in Korea will be a matter for negotiation, and negotiation is essentially a business of give and take. However, as far as Australia is concerned, there can be no question of giving or making concessions to gain a political objective -- even one so important as a settlement in Korea -- unless the other party to the bargain has shown itself willing to make reasonable concessions and willing and prepared to abide by its undertakings. At all times the purpose of any steps taken by the United Nations must be and must only be directed to the unification of Korea by genuinely free elections. I avoid the use of the word "democratic" since that poor battered word has come to mean one thing to us and an entirely

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different thing to the Communists. Within this context I am bound to observe with great regret that there is no evidence of a type which could satisfy us that the North Korean and Chinese Communists, who together mounted and maintained the aggression in Korea, are in a frame of mind to do anything of the sort. For these reasons, therefore, Australia stands firmly upon the terms of the two documents to which we have subscribed -- the Armistice Agreement and the Geneva Declaration -- until such time as it is made plain by the other side, in unmistakable terms, that they are willing to accept the principles which have been laid down by the United Nations for a settlement. We for our part, shall stand four-square on those principles. If the Communists do accept the United Nations principles, we shall not be found inflexible in discussing ways and means in which those principles can be attained in practice in Korea.

In the light of the views I have expressed, it is easy to see that the draft resolution which has been presented by the United States delegation meets what we regard as the essential requirements this year. The first paragraph of the draft resolution takes note of the report which has been submitted by UNCURK. The second paragraph refers to the report of the fifteen nations which participated in the Geneva Conference on Korea on behalf of the United Nations and quite properly stresses in brief form the principles which the United Nations has endorsed for achieving a settlement in Korea. The third paragraph refers to the Armistice Agreement, the basic document regulating present-day arrangements in Korea, and reminds us that this Armistice Agreement cannot be thrust aside and remains in force until expressly superseded.

In its operative part, the United States draft resolution reaffirms our determination to seek a solution in Korea based on United Nations principles, urges that continuing efforts be made to achieve these objectives, and places the Korean question on the provisional agenda of the eleventh session of the Assembly.



I believe that this resolution contains all the elements that can be useful to us this year and reaffirms the basic principles on which we stand. For these reasons the Australian delegation will give it its wholehearted support.

Regarding sub-item (c) of the item before us which has been submitted by the Indian delegation, the Australian delegation has been most happy to see that matters are already in train which will, I hope, lead to the early solution of this problem. We understand the difficulty in which the Government of India has found itself and welcome the understanding and generous attitude which has been displayed by Brazil and other South American countries which have expressed their willingness to assist in the resettlement of those expatriates.

I would like to reserve my right to speak again when the time comes for detailed discussion of the resolutions before the Committee.

Mr. van LANGENHOVE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): As the Belgian delegation has already noted last year, general agreement prevails as to the statement of the objective to be attained in regard to the Korean problem, that is, a peaceful settlement ensuring the creation of a unified, independent and democratic Korea.

But this statement is riddled with grave equivocations, especially as to the meaning to be given to "an independent and democratic Korea", and there is utter disagreement as to the means to be used for achieving this objective. This disagreement not only touches on the modality of the settlement; it affects the most fundamental principles. In fact, what is involved is the very authority of the United Nations in the framework of collective security, and, moreover, the principle of the right of people to self-determination.

I shall not revert to the former point. It is, in fact, vain to revive ancient squabbles. As far as the vast majority of Members of the United Nations is concerned, the case has been disposed of.

As regards unification, the Belgian delegation, like many others, remains firmly convinced that such unification can be carried out only through truly free elections under effective and impartial supervision. The representative

(Mr. van Langenhove, Belgium)

of Australia had just pressed this very point with great vigour and ability. In our opinion, this condition is essential if the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination is to be respected.

At this very moment this is the topic of a discussion in abstract terms in a neighbouring Committee in connexion with the covenants on human rights. The questionarises here in concrete terms of immediate interest. A people cannot truly be said to have self-determination unless the human beings of whom it is composed have the capacity to make a free choice. Where a regime is imposed on a people, this right cannot exist; what is to be found there is only a caricature of that right.

The Korean problem touches upon a second problem with which the United Nations is now dealing. The 1953 armistice agreement imposed an armaments limitation. Sub-paragraphs (c) and (d) of paragraph 13 (article II) of the armistice agreement prohibit increasing effectives and combat weapons it being understood that the relief troops and replacements of materiel could be introduced into the country only through specified entry points. This prohibition has been placed under international control. Thus, some of the fundamental provisions which have been envisaged and debated within the framework of the disarmament problem have been put to the acid test of experience.

The representative of Sweden last year offered us some interesting information on this subject. Additional information is to be found this year in the report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. The bulk of the membership of this Committee has doubtless already noted the significance of this lesson. The least that can be said is that control understood in this way is, for the most part, illusory.

The prospects for any impending progress in the settlement of the Korean question remain unencouraging, but we must persevere. The United Nations has assumed responsibility for unification; the United Nations cannot abandon this task. This is the very idea expressed by the resolution presented for our approval, a resolution which the Belgian delegation supports wholeheartedly.

For our Organization the Korean question has brought grave disappointments and cruel ordeals, but these have not been entirely without compensations. The military operations furnished admirable instances of devotion and solidarity, and my country is proud that Belgians have had a part in this. But the armistice did not put an end to the display of international co-operation. India, Switzerland, Sweden and Brazil have given additional evidence thereof by assuming thankless tasks with conscientious impartiality, or by facilitating the resettlement of unrepatriated prisoners of war. The Belgian delegation wishes to endorse the tribute which has so properly been paid to them.

Mr. BLAUSTEIN (United States of America): I listened with great attention yesterday to the statement of the representative of the Soviet Union. I had hoped to hear in this statement some indication of a change in the Communist attitude, or at least a hint that some change might be in the offing. But unfortunately we heard nothing of the kind.

The Soviet representative was quite vague yesterday in his suggestions with regard to a solution to the Korean problem. He said that:

"As before, the Soviet Union considers it essential to ensure the unification of Korea through the carrying out of all-Korean, free elections on the basis of an agreement between North Korea and South Korea and in conditions that would rule out foreign intervention or any kind of pressure whatever on the voters." (A/C.1/PV.787, page 13)

He said these elections should be "carried out not by foreigners but by the Koreans themselves under the supervision of an unbiased international organ". (ibid.)

(Mr. Blaustein,  
United States)

While these suggestions are vague, there is nothing vague as to their meaning. For these are the same suggestions which the Communist side made at Geneva and has been repeating ever since. The possibilities of these suggestions were explored at length at Geneva and the results of those efforts are well-known. What the Soviet representative has now proposed, in effect, is that we should consider once more the same Communist proposals that we have considered, found sterile and rejected in the past. These proposals, including the establishment of economic and cultural contacts between North and South Korea, were and are designed to prolong discussion, to mislead people into thinking there was agreement where in fact there was none and, most importantly, to prevent the people of Korea from having a genuinely free choice as to their representation in, and the nature of, the government which is to administer a unified Korea.

These proposals have an objective as simple as it is devious. The objective is not a free, unified and independent Korea under a democratic form of government. The objective does not square with that of the United Nations. Instead, the Communist objective is to impose Communist domination on the whole of Korea. Recognizing that this cannot be done as long as the Republic of Korea and the United Nations remain alert, the Communists by these proposals hope to give the false impression of willingness to work toward the objectives of the United Nations while at the same time chipping away at those objectives by whatever means they can find.

The Communist rulers of North Korea have never dared face an honest election -- indeed there has been to the knowledge of my Government only one election and I repeat "one election", for the so-called "Supreme Peoples Council" there. That was in 1948, and under Soviet supervision, where the customary single slate of candidates was presented for approval. The Communist proposals now suggest that representatives of this Supreme Peoples Council, while rules a minority of the Korean people, sit down together with the duly-elected representatives of the three-quarters of the Korean people who live in the Republic of Korea. It is suggested that there be equality of decision between these groups, that jointly on this basis of parity they work out

(Mr. Blaustein,  
United States)

the laws and regulations to govern a future election throughout the country. The free world has had some experience with arrangements of this kind and with the governments that spring therefrom. We are all too familiar with the type of election the Communist representation would seek to impose on the Korean people. We remember the fate of some of the peoples of Eastern Europe.

We are told by the representative of the Soviet Union that we must recognize the realities of the situation. I ask, is this reason for abandonment of a principle so fundamental as the freedom and independence of a long suffering people? Certainly it cannot be said that the Soviet suggestion is worth trying just because it offers the only terms which the Communist side is willing to consider at this time. The United Nations has proclaimed just and proper objectives for a Korean settlement. Because they are just and because they are proper we must not be diverted from them.

The vast majority of the Korean people -- those who fought so bravely and incurred such tremendous casualties against the Communist aggressors from the North -- is adamant in its refusal to embrace such proposals. And it has a perfect right to take such a position. The Government of the Republic of Korea has agreed to stake its fate on free elections under United Nations supervision. Why then should anyone expect that Government and the people it represents to subject themselves to the delaying and misleading tactics of the Communist proposal? Why should anyone expect that Government to afford the totalitarian voice of Communism a greatly disproportionate position -- indeed a veto -- in determining the future of the Korean people? On the contrary, I submit that it is the Communist regime in the north that should stand up and be counted -- counted in a free election under United Nations supervision.

The representative of the Soviet Union ended his speech yesterday by telling us that in light of the facts -- what he says are the facts -- it becomes all the more obvious that it is necessary to convene a conference of the interested States on the Korean question. But as I remarked earlier, there has been no change in the Communist position. They have given us no indication that they are now willing seriously to discuss the unification of Korea on a basis acceptable to the United Nations and to a majority of the people of Korea. I note that my colleague from Canada is also of the view that the time is not ripe for such discussions.

(Mr. Blaustein,  
United States)

Before concluding my remarks, I should like to address myself to several other points made by the Soviet representative. Yesterday he attempted to cast some doubt on certain figures and percentages which I cited in my statement of 11 November. He said that I had occupied myself with "complicated calculations" concerning the reduction of foreign troops in North and South Korea.

Actually, the figures which I cited are quite simple and clear. They have been made available to every member of this Committee, so that there is no mystery about them. These figures demonstrate that the United Nations Command has withdrawn from Korea a much larger proportion of non-Korean personnel than have the Chinese Communists. The reduction in the non-Korean strength of the forces under the United Nations Command were reported to and were checked by the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Soviet representative, who found my figures "complicated", was unable to contest any of them.

The representative of the Soviet Union went on to say that the increase -- it is a moderate increase -- which has taken place in the size of the Republic of Korea army prevents a "normalization" of the situation in Korea. I do not know what he means by "normalization", but if he means that this increase is an understandable effort by the Republic of Korea to avoid a repetition of the nearly disastrous situation of June 1950, he is quite right.

Certainly there is no need for me to belabour the fact that the Republic of Korea was the victim of the aggression, or the fact that its people constitute over three-fourths of the total population of Korea.

Moreover, as already made clear, the Communist side has substantially strengthened its materiel effectiveness by violating several provisions of the Armistice Agreement. The record of these violations has been set forth frequently by the representative of the United Nations Command in the Military Armistice Commission at Panmunjon. And finally, in terms of military potential, there is of course a vast difference between Chinese Communist armies withdrawn from Korea but poised just across the Yalu River and United Nations personnel withdrawn to their home territories, most some ten thousand miles from Korea.

Naturally, common prudence dictates some increase in the size of the army of the Republic of Korea. But, as I said in my first statement, and I wish

(Mr. Blaustein,  
United States)

now to repeat, "... the equipment furnished to the Republic of Korea was provided from stocks formerly held by United Nations troops which have now departed from Korea or from replacement of these stocks, in strict accordance with the provisions of the Armistice Agreement." (A/C.1/PV.785, p. 61)

Let us turn again briefly to the fundamental problem with which we are concerned. I have spoken thus far of the position of the Government of the Republic of Korea and the attitude of the great majority of the Korean people who elected that Government. But we here have an equal responsibility to ourselves and to this Organization to see to it that the aims and objectives of the United Nations are achieved. For the position of the General Assembly, as expressed in its various resolutions on this subject, is a position based on fundamental principles. It is not based on procedural or tactical considerations. We would be doing a gross disservice to those who fought on the United Nations side in Korea were we to abandon these principles merely to demonstrate our willingness to engage in renewed negotiations and at a time when it is evident that such negotiations could not lead to any constructive result.

(Mr. Blaustein, United States)

That is why the United States delegation has submitted the draft resolution which is before the Committee in document A/C.1/L.145. We have sought in this draft resolution to give expression to the consensus of the views of the great majority of delegations represented here. This draft resolution recalls the principles which we regard as essential to a Korean settlement and reaffirms our intention to seek an early solution of the Korean question in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations. My delegation does not see how the United Nations could do otherwise.

In closing, I should like to suggest a minor modification in the last paragraph of the United States resolution -- a modification which will make for greater clarity. We have asked in this paragraph that the Secretary-General place "this item" on the provisional agenda of the eleventh session. Since the main Korean item this year includes sub-items, and since there is a separate resolution dealing with one of these sub-items, I would suggest that in place of the words "this item" we should substitute the words "the Korean question". The paragraph would then read: "Requests the Secretary-General to place the Korean question on the provisional agenda of its eleventh session".

We believe that this draft resolution deserves the full support of this Committee.

Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): On every serious item that comes before this Committee and, generally speaking, on every item that comes before the United Nations, there is always a tragic division between the old policies based on the struggle for power and the new policies based on the principles of the United Nations, which are intended to establish in the world not a mechanical balance of power but a balance based upon justice and law.

The Korean question, which we can only approach with a feeling of awe and respect in our hearts and with a feeling of sympathy for a tragedy which has left a wound that is still **bleeding** is yet another typical case of the opposition of these two policies. If the division of Korea is to be overcome, we must abandon the old policy of an unjust, inequitable and dangerous balance, a balance that should be condemned by us because it overlooks the essential factor in the whole



(Mr. Belaunde, Peru)

problem, namely, the will of the people. We should consider the will of the people as sacred, always to be respected.

I have stated many times in the United Nations that I believe that we are going through a rather difficult period of transition. We cannot go from the old system of the balance of power, to the new system -- the old system which, with all its flaws and deficiencies, gave us at times long periods of peace, but which, at other times, specially when applied to small countries, created such serious problems -- without difficulties. This old system must be compared with solutions which are based upon the full juridical understanding of human needs.

I think that I am humane enough to understand the tremendous difficulties that beset countries which emerge from conflict. The competition for power is also understandable as an inevitable reverberation of war and of former policies. In facing this problem, therefore, I am being objective and impartial. However, I do want to call attention to the fact that the United Nations must be true to its standards, its purposes and its policies. The United Nations wants to establish a new policy and not merely to limit the old policy of the struggle for power. The United Nations wants to change that struggle into effective co-operation in order to achieve justice and freedom for people. That is why the present problem is no longer a simple problem of general policy between the great Powers.

As far as we are concerned -- we who represent both the peoples who are Members and those who are non-Members of the United Nations -- this is a human problem. Now can this type of problem be solved in accordance with the principles of the Charter? I know that this is a difficult question, and in order to answer a difficult question, we must go to the source. The Charter of the United Nations will answer the question.

The United Nations, the League of Nations and the entire evolution of Europe and of the world from the time of the independence of the United States at the end of the eighteenth century, have had their policies directed towards the self-determination of peoples, towards freedom not only in name but also in deed and fact. Effective freedom must be ensured by careful supervision in order to guarantee the true expression of the spontaneous will of the people to decide their own fate. That is the only possible solution.

(Mr. Belaunde, Peru)

If we were speaking only of economic interests, then we might have some discussion directed towards conciliating the different points of view and finding some balance between them. That is always possible when we are speaking of economic matters. But here we are not considering only economic interests; there are also human values involved. The supreme dignity of the individual is involved here. The individual, when linked by free choice to other people, within the framework of the sociological factors and the historic traditions of a nation, gradually creates, through an accumulative effect, the national personality.

It might be said that the national personality is even more sacred than the human personality. Hence, as regards the question of Korea, the United Nations must take into account that highest of all freedoms: the self-determination of the people. The final value in the hierarchy of values must be the will and the interest of the people of Korea -- as that will and interest are understood by the people of Korea. Those of us who wish to accelerate the unification of Korea and, thus, to fulfil our own ideals, those of us who want the world to exist under the rule of international law must insist that all possible measures should be taken to unify Korea under guarantees concerning freedom of choice and election.

In very eloquent words, the representative of Belgium has just reminded us that the self-determination of peoples is at the very essence of the United Nations. It might be said that the principle of self-determination brought about everything that is great and noble in European and American policies. We of America are proud to say, with deep emotion, that that principle has been the essence of our policies since the eighteenth century. This impetus has received its highest reflection in the Charter. We cannot abandon the principle of self-determination in any circumstances, unless we wish to abandon our own ideals -- and that, we are not willing to do.

I believe that the very least that can be expected of the General Assembly at this session is that it should address an appeal for a rapid solution of the Korean question. Of course, there are two aspects of the question. There is the human, the moral, the juridical aspect. In that regard, the decisive criterion must be the indivisible personality of the Korean people, the will of the Korean people as expressed in a vote: the one way in which modern man may make his desires known. But there is also the political aspect. There are countries which have an interest in the equilibrium of the Far East. There is also the interest of the Asian peoples -- and, in fact, of all humanity -- in the principle that must be regarded as the quintessence of our existence and the basis of our international evolution.

I therefore hope and believe that there will be co-operation among all the bodies directly concerned in the problem of Korea. We must once again appeal for co-operation. But the basis of any solution must be the guarantee of free elections in Korea. That master of poets, Goethe, respected facts. So do I.

Facts are very serious things. Very often, we must bow to the facts; I admit that. We must, however, also bear in mind that it is the duty of the human intelligence and of human institutions to guide the facts, to improve -- I do not say "to improve on" -- those facts. It is our duty to inject ideals and justice into the facts. This does not mean that we should take up an adamant position or arrogantly assume a role that is too big for us. But neither does it mean that, when we are faced with a fait accompli, we should not try to find a better road, to take all the paths that might lead to our goal.

In the case of Korea, we are faced with the necessity of reconstructing what was, unfortunately, destroyed when Korea was divided. How are we to accomplish that? By a mere political compromise? Solely by means of concessions, made during negotiations in which law, justice and honour are sacrificed? No. In this case, the straightest line is the right line -- and that line is to give Korea the maximum freedom of elections. And how is that to be done? How are we to give all the people of Korea -- both North and South -- guarantees that they will have freedom to vote as they wish? How are we to enable that people to forget the old disagreements and erase the old sorrows and tragedies? There is but one way: to establish a neutral body representing the moral authority of the United Nations, a body which will represent the maximum of honesty and justice. In that way, we shall combine the dictates of political science with the achievements of technical science, ensuring, by mathematically perfect procedures, freedom of vote. At the same time, we shall be heeding the voice of justice, which requires that guarantees should be given concerning free elections.

The representative of Belgium said quite rightly that we were here discussing the principle of the self-determination of peoples. That principle will be respected in Korea. Only in that way may we give a living, brilliant example of the worth of the principle. It will be a final proof of the possibilities, as well as the abilities, of the United Nations to establish free institutions in far distant countries.

Of course, the contending parties and the great Powers having interests in Korea should co-operate in this plan. It is our duty, as the United States draft resolution says, to reaffirm our intention to continue to seek an early solution of the Korean question in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations.

(Mr. Belaunde, Peru)

I would not vote for the United States proposal if it merely said "to continue to seek an early solution of the Korean question" because that might be an unhappily realistic solution that would be contrary to justice and the principle of self-determination. But the United States proposal goes on, "in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations", and the final objective of the United Nations with regard to nationality is self-determination of peoples. Thus it is increasingly obvious that in this the draft resolution adheres very closely to the programme that this Organization laid down for itself ten years ago. Then the draft resolution "Urges that continuing efforts be made to achieve these objectives" -- that is, the objectives of the United Nations.

I believe, frankly, that the United States draft resolution can be adopted unanimously, because I do not think any Member of the United Nations can possibly take exception to the principle that we should act in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations and continue our efforts to realize such aims. That is why the delegation of Peru will certainly vote in favour of the United States proposal, which affirms once more the moral authority of the United Nations and the conviction of all of us that very soon -- indeed, as early as possible -- we ought to establish proof that the new and true juridical stand of the free nations must be brought about by our Organization.

I ought to conclude here, but the very eloquent words of the representative of Brazil this morning, when he repeated his offer to settle some of the former prisoners of war, makes it necessary that I, too, pay tribute to those who deserve it, and I am happy to do so. We of South America can recall with pride that, as far as was possible, we contributed, as we are still contributing, to the solution of the Korean problem and to the maintenance of juridical law and order in Korea. In this we received the help of Colombia, and the delegation of Mexico was the first to suggest the idea of asylum as a solution to the problem of former prisoners of the Korean war to ensure the perfect functioning of voluntary repatriation. It was the practical and logical corollary to voluntary repatriation. And from the very beginning the Peruvian delegation modestly affirmed that, since there was no protecting nation for the prisoners of war in Korea save the protecting Powers set up by the protocol at Geneva, the maximum authority and unlimited competence would have to be vested in the United Nations.

(Mr. Belaunde, Peru)

The delegations of Brazil and Argentina said that they were ready to help in the solution of this problem. Will they permit me to express to them my heartfelt tribute and thanks? Their attitude and their behaviour warrant our congratulations and our respect.

Mr. SCHIFF (Netherlands): It is a depressing thought that we are again discussing the Korean question, and that again there appears to be not the slightest chance that we shall succeed where we failed before. If we had hoped that the tenth session of the General Assembly would bring us nearer to a solution, this hope has been thoroughly dashed by the debate in this Committee. We still find the two sides as widely divided on the main issue as before. Whereas those countries which have, in word or deed, supported the United Nations action in Korea maintain that a unified, independent and democratic Korean State should be established through free elections under impartial United Nations supervision, there are others who profess to seek the same result but whose proposed methods would make a mockery of the words "democratic" and "free". They do not wish to accept the authority of our Organization, moral or otherwise, to play a role in solving this problem. They claim that the solution should be left to the parties concerned to achieve. In fact, they assert that the solution can be found only on their conditions -- which are conditions that we, the United Nations, cannot accept without sacrificing the basic principles of the Charter.

The representative of Canada said the other day that the United Nations refused to impose unification by military means and that it cannot presume now to impose it by peaceful means. My delegation wholeheartedly agrees with this view. Indeed, it would be better not to have a solution at all than to impose one which would only carry the germs of new disputes and new friction. But does this mean that the alternative that faces us is to give in and to abandon the high purposes which the United Nations has sought to realize for the last ten years? Indeed not, Sir. If we still believe in those purposes -- and my Government, for one, does -- we should adhere to them even though there is nothing in the present political situation which would seem to justify our hopes of soon reaching the end of the road which our Organization has set out to follow.

(Mr. Schiff, Netherlands)

My delegation feels, therefore, that this annual discussion, however little it may accomplish, is important because it causes us to remember clearly where we stood before and where we shall continue to stand. If this firmness of purpose is termed ~~mere~~ stubbornness we should not feel discouraged or insulted, for the steadfast adherence to an ideal for which many gave their lives is for us a quality of the highest value.

The representative of the Soviet Union has stated that a second conference should be held between the parties concerned. If this were to mean that there was a change of heart in North Korea and that that country was now prepared to make a sincere and constructive attempt to reach an agreement compatible with the principles that we are pledged to uphold, we might be inclined to consider such a suggestion. However, there has not been the slightest indication of a more co-operative spirit in the other camp, and such a conference would, consequently, only submit the United Nations to renewed pressure to abandon its principles. It is for these reasons that we remain opposed to the convening of such a conference.

Under these circumstances, where there is no immediate prospect of breaking the political deadlock, it is a cause for moderate optimism that the Armistice Agreement still stands and is adhered to by both sides, even though different opinions can be held as to the actual measure of sincerity with which its provisions are observed by the other side.

The representative of the United States has stated some facts about the military situation in Korea which do not tend to allay our anxieties completely, but here I feel that the United Nations and its ally, the Republic of Korea, would do well, while maintaining their vigilance, to uphold simply the high standard of compliance with the truce agreement.

Conditions in the troubled country of Korea and in the world around it certainly do not facilitate the work of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. The Commission cannot hope for speedy results. It is on the spot, however, and available for any service which may be required from it. The Commission has recently decided to establish a committee to act on its behalf when the full Commission is not meeting. We feel that this sub-committee, composed of representatives who reside in Korea, will be fully able to carry out its important tasks whenever necessary. Together with

(Mr. Schiff, Netherlands)

UNKRRA, the sub-committee of UNCURK represents the United Nations and its affirmed policies in the best possible way.

Finally, I should like to make some brief comments on sub-item (c) of the item under discussion, namely, the problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean war. Tribute has already been paid to the Government of India for its truly magnificent contribution to the solution of this problem. We still remember the exemplary way in which the Indian custodial forces, under General Thimayya, carried out their extremely difficult assignment. We are also indebted to the Indian Government for the care which it has extended to those prisoners who did not wish to be repatriated and who, for some time now, have been waiting in India for resettlement abroad. It seems the more appropriate to express our appreciation to the Government of India through its distinguished representative in this Committee at this moment, now that the very generous offers made by the Governments of Brazil and Argentina portend the final solution of this problem.

The main problem still awaits a solution. Unification of Korea still seems to be a nearly unattainable goal. It is the hope of my delegation that, with perseverance and patience, we shall see the day when a unified, independent and democratic Korea will take its rightful place among us. This hope is, under the present circumstances, best expressed in the terms of the draft resolution submitted by the United States delegation. We shall support this draft resolution with pleasure and confidence.

The CHAIRMAN: We have come to the end of the list of speakers for today.

Mr. Krishna MENON (India): I wonder whether it would be possible to request the Secretary-General to circulate any documents which he may have received -- and which he is competent to circulate -- relating to the work of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. You will appreciate, Mr. Chairman, that references have been made to this Commission, to what is said and to what is not said. The matter is before us, and therefore we are entitled to have something to go on other than ex parte statements.



The CHAIRMAN: I shall convey the request of the representative of India to the Secretary-General.

The Committee is adjourned until 10.30 a.m. tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.