

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Chairman: Mr. Miguel Rafael URQUIA (El Salvador).

AGENDA ITEM 24

The Korean question: report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (A/3865, A/C.1/807, A/C.1/809, A/C.1/810 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.217) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand) said that his country's interest in the Korean question was motivated to a large extent by its devotion to the principle of collective security. In defence of that principle, Thailand had been one of the first countries to answer the call of the United Nations and to come to the assistance of the Republic of Korea when it became the victim of aggression. Thailand believed in the principle of United Nations collective security on the grounds that it alone could save small nations from annihilation.

2. His country, one of the sponsors of the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217), was prepared to withdraw its troops from Korea as soon as international peace and security had been permanently restored in the area. The armistice and the withdrawal of Chinese Communist forces from North Korea were certainly to be welcomed; however, it was still necessary to achieve a lasting settlement of the question and the peaceful unification of Korea; and that could only be brought about through free elections under United Nations supervision.

3. The delegation of Thailand congratulated the United Nations Commission on the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) on the work it had done. According to the Commission's report (A/3865) and the statement by the representative of the Republic of Korea (975th meeting), the country had made substantial economic, social and political progress, and the time had come to admit it to the United Nations in accordance with the wish expressed by the General Assembly in its resolution 1144 A (XII).

4. Mr. ERALP (Turkey) said that, to judge from the exchange of notes and the communist statements cited in the UNCURK report (A/3865, para. 9 *et seq.*), the Chinese and North Korean Communists were as determined as ever to thwart all attempts to bring about the peaceful unification of Korea on the

terms of the United Nations. The withdrawal of Chinese Communist forces from North Korea was undoubtedly to be welcomed, but that step could not justify the withdrawal of the United Nations forces, whose symbolic presence would continue to be essential until such time as the aggressor altered his attitude and Korea became a unified, independent and democratic country.

5. The progress made in all fields by the Republic of Korea gave grounds for hope that brighter prospects awaited the Koreans and that their country would soon be admitted to the United Nations, whose duty it was to continue the work begun and to carry its peaceful cause to victory. In that spirit, the Turkish delegation had joined with other delegations in submitting the thirteen-Power draft resolution, which could lead to a lasting solution of the communist authorities sincerely and realistically responded to the appeal made to them.

6. Mr. THOMAS (India) said he would like first of all to give the Committee some information on the eleven Korean ex-prisoners now in India. Five of them had chosen to remain in India and were being given occupational training which would enable them to earn their livelihood satisfactorily. The three ex-prisoners who had opted for Mexico and the one who had opted for Argentina were also in India awaiting completion of the necessary formalities. The two remaining ex-prisoners had not yet signified their choice.

7. The Indian delegation believed that, in order to maintain peace in the Far East, it was essential to bring about, by peaceful means, the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Korea. To that end there should be an all-Korean Government, freely elected under international supervision. The thirteen-Power draft resolution, which was in essence a repetition of previous General Assembly resolutions, would not lead to a settlement of the question, and the Indian delegation could not support it. It must be remembered that the United Nations was one of the parties to the conflict and that it had never exercised control over the whole of Korea. Consequently, it would be better to revert to the proposal made during the Korean Political Conference at Geneva in 1954 by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, namely that elections should be held under international supervision throughout the whole of Korea for the purpose of establishing a representative Government, after which the United Nations would give its approval to the settlement thus reached.

8. The Indian delegation had been gratified to learn that the Chinese Volunteers had withdrawn from North Korea and believed that the question could more easily be settled if the other party followed their example. It also believed that the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency should provide as-

sistance to the whole of Korea, and not merely to one-half of the country.

9. Mr. BRATUS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) saw no value in the activities of UNCURK, which always acted in accordance with the wishes of the Western Powers and in disregard of those of the Korean people, who alone were capable of settling the question of Korea's unification. The solution of that problem presupposed the withdrawal of all foreign troops still stationed in Korean territory, but that proposal met with opposition from the imperialist circles supporting the South Korean régime. It was absurd not to recognize the existence of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which enjoyed the full confidence of the people of North Korea, and it was regrettable that the First Committee had refused to invite a representative of that Government to take part in the debate. The Soviet Union, even though it did not recognize the South Korean Government, none the less supported the efforts of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to restore contact between the two parts of the country.

10. The Committee was aware of those efforts. It was aware that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had issued a statement on 5 February 1958 (A/3865, para. 9) proposing the simultaneous withdrawal of foreign troops, the initiation of conversations between the two Governments on economic and cultural relations, and the reduction in strength of the two armies.

11. According to the statement he had made at the 976th meeting, the representative of Canada believed that the Korean people should be consulted regarding the unification of the country, but it was not clear why the Korean people, in his mind, included only the people living south of the 38th parallel. Like the United Kingdom representative (975th meeting), he had also advocated elections, but with the condition that the Chinese Volunteers should withdraw from Korea while the armed forces of the United States and its allies remained. It was quite evident that the United States representative did not envisage "free elections" except under the supervision and with the "assistance" of the United States occupation forces, whereas for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea free elections implied the prior withdrawal of all foreign troops. As was known, the Chinese volunteers remaining in Korea had now completely evacuated the territory.

12. The system of people's democracy in North Korea had enabled that country rapidly to repair the ruins of war and to raise substantially its economic level. It was a known fact that between 1956 and 1957, industrial productivity had increased by 12.4 per cent, while national income had increased by 37 per cent. Wages and salaries had risen by an average of 10 per cent since 1 January 1958, and the price of food had gone down during the same period. The number of schools, hospitals and cultural institutions continued to increase every year.

13. On the other hand, as UNCURK had been forced to state, the standard of living was not very high in South Korea—which was not surprising in view of the high level of military expenditure. In view of that distressing situation, the Democratic People's Re-

public of Korea had offered assistance to its southern neighbour in the form of industrial products, food-stuffs and scholarships, and had further offered to take over the education of South Korean orphans. Unfortunately, the Government of the Republic of Korea, in agreement with the United States Military Command, had declined the offer, although the Korean people had much to gain thereby.

14. For Syngman Rhee, the unification of Korea meant the conquest of North Korea. That had been made clear in the statement made the previous day (975th meeting) by the representative of South Korea.

15. While the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was reducing its armed forces, the United States had introduced further and more up-to-date weapons into South Korea in violation of the Armistice Agreement (S/3079, appendix A). In May 1958, in the vicinity of the demarcation line, the United States had engaged in manoeuvres with atomic weapons, which it was difficult not to consider as provocation. Indeed, it was transforming South Korea into a strategic base, constituting a serious threat to peace in the Far East, and in order to expedite its plans, it had unilaterally discontinued the work of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission's inspection teams.

16. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic could not support the draft resolution submitted by the United States and twelve other delegations (A/C.1/L.217). That draft merely repeated earlier resolutions which had remained dead letters. Moreover, it made no reference to a withdrawal of foreign troops stationed in Korea following the example of the Chinese Volunteers. Finally, it wanted the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow general elections to take place in the presence of foreign armed forces.

17. The time had come to stop singing the praises of UNCURK; indeed, it should be dissolved, because it had never done anything to promote the solution of the Korean question.

18. Mr. DE MARCHENA (Dominican Republic) paid a tribute to the Korean people, who had always resisted pressure directed against their independence. It was all the more regrettable that through the fault of a single Power, a single ideology, Korea should have been prevented by tragic circumstances from obtaining what the community of nations wished for it.

19. The evacuation of North Korea by Chinese Communist troops, assuming that it had really taken place, was only a feeler towards a reconciliation which would only lead to the unification of the country if free elections were held under the supervision of the United Nations. The Dominican delegation considered that the United Nations ought not to lose sight of the problem so long as North Korea's attitude remained unchanged. The statements made by representatives of the Soviet group carried little weight; everyone knew what was the root of the problem and where the only solution lay. The United Nations could not stand for a false interpretation of the principles on which its intervention in Korea was based.

20. Persuasion should be used in order to induce North Korea to realign its policy and in order to discover new areas of agreement. The main thing was

to establish a lasting peace in Korea. That was why the nations which had pledged their assistance to the Republic of Korea, in conformity with the principles which they had espoused in signing the Charter of the United Nations, were unwilling to withdraw their forces unless certain conditions, of which the communist world was well aware, were fulfilled. The presence of their troops was all the more justified by the fact that communist elements were infiltrating into the territory of the Republic of Korea and causing incidents, as described by the representative of that country at the 975th meeting.

21. The Dominican delegation would vote for the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217). It also hoped that the Republic of Korea would be admitted to the United Nations.

22. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) was sorry that the debate on the Korean question should have begun, as in previous years, on such a note as to make it impossible for the General Assembly to take a decision which could contribute towards the solution of the problem of Korean unification.

23. Although everyone seemed to be agreed that the Korean people was the party principally concerned, certain delegations were once more opposed to letting the Committee hear representatives from both parts of Korea, justifying their attitude by repeating once again the untruth that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was an aggressor country which refused to abide by the decisions of the United Nations.

24. The mere mention of the invasion of Korea by United States armies in August 1950 and the encouragement given to the war-mongering Syngman Rhee by certain influential circles in the United States was enough to show who was responsible for the outbreak of war in Korea. Those circles had a vested interest in prolonging the "cold war" and opposed the peaceful unification of Korea, which could not take place without the participation of a representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the First Committee's discussion. Their purpose was to transform South Korea into a military base and to use the puppet Government of Syngman Rhee as a means towards world domination by the United States.

25. The proof of that was the dispatch of modern weapons to South Korea, as reported in the Press, in the report of UNCURK, and even in the United States representative's statement at the 973rd meeting. Such a concentration of modern weapons in South Korea and the constant provocation to which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was subjected were hardly in conformity with the General Assembly's resolution 1180 (XII).

26. The draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217), of which the United States was a sponsor, showed that that country was bent on pursuing the same policy. It contained no concrete proposal beyond that of putting the Korean question on the agenda of the fourteenth session of the General Assembly.

27. The People's Republic of China had given brotherly assistance to the Korean people in opposing American aggression and in repairing the devastation wrought by the war. But, whereas the last of the Chinese Volunteers had left the soil of North Korea,

United States troops were still stationed in South Korea, where they were being supplied with nuclear weapons and rockets, in violation of the Armistice Agreement.

28. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in its statement of 5 February 1958 (A/3865, para. 9), had made constructive proposals which the Committee could not ignore. It proposed that, after the withdrawal of foreign troops, elections should be held throughout the territory of Korea under the supervision of a body consisting of representatives of neutral countries. It also proposed that consultations should take place, on a basis of equality, between North Korea and South Korea, concerning their economic and cultural relations and the reduction of armed forces on either side. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stressed the need for convening a conference of all the countries concerned in the Korean question, to consider the problem of Korean unification.

29. By its opposition to the participation of a representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the present debate, i.e., to any contact between the two parties in Korea, the United States showed that it did not wish to let the Koreans settle the question of their country's unification and that, actually, it did not want a peaceful reunification. Instead, the United States sought to perpetuate the existence of the so-called United Nations Commission, whose activities, far from promoting the solution of the problem, were directed towards furthering the aims of the United States and its allies.

30. Mr. SOSA RODRIGUEZ (Venezuela) believed that the unanimous intention of the States Members of the United Nations to achieve the unification of Korea by peaceful means could not be questioned. The failure of efforts to that end made since the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement of 27 July 1953 (S/3079, appendix A) was due to the North Korean authorities' wrongful insistence on branding South Korea as the aggressor in 1950 and on treating the United Nations forces, which had entered the conflict in order to safeguard peace, on the same footing as the Chinese "Volunteers", who had intervened on the side of North Korea.

31. Everyone knew who had been the aggressor in 1950. There was no need to recall that, but for the prompt intervention of the United Nations, South Korea would have gone down before the violent invasion by North Korean troops which had crossed the 38th parallel. The United Nations forces belonged to no single nation; they were the troops of the supreme world Organization and were sent to Korea to carry out the task entrusted to them by that Organization. The so-called Chinese Volunteers, on the other hand, were troops belonging to Communist China, whose action had been condemned by the United Nations because the only purpose of their illegal intervention had been to help the North Korean authorities in their aggression against South Korea. Such was the legal situation.

32. As to the factual situation, it was not possible to regard the withdrawal of troops to within a short distance of the Korean frontier as equivalent to the withdrawal of troops thousands of miles across the sea without having a degree of confidence in the

good faith of the North Korean authorities which was unfortunately not justified at present.

33. The proposals put forward by the North Korean authorities for solving the Korean problem were unacceptable, not only because they were vague with regard to the method proposed for organizing the elections and having them supervised by neutral observers, but because they called for the prior withdrawal of the United Nations forces from South Korea.

34. The presence in South Korea of United Nations forces, already much reduced, should cause the North Korean authorities no alarm, since those troops could never be aggressors. On the contrary, they

guaranteed the maintenance of peace. They were in Korea to defend, not the interests of one particular country, but those of the United Nations, which had sent them there to see that the provisions of the Charter were carried out; and to safeguard peace and the principle of the self-determination of peoples.

35. The United Nations should continue its efforts to bring about conciliation without prejudice to the fundamental principles on which it was based.

36. The Venezuelan delegation would vote for the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217) because it was in keeping with those principles.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.