

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWELFTH SESSION

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Chairman: Mr. Djalal ABDOH (Iran).**Tribute to the memory of Mr. Antonin Zapotocky,
President of the Czechoslovak Republic**

1. The CHAIRMAN said he had heard with regret the news of the death of Mr. Antonin Zapotocky, President of the Czechoslovak Republic. He expressed the First Committee's profound sympathy with the delegation of Czechoslovakia, and asked the Czechoslovak delegation to convey those sentiments to the Government and people of Czechoslovakia.
2. Mr. DAVID (Czechoslovakia) expressed his delegation's sincere gratitude to the Chairman and the members of the Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 23**The Korean question: report of the United Nations
Commission on the Unification and Rehabilitation of
Korea (A/3672, A/C.1/795, A/C.1/L.192) (continued)**

3. Mr. YANG (Republic of Korea) thanked the First Committee for inviting his delegation to participate in the discussion of the Korean question.
4. The Korean question was now before the Committee for the eleventh successive year. Some problems which arose between nations were alleviated and softened by the passage of time, but that was not the case when the problems resulted from aggression in an occupied area, when an ancient, homogeneous and closely knit people was artificially divided, and when the minimum security of a peaceful and law-abiding Government was under constant threat. The longer that situation persisted in Korea the worse it became.

5. At the eleventh session (817th meeting) he had drawn the attention of the Committee to the dangerous situation arising from the military imbalance as a result of the introduction of armaments by the communists in violation of the terms of the Armistice Agreement (S/3079, appendix A). The United Nations Command had taken steps, belatedly it was true, to correct the situation by declaring the abrogation of sub-paragraph 13 (d) of the Armistice Agreement. But the imbalance had yet to be rectified.
6. In spite of all the formidable challenges and difficulties encountered, great progress had been made

by the Republic of Korea in the political, economic, social and educational fields. It had a workable two-party system of politics, with free discussion and free elections by secret ballot. Korean newspapers were a free and vigorous forum for the discussion of the many issues which arose in Korea as in any other society. Many candidates representing many divergent programmes were freely waging political campaigns, and the great electorate composed of all adult men and women was freely arriving at its own decisions.

7. With the generous economic assistance of the United Nations and the United States the battered and war-devastated Korean economy was gradually emerging from the shambles, as was attested by the report of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (A/3651 and Add.1). The inflationary trends had been almost halted and the price index had been levelled out.

8. At the time of Korean national liberation, 77 per cent of all the Korean people had been illiterate. Despite the enormous demands which his Government had had to meet for military defence, economic development and social welfare, it had devoted special attention to building up its educational facilities and much had been accomplished in that field. However, as a result of the communist invasion, much of the educational work had been destroyed. The communists had burned books, destroyed buildings and driven many thousands of school teachers north into captivity. Despite all those difficulties Korea was now among the most literate nations in the world. Only 6.6 per cent of the population of the Republic of Korea was illiterate and 96.5 per cent of all children aged six to twelve were now in school. In the fifty colleges and universities there had for several years been an average enrolment of 80,000 students.

9. There was a far darker side to the Korean question, the side of communist aggression. Eighteen thousand peaceful civilians had been kidnapped from their homes and were still held in captivity with no word as to their fate, for even the International Red Cross had been unable to inquire about them. The number of war widows amounted to 300,000 and that of war orphans to 100,000. The population of the North was waiting in suffering and anguish for a second liberation from foreign tyranny.

10. At the Cairo Conference, the United States, the United Kingdom and China had, on 1 December 1943, issued a declaration stating that Korea should in due course be free and independent. Neither they nor any one else had had the slightest doubt that their declaration encompassed the whole of the Korean peninsula. At the Potsdam Conference in 1945 and in its declaration of war against Japan on 11 August 1945, the USSR had similarly given its solemn pledge that all Korea should be independent. When the division of Korea along the 38th parallel was accepted by the great

Powers at the end of the Second World War as a temporary military expedient, it had been clearly understood that Korea was to be reunited just as soon as Japanese troops in the peninsula should surrender.

11. It was a well-known historical fact that the 38th parallel division had never had any ideological or political significance. After the surrender of the Japanese troops in August and September 1945, the division along the 38th parallel had ceased to have any *raison d'être* or legal justification. The United States, which had briefly occupied the southern part of Korea, had then attempted to negotiate with the Soviet Union, whose troops were occupying the northern part, for the establishment of a democratic Government on the basis of the freely expressed will of the Korean people.

12. The General Assembly of the United Nations had begun to deal with the juridical aspects of the Korean question at its second session in the autumn of 1947. It had decided (resolution 112 (II)) that free elections should be held under United Nations observation in all Korea and that the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea should be set up to ensure that the people of the whole of Korea should have the democratic right to elect a government of their own choice. It was well known that the Soviet Union had refused to permit the Commission to operate in the northern part of Korea, so that the elections had been restricted to the southern provinces.

13. The result was the continued artificial division of a homogeneous people which for more than 4,000 years had been a nation in all respects, in language, traditions, customs, and political and cultural unity. The terms "North Korea" and "South Korea" had absolutely no meaning and would never have arisen had it not been for the recent foreign aggression.

14. Korea was a genuinely peace-loving nation; it had never committed aggression against any other nation. It had taken up arms only to defend itself and to protect its territory from foreign aggression. It therefore called on the clamorous protagonists of "peaceful co-existence" to put their theory into immediate practice by withdrawing their forces of aggression from the northern half of Korean territory and by agreeing to hold genuinely free elections, under United Nations supervision, for the purpose of unifying the country. Korea had no intention of ever launching an attack against the Soviet Union or China. Such an idea would be ridiculous. No one anywhere would have the slightest cause to fear a reunited, democratic Korea.

15. In regard to the question of the admission of Korea to the United Nations, he recalled that in resolution 195 (III) of 12 December 1948, the General Assembly had recognized that the Government of the Republic of Korea was the only lawful government in all Korea. In international relations, in the United Nations and in the specialized agencies, the Government of the Republic of Korea was Korea's only legitimate representative. Moreover, no one had questioned that Korea fulfilled all the requirements of Article 4 of the Charter for membership in the United Nations. Ten of the eleven nations represented on the Security Council had voted in favour of its admission and its candidacy had been supported by a large majority of the members of the General Assembly.

16. He urged the Soviet Union not to oppose again the request of the Republic of Korea, for admission to the

United Nations and not to prevent it from taking its rightful place in the Organization. He also asked for the withdrawal of the communist armies and an opportunity to organize free elections, under United Nations supervision, in the northern provinces. The genuine stability which would result from them would make the further presence of the United Nations troops unnecessary.

17. The existence of a free, independent and unified Korea would benefit not only the Korean people but all the peoples of the world. It would strengthen peace in the Far East and throughout the world. It would also represent a victory for the ideals and principles of the United Nations and would strengthen immeasurably the prestige and power of the Organization which was the guardian of justice and peace in the world.

18. Mr. PINK (United Kingdom) said that the problem of Korea was one in which the responsibility of the United Nations had been deeply engaged for a decade. He recalled that, since the General Assembly had established the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea by its resolution 112 B (II) of 14 November 1947 in order to facilitate the establishment of a national government of Korea, its efforts had been consistently frustrated by the régimes which had been in effective control of North Korea during that time. The Temporary Commission had been prevented from entering North Korea to carry out its mandate of supervising all Korean elections. It had, however, observed the South Korean elections of May 1948, and on the basis of its report,^{1/} the General Assembly had declared, in resolution 195 (III) of 12 December 1948, that a lawful government, based on free elections, had been established in South Korea and was the only such government in Korea.

19. In 1950, the United Nations had been faced with aggression by the forces of North Korea against the Korean Republic. Since the armistice of July 1953, the aim of the United Nations had remained substantially the same as before the aggression: the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Korea.

20. At the Korean Political Conference, held at Geneva in 1954, fifteen of the nations represented in the United Nations Command, together with the Republic of Korea, had set forth two principles which in their view must underlie a settlement of the Korean problem: first, that the United Nations was empowered to take collective action to repel aggression, to restore peace and security and to extend its good offices; secondly, genuinely free elections should be held under United Nations supervision (A/2786, para. 1).

21. The representatives of the communist side had rejected those principles. The General Assembly had endorsed them in a number of resolutions, but unfortunately, as emerged from the UNCURK report (A/3672), there was no sign that the authorities in North Korea or the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China were willing to negotiate a settlement on the basis of the principles laid down by the United Nations, and as long as that unwillingness existed, the prospects of achieving the United Nations objectives were clearly remote.

22. The representative of the Soviet Union had shown that that attitude had not changed. In essence, he had

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Supplement No. 9.

advised the United Nations to abandon the principles and objectives it had laid down. The United Kingdom delegation believed that it was the duty of the General Assembly to reaffirm them. It recommended those authorities which had hitherto obstructed progress to reconsider their present negative attitude.

23. Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland) said that the Korean problem was nowhere near a solution. Some representatives had merely levelled accusations against the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea without allowing it to answer those charges. Even a casual perusal of the UNCURK report was enough to show that the intentions of the Government of the Republic of Korea were not as peaceful as some representatives claimed. He quoted several passages from the reports of the Unified Command and UNCURK which showed that the Republic of Korea had repeatedly called for the denunciation of the Armistice Agreement, that the Unified Command had decided that it would "provisionally suspend" the inspection teams in the areas of the Republic of Korea and under its command and that it considered the withdrawal of the inspection teams to be in accordance with the purpose of the Armistice Agreement because it terminated serious errors in the application of the inspection provisions—which was, in the opinion of the Polish delegation, a most unusual statement to make.

24. The inspection teams had been withdrawn into the demilitarized zone, and their freedom of action had been nullified, with the result that the work of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), which had played an important part in preventing the recurrence of hostilities, had been brought to a standstill. The first step towards the settlement of the Korean problem should be the observance of the Armistice Agreement. The next step should be to seek a political settlement, and that should be the responsibility of the two Korean States. Nothing would be gained by introducing discord, by using the Korean problem for propaganda purposes or by attempting to impose a unilateral settlement on one of the sides.

25. Mr. CRAW (New Zealand) said that the Korean question remained a matter of deep concern to his country. Korea and New Zealand were both in the Pacific area; and unsettled conditions in Korea gave rise to anxiety lest the full maintenance of international peace and security in the Pacific should be endangered with results that would inevitably affect New Zealand. Moreover, New Zealand had always stood squarely behind collective measures to repel aggression and had sent soldiers who had fought and died on Korean battlefields. New Zealand was not, therefore, willing to have a merely perfunctory examination of the Korean question and then to put it aside.

26. He summarized the history of the United Nations concern with the problem of Korea and noted that it was the communist side which had prevented the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Korea. Nevertheless, although the United Nations had not so far been able to achieve the unification of Korea, it had, by its patience and courage, saved the people of South Korea from the fate of many other peoples who had been enslaved; and the way was still open for eventual peaceful unification.

27. Some doubted the usefulness of resolutions which would be ignored by the main party concerned. But it

should not be forgotten that it was because the United Nations had adhered to the principles it had laid down that the majority of the Korean people had been able to preserve their freedom and independence. North Korea, if it could speak freely, would undoubtedly accept those principles.

28. The Communist authorities were determined to avoid genuinely free elections in North Korea, as elsewhere. They had built up their armed forces and equipment in violation of the Armistice Agreement. They were conducting a war of nerves against South Korea in the hope that the free nations would become indifferent and that South Korea would fall an easy prey to subversion, infiltration or armed attack.

29. That sombre picture, however, had some encouraging features. The United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea had noted that the Republic of Korea had achieved political, administrative and economic progress. The United Nations Command, for its part, had shown its determination not to relax its vigilance in the face of the building up of communist military strength: it had both the right and the duty to take steps to ensure that any renewed aggression would not find South Korea helpless.

30. In those circumstances, the least the United Nations could do was to reiterate the principles already laid down in order to keep the problem before the conscience of the world. It must once again state that free elections must be held under the impartial supervision of an international body. There was nothing rigid about that position: details should not be pressed to the point of obstinacy. But it must be insisted that the objective was to bring about, by peaceful means, a unified, independent and democratic Korea under a representative form of government and the full restoration of international peace and security in the area. If those broad principles were accepted, there would be relatively wider scope for negotiation on the practical details. It was not too much to hope that in time satisfactory measures would be agreed upon. In the meantime, the armistice must remain in force until it could be replaced by an over-all settlement that would permit the establishment by peaceful means of a united, independent and democratic Korea.

31. Mr. MATSUDAIRA (Japan) stated that the problem of Korea had always been of great importance to his country. The report of UNCURK pointed out that the implementation of the Armistice Agreement had encountered serious difficulties since the previous year. His delegation hoped that the situation would be improved so that the implementation of the Agreement, both in the letter and in the spirit, would become feasible.

32. The Armistice Agreement was, however, only a step towards achieving the goals of the United Nations, namely, a settlement of the question of establishing a unified, independent and democratic Korea by peaceful means. Thus, the use of force was ruled out, but no particular form of peaceful means, such as good offices and direct negotiations, was excluded, as had been indicated in the letter dated 11 November 1954 attached to the report to the United Nations on the Korean Political Conference in Geneva (A/2786). Since the Armistice Agreement had been reached through negotiation, it would be rather difficult to reject the use of

the same procedure in order to bring about a settlement between the parties—either in or out of the United Nations—including the Government of the Republic of Korea and the authorities in North Korea. The question of the recognition of a government was not involved.

33. However, there was a basic condition for such negotiations: they must be in accordance with the fundamental principles set forth by the nations participating in the Korean Political Conference on behalf of the United Nations. Those principles were definite and concrete and had been consistently reaffirmed by the General Assembly. Although they did not constitute an ultimatum and could be modified or amended by the Assembly, without such alteration by the Assembly they represented the minimum conditions on which any negotiation could be fruitfully conducted.

34. Unfortunately, the authorities in North Korea did not seem to be willing to negotiate for a settlement on the basis of those principles. Unless there was a change in their attitude, there would be no justification for the participation of a representative of North Korea in the First Committee's debates. If there were a change in the attitude of the North Korean authorities, the position of the United Nations would be reasonably flexible.

35. In conclusion, he paid a tribute to the admirable achievement accomplished by UNCURK under difficult conditions.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.