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

AGENDA ITEM 24


GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. COOPER (Liberia) said that his country's interest in the Korean question came from its belief that all peoples were entitled to be free and independent and to choose their own political future. The Korean people had become the victims of the struggle for power among the great Powers following the Second World War. Their hope of reunion after the establishment of the United Nations had been frustrated when North Korea had refused to allow the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea to enter its territory and had set up a government which it proclaimed to be the Government of Korea. Even after the North Korean aggression and the war which had followed it, the majority of the Korean people had continued to hope for reunification by free elections under the auspices of the United Nations, and it was difficult to understand how the North Korean Government and the Peking Government, if they really desired unification, could object to that solution.

2. He reviewed the North Korean proposals for the unification of the country quoted in the report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) (A/3665, para. 9) and pointed out that it would be difficult to constitute the "neutral nations organ" suggested for supervising elections in a divided world where the professed neutrality of countries was looked upon with scepticism by the East and the West. It might be easier to have a United Nations commission composed of countries from both the East and the West. Furthermore, the South Koreans would be more than naíve to accept the proposal for the complete withdrawal of United Nations forces on the strength of a unilateral declaration by the North Korean authorities that all foreign troops had been withdrawn from their territory. If the North Korean authorities and the Peking Government were sincere in their proposal for the unification of Korea, they would agree to a United Nations commission such as UNCURK, which would supervise or at least observe the evacuation of all foreign troops. That was indispensable for free elections. That commission should either undertake the supervision of the elections or recommend the establishment of a special group for that purpose. The economic and cultural exchange proposed by the North Korean authorities was impossible so long as one or the other régime in Korea was branded as the puppet of either of the great Powers. Moreover, events in Korea immediately preceding the 1950 hostilities and during the war had been so blatantly misrepresented by the North Korean authorities in their statement of 28 October 1956 (A/C.1/810) as to cast doubt on their intentions and to substantiate the fear that they still sought control of all of Korea by force.

3. The Liberian delegation congratulated UNCURK upon its report. It was encouraging to learn of the general progress achieved by the South Korean Government, but it was not surprising that half of its general budget should be spent on defence in view of the extent to which the country had been ravaged by the 1950 communist aggression. The Liberian delegation regretted, however, that South Korea's further economic growth was being hampered owing to the burden of maintaining a large army and the lack of private capital, but noted with satisfaction that the country's increased financial stability was likely to make it more attractive to private capital.

4. It had been argued that no useful purpose would be served by having the question of Korea debated in the Committee and a resolution on that question adopted without the participation of both parties. Even if North Korea were represented, however, nothing more would be gained since it could be expected to maintain its intransigent position. The United Nations debate on Korea would in any case serve to remind the world and South Korea that the United Nations was still resolved to work for a peaceful solution, but the Koreans could not expect to attain their goal of unification and complete independence until the distrust prevailing in the relations among the great Powers had been dissipated.

5. Liberia would support the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217) as the minimum which could be achieved at that juncture towards the unification of Korea.

6. Mr. FORSYTH (Australia) said that his delegation was gratified to note, from the report of UNCURK, that economic progress in the Republic of Korea had been maintained and that the democratic system of government had been strengthened. It recognized, however, that no substantial progress had been made towards reunification. There could be no doubt that, had all the people of Korea been permitted to express their wishes without external interference, unity would long since have been achieved. In the existing cir-
cumstances, unfortunately, free expression was possible only in one part of Korea.

7. He reviewed the objectives of the United Nations in Korea as reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 1180 (XII) and the events which had led to the existing situation, and pointed out that if the United Nations were to abandon the principles it had consistently upheld for a solution of the Korean question, the result would be either the permanent division of the Korean people or the eventual success of the aggression which had started in 1950. The Australians, who had participated in the Korean war together with other United Nations forces, were acutely aware of what they had fought for. The Assembly clearly intended by its resolution 376 (V) that the United Nations forces should remain in Korea until free elections had been held under United Nations auspices for the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government.

8. The solution which the communists had persistently offered for a settlement of the Korean question was the withdrawal of all foreign forces. Such a complete withdrawal might indeed solve the question of territorial unification, but it would be a unification achieved by pressure and subversion supported by Communist China with the hope of bringing about a coup in South Korea. Then the fruits of the aggression of 1950 would have been harvested.

9. It was significant that, despite the well-advertised withdrawals of Chinese forces from North Korea, the communists maintained their refusal to accept principles which would ensure free elections. He reviewed the exchange of correspondence between the Chinese Communist and the North Korean authorities on the one hand, and the United Kingdom, acting on behalf of the countries which had contributed forces to the United Nations side in 1950, on the other (A/3865, paras. 13-15). With regard to the announcement of the withdrawal of the Chinese People's Volunteers, he recalled that as long ago as 1951 the General Assembly had called upon those forces to withdraw from Korea (resolution 498 (V)). Thus, it had taken the Peking régime seven years to heed that appeal, and it had done so only after ensuring a substantial increase in the military power of the North Korean administration and long after the greater part of the United Nations forces in South Korea had already been withdrawn. No reply had been forthcoming to the United Kingdom request for clarification of the communist proposal regarding elections (A/3865, para. 13). Instead, the communist authorities continued to repeat their demand for a complete withdrawal of forces as a prerequisite to a settlement of the Korean problem. That proposition contradicted the United Nations position that its force would be withdrawn when conditions of unity, independence, freedom and security were genuinely established in the whole of Korea. Moreover, the United Nations side had expressed willingness at all times to give further consideration to the question of the reunification of Korea on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly (A/3865, para. 15).

10. Acceptance of the communist proposals made in the 1958 exchange of correspondence would have resulted in the withdrawal of United Nations forces from Korea without any guarantee that reunification would be achieved by democratic methods. The withdrawal of the Chinese Communist forces from North Korea, which Australia welcomed, constituted only a small step towards realizing conditions suitable for reunification. It did not remove the need for a United Nations force in Korea. The status of the Chinese Communist forces in Korea could not be deemed to be equivalent to that of the United Nations forces. The Chinese had come to Korea in support of an aggression and had been declared aggressors by the General Assembly (resolution 498 (V)). Their departure had been persistently requested by the Assembly. The United Nations forces, on the other hand, were in Korea to ensure that aggression would not recur and to show that United Nations intentions for the reunification of Korea by democratic means would be carried out.

11. He recalled the suggestions which the communist authorities had made in the course of the exchange of correspondence in 1958 that troop withdrawal should be followed by elections which might be conducted under the observation of a "neutral nations organ" (A/3865, para. 9). He pointed out that fifteen nations had requested a clarification of the suggestions, but no reply on this point had been forthcoming. The communist public statements on the idea of observation by a neutral nations organ left doubt whether the communist authorities envisaged a withdrawal which would ensure genuinely free elections. Indeed, the lack of response to the request for clarification justified doubt as to whether the communist proposal for supervision of elections had any meaning at all. In the absence of evidence that the communist authorities were prepared to discuss and perhaps accept the principles advanced by the United Nations for a political settlement, the withdrawal of Chinese Communist forces from North Korea did not in itself demonstrate that the communist authorities were ready to approach a peaceful settlement on any other terms but their own. In reply to a very recent proposal by the North Korean representatives on the Military Armistice Commission for withdrawal of United Nations forces, the United Nations representative had replied that the conditions for such a withdrawal could be settled only by a political conference and that if the communists really wanted a solution, they had only to show readiness to discuss the matter on the basis of the objectives of the General Assembly. The communist authorities had not taken any further action in the matter.

12. The statement of the North Korean authorities of 28 October 1958, announcing completion of the withdrawal of the Chinese People's Volunteers (A/C.1/810) contained nothing which might contribute towards a Korean solution in accordance with United Nations objectives. It deliberately reversed the facts of the 1950 aggression and appeared to be designed merely to promote communist propaganda. Further, by claiming that, in view of the withdrawal of the Chinese Communist troops, United Nations forces were also obliged to withdraw, it attempted to deceive the world and induce the United Nations to abandon the means of giving effect ultimately to its Korean policy. On the grounds that they had taken a long overdue single step which had been enjoined by the General Assembly, namely, the withdrawal of Chinese troops from North Korea, the Chinese Communists did not become entitled to demand in return that the United Nations should abandon its principles for a
Korean settlement. Because North Korea withheld its consent, the United Nations was unable to secure conditions in which all the people of Korea could freely express their wishes. The presence or absence of Chinese troops in North Korea in no way affected that central fact. On the other hand, the withdrawal of United Nations forces from South Korea would make a vital difference: it would remove the main guarantee that freedom and independence for the Korean people would ever be secured.

13. In the view of Australia, the only right course was to remain firm, while keeping prepared to respond to any convincing sign of readiness on the part of the communist authorities to approach a solution on the basis of United Nations principles. In that spirit, Australia had co-sponsored the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217). Having reviewed the terms of the draft, he stated that the Australian delegation considered that the United Nations had a duty to reaffirm its objectives as proposed therein. If the General Assembly were to succumb to communist pressure, the Korean people would be left without hope of ultimate reunification in conditions of peace and independence. Moreover, the damaging effect of a United Nations admission that it was not prepared to stand firm on its principles would not be confined to the Korean people.

14. Mr. ZARATE MORENO (Colombia) said that the concern for the fate of Korea which had led his country to contribute troops to the United Nations forces serving in Korea had led it to co-sponsor the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.217). Colombia did not wish to see the Korean question congeal into one of those on which the United Nations passed ineffective resolutions year after year; it desired not only a just solution, but a rapid and lasting one. To that end, a new and vigorous policy was needed which would advance the present state of affairs and restore, in a just and democratic manner, control of their own destiny to the Korean people. It was in that spirit that his delegation had co-sponsored the draft resolution.

15. Mr. JORDAAN (Union of South Africa) noted that his country had been one of the handful of States which had responded to the Security Council's appeal for assistance in repelling the aggression against South Korea, and retained its interest in the cause for which its forces had fought. In spite of the very slow progress that had been made towards a satisfactory settlement, his delegation was not prepared to accept failure as a foregone conclusion. As far as the United Nations was concerned, it was clear that the door to negotiation remained open.

16. Since free elections had always been regarded by the United Nations as a prerequisite to the establishment of a free and independent Korea, his delegation had noted with interest that the North Korean authorities now favoured such elections. It was, however, essential to know what the communist side meant by a "neutral nations organ" to supervise the elections and on what basis the proposed new assembly would be elected. Since the clarification of those issues requested by the Governments which had contributed troops to the United Nations Command had not been forthcoming, one was left to ask whether the North Korean proposals had been seriously intended.

17. His delegation welcomed the announced withdrawal of all Chinese forces from North Korea. Unfortunately, however, the announcement of that action by the North Koreans had been coupled with a demand for the withdrawal of United Nations troops. The United Nations forces had been sent to Korea to repel aggression and they remained only to keep the peace until the two objectives of the United Nations were achieved—the establishment by peaceful means of a unified, independent and democratic Korea under a representative form of government, and the full restoration of international peace and security in the area.

18. Difficult as the task might be, his delegation continued to hope that those objectives would eventually be attained. If at present no more could be done than to urge the authorities concerned to strive for the attainment of those objectives, the United Nations should not desist from doing so. It was for that reason that his delegation would vote in favour of the thirteen-Power draft resolution.

19. Mr. MEZINCESCUI (Romania) said that discussion of the Korean problem in the United Nations was characterized by the refusal of the United States and some other delegations to face the fundamental facts of the situation. The claim that there was only one legal Government of Korea could not alter the fact that two States existed on Korean territory. It must finally be understood that the General Assembly's consideration of the Korean question was not intended to determine which was the legitimate Government of Korea—a question which was in any case outside its competence.

20. The failure of the United Kingdom representative to answer the question of how the refusal to admit representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Committee's discussion could help to solve the problem was understandable, for that procedure could not possibly be helpful. On the contrary, the exclusion of those representatives had ruled out any possibility of substantial progress towards a solution of the question during the current session of the General Assembly. That fact could only be construed as proof that the United States and its supporters did not seek a settlement of the question in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the existing international agreements on the question, despite the hope for progress aroused during the current year by the withdrawal of the Chinese People's Volunteers from Korea. It might well have been expected that so important a measure would have induced the United States and other countries to withdraw their own armed forces. Not only had they failed to do so, however, but they had taken the Chinese-Korean initiative as a signal for intensifying their own military preparations in South Korea, transforming the area into an atomic base. Such actions could serve only the purposes of aggression, and it was obvious that together with the recent aggressive actions by the United States and the Chiang Kai-shek refugees in the Taiwan Strait, they were part of a premeditated United States plan for the colonial domination of the peoples of the Far East.

21. In his statement (973rd meeting), the United States representative had attempted to minimize the danger to international peace and security im-
licit in the presence in Korea of United States armed forces equipped with nuclear weapons, and had said that they would remain in Korea only in order to achieve the objectives of the United Nations. He would like the United States representative to inform the Committee what United Nations objectives in Korea could be attained by means of rockets and nuclear weapons. The real intentions of the United States were to bring about the capitulation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through "atomic blackmail" while utilizing the discussions in the United Nations as a smoke-screen—discussions which could lead to nothing in the absence of representatives of the Democratic People's Republic. There was no need to emphasize the dangers of that policy.

22. In spite of the serious situation created by the aggressive policy of the United States, his delegation considered that the Korean problem could and must be solved by peaceful means. Those means had been set out in the statement made on 5 February 1958 by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea: first of all, the elimination of all foreign interference in the internal affairs of Korea and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korean territory; then free elections throughout the country in order to create a single organ of State power. There could be no question of free elections so long as South Korea was occupied by United States troops, regardless of the sponsorship of those troops.

23. His delegation considered that the proposals put forward by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be examined carefully and earnestly and that if positive results were to be achieved on the question it was above all necessary for the United States and its supporters to decide to approach the problem in conformity with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter, the realities of the situation and the exigencies of contemporary international life.

24. Mr. VEGA GOMEZ (El Salvador) noted that, while the war in Korea had been halted, little had been done to restore that country's unity and legitimate international rights. He hoped that Korea would soon be reunified and granted membership in the United Nations.

25. The General Assembly should approve the report of UNCURK, which indicated that the Commission had done excellent work during the past year. The report showed that the Republic of Korea was making progress in all fields, but that the continued partition of the country, heavy defence expenditures and the lack of private capital were still retarding economic development. At the same time, democratic ideas were taking root. Obviously, the country's progress would be even more rapid as soon as the present abnormal situation was ended.

26. His delegation would vote for the thirteen-Power draft resolution.

27. Mr. MATSUDAIRA (Japan) noted that, whereas the report of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency stated that the Korean economy had achieved a greater measure of stability during the past year than at any time since the outbreak of the Korean war (A/3907, para. 172), the report of UNCURK said that certain obstacles continued to retard economic progress (A/3865, para. 54). North and South Korea were economically complementary, and political stability was clearly impossible so long as the country remained divided.

28. According to the UNCURK report, the North Korean authorities had proposed on 5 February 1958 that, with a view to achieving the peaceful unification of Korea, all foreign troops should be simultaneously withdrawn from Korea and all-Korea free elections should subsequently be held under the observation of a neutral nations organ (A/3865, para. 9). The first point in that proposal was at variance with the principles embodied in the report to the United Nations on the Korean Political Conference (A/2786), held at Geneva in 1954, and with numerous General Assembly resolutions, such as resolution 498 (V) of 1 February 1951, which called upon the Government of the People's Republic of China "to cause its forces and nationals in Korea to cease hostilities against the United Nations forces and to withdraw from Korea". The second point was incompatible with General Assembly resolution 376 (V) of 7 October 1950, which recommended that the United Nations forces should remain in Korea until conditions of stability had been created throughout the country and elections for the establishment of a unified, independent, democratic government in the sovereign State of Korea had been held under United Nations auspices. The North Korean proposal obviously could not provide a basis for discussion. Although the Japanese delegation welcomed the withdrawal of the Chinese troops from North Korea, it felt that the United Nations forces should not be withdrawn until the conditions for a lasting settlement laid down by the General Assembly had been fulfilled.

29. Although the United Nations objective in Korea remained the achievement by peaceful means of a unified, independent, and democratic Korea and the full restoration of peace and security in the area, it could exercise flexibility in pursuing that objective, provided that the fundamental principles set forth in the various General Assembly resolutions on the matter and in the report on the Korean Political Conference were followed. He agreed with the Canadian representative that the General Assembly could, if it wished, modify past resolutions or adopt new ones. Above all, a settlement must be brought about by peaceful means; within that framework, a variety of methods, including good offices and negotiations, might be employed.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.