

will be referred for early and effective action to the United Nations Commission which has been set up for that purpose.

I do not need to emphasize to this Committee the gravity of the problem. Man has now developed weapons capable of his own complete destruction.

If he does not bring and keep them under control and, even more important, bring about a state of affairs where their use would be unthinkable and impossible, then life on this planet will indeed soon become—in the words of the English philosopher “nasty, brutish and short”.

Korea

The Korean question appeared as the first item on the agenda of the Political Committee. Two resolutions were introduced, the first dealing with the problem of re-unification of the divided nation and the second with the report of the Government of India concerning ex-prisoners of war who did not wish to be repatriated. This second resolution was sponsored by Ecuador, El Salvador and Venezuela, and expressed gratitude to the Governments of India, Argentina and Brazil “for their valuable co-operation in the settlement of the problem of ex-prisoners of the Korean War”. It was adopted by the General Assembly in plenary session by a vote of 60 in favour, none against, and 10 abstentions.

The resolution on reunification was, however, more contentious. Sponsored by the United States, it reaffirmed that the “objectives of the United Nations are to bring about by peaceful means the establishment 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”. The resolution further urged that continuing efforts be made to achieve these objectives in accordance with the principles enunciated at the Geneva Conference of 1954 and reaffirmed by the General Assembly at its 8th and 9th sessions. The resolution then requested the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea to continue its work in accordance with existing resolutions and in particular to observe and report on elections throughout Korea”, and called upon all states and authorities to facilitate the Commission in its work. Finally, the Secretary-General was requested to place the Korean item on the provisional agenda for the 12th session.

The Committee, by a vote of 51 in favour (including Canada) 10 against (Soviet bloc and Syria) with 12 abstentions (including India, Ceylon, Cambodia, Burma, Finland, Yugoslavia and Indonesia) invited a representative of the Republic of Korea to participate in the discussion of the main resolution. This representative, however, did not enjoy voting privileges.

During the course of the Committee's discussions, Canada's position was outlined in a statement made by Dr. R. A. MacKay, Canadian Permanent Representative to the UN. After expressing regret that the prospect of a free and united Korea was not much closer than when the subject was last discussed, Dr. MacKay called for an approach which would be practical and flexible and an attitude which would not allow “unreasonable stubbornness to stand in the way of negotiations which might lead to a settlement”. While the UN must insist on strict adherence to certain principles fundamental to unification, it need not be so inflexible with regard to methods; “It is the end result not the means of achieving it which matters”. Rather than being imposed, the settlement will have to be negotiated, he continued. Although such a course of action may be prolonged and frustrating, the process of conciliation and pacification is the most honourable work of the UN and in this work a remarkable degree of success has been achieved in the past.