

Early in October, while the debate at Lake Success was still proceeding, the Chinese Communist Foreign Minister, Chou En-lai, had publicly warned that his country would not "stand aside" if United Nations troops crossed the 38th parallel. This warning had contributed to the apprehension of a number of delegations lest the continuation of United Nations military operations into North Korean territory might result in an extension of the conflict. On the other hand, while a halt short of the 38th parallel might have been held to be consonant with the immediate objective of stopping the aggression, it would have left unsolved the long-range problem of unification, unless the North Koreans themselves agreed to accept a United Nations settlement for the entire country; and it would have permitted the North Korean forces to regroup once more behind their previous border, remaining as a constant threat to the stability of the area. Within a month after the difficult decision was made, however, it became apparent that the warning from Peking had not been an empty threat. Substantial numbers of Chinese Communist "volunteers" appeared on the Korean side of the Yalu River, throwing back advance units of the United Nations forces. On November 6, the United Nations received official notice of Chinese Communist intervention in a special report from General MacArthur.

The gravity of this new development was recognized by all. It was, however, by no means clear what motives had inspired this intervention, which not only endangered the possibility of any peaceful settlement for Korea, but was also starting a chain of events which might lead to a third world war. If it were motivated by fear of alien forces along the Manchurian border, or by a desire to protect specific Chinese interests in the frontier area, some solution might be found. If, on the other hand, the Chinese Communist action were part of a broader plan, or were designed to throw United Nations forces entirely out of Korea, the United Nations would be faced with a new crisis incomparably more serious than that created by the initial attack on June 25.

Since the question of Chinese Communist motivation was obviously of primary importance, the first action taken by the Security Council on November 8, immediately following receipt of General MacArthur's special report, was to adopt a resolution inviting a representative of the Chinese Communist Government to be present during the discussion of this question in the Council. It was also hoped that assurances regarding legitimate Chinese interests might ease the tension, and on November 10, a six-power resolution was presented to the Security Council calling on the Chinese Communists to withdraw from Korea, affirming at the same time that legitimate Chinese interests would be protected, and requesting UNCURK to assist in the settlement of any problems arising along the Chinese-Korean frontier. The Interim Committee on Korea had three days before unanimously resolved to give what assistance it could in this regard, and by the beginning of December the United Nations Commission had begun to consider the problems which it had been assigned.

On November 11, the Chinese Communist Government declined the Security Council's invitation to send representatives to discuss