

We all realize and sympathize with the suffering and devastation suffered by the U.S.S.R. during the course of the Second World War. All countries on the Allied side, and indeed on the side of our former enemies, suffered in greater or less degree. We can understand, too, the intensity of the feelings of the Russian people, on this score. However, we have too much faith in the fundamental decency of the great masses of the Russian people and in the humanitarian traditions which have inspired in the past the thinking of their great philosophers and writers, to believe that bitterness and resentment will forever animate their attitude towards their, and our, former enemies. We shall continue to hope that a satisfactory solution of this great problem, which has been entrusted to the United Nations, will soon be reached; and that in consequence we will, at long last, be able to close this very sad chapter in the history of mankind.

Voting Results

By a roll-call vote of 44 in favour (including Canada) to 5 against (Soviet bloc) with 5 abstentions, the Third Committee adopted on December 3, 1953 a five-power resolution under which the General Assembly reiterates its concern at the large number of prisoners of the Second World War who have not been repatriated or accounted for, and appeals to all governments to supply information to the Ad Hoc Commission on Prisoners-of-War. The resolution was sponsored by the Delegations of Australia, Brazil, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States.

The resolution was subsequently approved without change in a plenary session of the General Assembly on December 7, 1953 by a vote of 46 in favour (including Canada) to 5 against with 6 abstentions.

Text of Resolution

The full text of the resolution adopted reads as follows (Doc. A/C.3/L.397/Rev.1):

"The General Assembly

"Recalling its resolution 427 (V) of 14 December 1950 on measures for the peaceful solution of the problem of prisoners-of-war.

"Reaffirming its belief that all prisoners having originally come within the control of the Allied Powers as a consequence of the Second World War should either have been repatriated long since or have been otherwise accounted for as required both by recognized standards of international conduct and the Geneva Convention of 1949 for the treatment of prisoners-of-war, and by specific agreements between the Allied Powers,

"Having examined the Progress Report to the Secretary-General on the work of the Ad Hoc Commission on Prisoners-of-War,