

54. Since then the Temporary Commission has satisfied itself, as a result of extensive field observation in various key districts of south Korea, that a free atmosphere did exist wherein the democratic rights of freedom of speech, press and assembly were recognized and respected. It then confirmed that it would observe the elections announced by the Commanding General of the United States forces in Korea to be held on May 10, 1948. The elections were duly held on that date and were observed by several observation groups of the Temporary Commission. Since then it has been preparing its final report to the General Assembly and has passed a resolution to notify the elected representatives of the Korean people that the Commission is now ready for such consultation as they may request. On June 25 the Commission resolved unanimously to record the opinion that the results of the election of May 10 represented a valid expression of the free will of the electorate in those parts of Korea accessible to the Commission, whose inhabitants constitute approximately two-thirds of the people of all Korea.

55. During the discussion of the Korean problem in the General Assembly in 1947, the Canadian representative supported the United States approach rather than the proposal of the Soviet Union. He pointed out that a premature withdrawal of occupation forces would serve only to precipitate chaos and disunity, especially in view of the political and economic division which had been imposed upon Korea during the occupation. He said that the purpose of a United Nations Commission would be to provide observers to ensure that the Korean people could, in fact, establish their own government by free elections without foreign interference.

56. As noted above, Canada was appointed as one of the members of the Temporary Commission on Korea. Dr. G. S. Patterson was appointed by the Canadian Government to fill this position. During the discussion in the Interim Committee, the Canadian representative, Mr. L.B. Pearson, the present Secretary of State for External Affairs, stated the opinion of the Canadian Government that, in view of the non-co-operation of the Soviet authorities in north Korea, the Temporary Commission was not in a position to carry out its mandate in Korea. He pointed out that the responsibility for this situation rested squarely on the Soviet Union "which, by its non-co-operative and obstructive attitude, has prevented the facilitation and observation by the United Nations of elections for the whole of Korea for the purpose of setting up a national democratic government chosen by the people of Korea themselves". The Canadian representative said that it would be unwise to ask the Temporary Commission in Korea to do things that it has not, under its terms of reference, the power to do. The Canadian position was that the Temporary Commission was not authorized, under the resolutions of the General Assembly of November 14, 1947, to act in, or for, south Korea alone. In taking this position Canada was in the minority and the resolution mentioned above was passed by 31 to 2 (including Canada) with 11 abstentions. The Korean Commission was accordingly advised to implement its program "in such parts of Korea as are accessible to it". The Canadian representative also stressed the fact that whatever the Interim Committee decided should be considered as advice only and that the Temporary Commission should decide whether or not to accept this advice.

57. The Canadian representative on the Korean Commission has since made every effort to ensure that the Temporary Commission has operated in accordance with the terms of the General Assembly resolution of November 14, 1947. However, as Mr. Pearson stated in the Interim Committee on February 26: "There is one point on which we have no differences. We are unanimous on the necessity of establishing at the earliest possible date a free, united and democratic Korea".