

*The Address—Mr. Pearson*

negotiations, as distinct from cease-fire negotiations, with the Peking government while its troops were still attacking United Nations forces. We have been willing to have the United Nations discuss with the Chinese communists a settlement in Korea and throughout the Far East, but we have not been willing at any time to ask members of the United Nations to participate in such discussions under duress while their men were being killed in Korea. The point of principle here, and the practical consequences of abandoning it, I think are of such crucial importance that this is one issue on which we have never been prepared to compromise.

There are those in this country who assert, and do so quite often and quite vehemently, that our willingness to seek an arrangement on the issue of a cease-fire first and talks afterwards was dishonourable and, as they called it, "appeasement". Those who hold such views I think are mistaken about the character of our policy and about the nature of appeasement itself. What they have in mind, no doubt, is such action as was taken at Munich in 1938. Appeasement as defined by those events begins with illusions about the potential aggressor, and ends with the betrayal of a friend in response to pressure exercised by that aggressor in the hope that such yielding will give one immunity from attack. How different such a course is from the policy which has been advocated by this government in this matter may be seen by examining the same broadcast in which I suggested negotiations with the Chinese communists. Having made that suggestion I went on at once to say:

We must not allow this process—or the situation which makes it necessary—to weaken our resolve or interfere with our plan to strengthen our defences. Above all, we must not allow it to weaken the unity or friendly co-operation of those countries in the free world who are now working together so closely for the good purpose of establishing conditions of stability and peace in the world.

In that, and in other statements made at the time, I stressed the danger in which we stood and the sacrifices which it demanded of us. Far from trying to lull our people into a sense of false security by a move which could rightly be interpreted as appeasement, I have said, and other members of the government have said time and again as I say now, that the free world is in the greatest possible danger. A cease-fire in Korea would not have removed that danger, but it would, however, have put us in a stronger position to meet it.

If those of us who have advocated negotiations of this kind with the Chinese communists are appeasers we are in very good company. It will not, I think, be argued in this house that Mr. Churchill is a man likely to

truckle to or appease aggressors. What are his views on the present situation? Speaking in the House of Commons at Westminster on December 14, he said:

The only prudent course open to the United States and ourselves is to stabilize the local military position . . .

That is in Korea.

. . . and if the opportunity then occurs, to negotiate with the aggressors . . .

Later in the same speech he said:

Appeasement in itself may be good or bad according to the circumstances. Appeasement from weakness and fear is alike futile and fatal. Appeasement from strength is magnanimous and noble, and might be the surest and perhaps the only path to world peace.

The United Nations in Korea, Mr. Speaker, as events have now shown is, thanks primarily to the magnificent effort of the United States, not weak or frightened, and it is getting stronger. From that strength I think it will always be wise to negotiate, to "appease," to use Mr. Churchill's words, in order to bring this diversionary and weakening struggle to an end on honourable terms as soon as possible.

One of the vehicles for this so-called appeasement, Mr. Speaker, was the United Nations cease-fire committee, on which I had the honour to be associated with the president of the assembly, Mr. Entezam of Iran and Sir Benegal Rau, the Indian delegate. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, in taking on that work I was no volunteer. I was the victim of conscription, because it was not a job which anyone would willingly choose. I do not intend today to go into the details of the work of that committee, but there are some things about this particular initiative which I should like to make clear.

In some quarters it has been assumed that this was a sterile, if not dangerous, exercise undertaken by naïve idealistic persons merely to placate Asian opinion. It is quite true that the Asian countries had taken the lead in suggesting that a committee should be set up to determine the basis upon which a satisfactory cease-fire could be arranged. It is also true that many other members of the United Nations, including Canada, had been anxious, whenever possible, to take advice from Asian countries as to the best method of restoring peace in the Far East.

I should like to point out, however, that the resolution to establish the cease-fire committee secured the support of all members of the United Nations with the exception of the Soviet bloc. The United States in particular actively assisted and encouraged the members of our committee in their work. The task of the committee was an uphill one, and often a frustrating one. In one