

An outbreak of armed aggression had not only brought United Nations forces into action against a declared aggressor, but was threatening to bring about a general world catastrophe.

Under these circumstances it had become, in the judgement of many member states, including Canada, a matter of prime urgency to review the collective security machinery which was available to the United Nations. It was true that the Security Council's action on Korea had been forthright and effective; but there was good reason to believe that in another such crisis the United Nations might not be so well served by the Security Council. For one thing, the U.S.S.R. had resumed its place at the Council and thus could not be counted on to continue to forego its right of veto. For another, there were many possible danger areas where the United Nations maintained no observation agency such as the Commission on Korea, which had provided reliable evidence on the North Korean attack. It was realized that the prompt implementation of the Council's decisions on Korea would not have been possible had United States troops not been available in close proximity to the area of hostilities. The fact that such assistance might not be readily forthcoming in other possible danger areas had brought to a head the concern of many member states over the failure of the permanent members to agree on the formation of the United Nations military forces envisaged in Chapter VII of the Charter. While the Security Council's recommendations of June and July 1950 had, in the event, met with spontaneous acceptance by fifty-three member states, there seemed to be a need for new means of organizing collective defence against aggression. In spite of its record of achievement on Korea, the Security Council did not retain the confidence of the non-Cominform world as a capable guarantor of international peace. A second line of defence was sought in the General Assembly, where votes were not rendered ineffectual by the veto of one of the permanent members. The debates which followed in October and part of November 1950 were staged against this background, and they resulted in the adoption of constitutional decisions of potentially great importance.

These decisions were embodied in a set of three resolutions. By far the most significant provisions were contained in the first of these, entitled "Uniting for Peace", which was guided through committee and plenary debate under the joint sponsorship of Canada, France, the Philippines, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and Uruguay. In its final form this resolution contained a lengthy preamble, and five parts (A to E), four of which had been included in the original text. The fifth incorporated references to economic and social objectives based on a proposal, similar in character to the "Uniting for Peace" resolution, submitted by the Chilean Delegation. The final version of the resolution, as adopted by the General Assembly by a vote of 53 to 5 (the Soviet bloc) with 2 abstentions (Argentina and India) on November 3, 1950, provided for the following:¹

- (a) the calling of emergency sessions of the Assembly on twenty-four hours notice for the purpose of making recommendations if the Security Council had failed to agree

¹See Appendix 8, p. 167, for excerpts from the text of the resolution.