

not have been possible or even, I think, attempted. Fifty-three members of the United Nations supported this decision, and resistance to the aggression was organized through the Security Council.

Let us return for a moment, then, to the situation as it existed for some forty-eight hours in June before President Truman had decided to give military assistance to the Republic of Korea. At that time, because of the absence of the Russians from the Security Council, there were two possible courses open to the United Nations. The Organization could either decide that it must do its best to implement its primary purpose, as laid down in Article 1 of the Charter, and take effective collective measures for the suppression of an act of aggression, or it could argue that this attack had almost certainly been prepared with the support both of Communist China and of the Soviet Union and for that reason it would be unwise for the United Nations as such to attempt to defeat an act of aggression involving one of the great powers. I have no doubt myself that President Truman and his advisers made the right decision when they brought the matter immediately to the attention of the Security Council, when they ordered General MacArthur to provide cover and support for the forces of the Republic of Korea, which the United Nations had itself set up, and when they then urged the Security Council to take action against the aggression. They had to choose between a course which would deny formally and possibly finally the claims of the United Nations to be a general security organization, or alternatively, one which would overlook any implications of Article 27 of the Charter that enforcement action could not effectively be taken against the declared will of one of the great powers. They chose the latter course and by their choice did much, I think, to determine the future of the United Nations in a world where, in effect, power is now shared between two great super-states, around which most of the rest of us gather in varying degrees of confidence or uneasiness. We should approve and support this fateful Korean decision, I think, but we should do so with an awareness and understanding of all its implications; not merely because of a natural elation over a decision which proved that the United Nations could act as well as talk.

I am not being cynical, or lacking in admiration for the leadership given at that time, when I say that the United States decision to lead and help organize the United Nations in its resistance to North Korean aggression was perhaps somewhat easier than it might have been because at that time the possible consequences of the course on which we were embarking had not been fully revealed. That was only to happen in November when the intervention of the Chinese Communists showed unmistakably the degree of support which the puppet regime in North Korea could count on from its friends in China, and, indeed, in the Soviet Union. In general, it was possible, even easy to believe in June 1950 that this was not a case where a great power was involved or would intervene, and that if the aggression by North Korean forces were defeated those who had encouraged the attack in the hope of increasing the area in the world under Communist domination would be prepared to write off the defeat as a consequence of a miscalculation. Such a triumph for the United Nations in defeating an aggression would have been - and would still be - a tremendous development for security in other parts of Asia and the world. After all, this had happened on at least two other occasions. When the Greek Government had beaten off