

*The Address—Mr. Pearson*

of a force which was very largely composed of soldiers of the United States. That command and those soldiers were bearing the brunt of the responsibility and of the fighting, and they had the full right to make the military decisions within the limits of the authority given them by the United Nations. When those decisions turned out well, we all rejoiced with them. When they were wrong, I think it would have been improper and ungrateful to be unfairly critical and emphasize our own lack of responsibility. However, all of us who supported the action of the United Nations in Korea had not only the right but the duty to make our views known to the unified command through the positions we took at Lake Success, and also through our contacts with the United States delegation there.

In this connection it will be recalled that on October 5 last the foreign minister of the Chinese people's government, Mr. Chou En-lai, stated that his government would not stand aside if the United Nations forces crossed the 38th parallel.

That warning came to us through the Indian ambassador at Peking. We ourselves did not think it a sufficient reason for refusing the United Nations commander permission to complete the task which had been assigned to him; but many delegations, including our own, considered it to be a good reason for conducting military operations in North Korea, with, shall I say, great circumspection. So when we began to receive indications that it was intended to carry the campaign to the Yalu river, we expressed our misgivings confidentially to the United States authorities in Washington as early as November 6. It may also be recalled that I publicly made clear the position of the government on this matter when I spoke in Windsor on November 15. On that occasion, after stating that the marches where the free world rubbed together with the soviet world were obviously the most critical points, I went on to voice this hope:

Those primarily responsible for safeguarding the security of such areas of the world should carry out their mission in as steady and unprovocative a way as possible.

In keeping with this point of view we supported, in private discussions at the United Nations, the proposal that a buffer state should be left along the northern boundary of Korea in order to avoid giving any excuse for suspicion on the part of the Chinese government that its legitimate interests might be in danger.

Intervention by China in this war in North Korea on an increasing scale throughout the whole of November brought sharply into view the third of the critical issues with which we

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have been asked recently to deal. Should we at once condemn this as aggression, or should we enter into discussions, on certain conditions, with the Chinese communists in an effort to bring it to an end? It seemed pretty clear that a stable settlement in Korea could hardly be achieved without some agreement, even though a tacit one, with the people's government of China; but after the Chinese government at Peking had intervened in force and were driving back the outnumbered forces of the United Nations at the end of November, some voices—and this is quite natural—were immediately raised in favour of whatever United Nations military action against China itself might be necessary in order to end the war.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we opposed at that time and have continued to oppose any such action against Chinese territory which was not dictated by the most urgent considerations of immediate military necessity. Already such large forces have been committed in Korea that the risk of Soviet or Soviet-inspired attacks at other points, strategically far more important to the free world, is serious. For this and other reasons we have joined from the beginning those who urged that the conflict in Korea should be limited and localized as far as possible; and we still believe that the arguments in favour of that course are as strong as ever.

If, then, a war with China, in which a decision could hardly be achieved, had to be averted by every means possible, what alternative methods were there for reaching a settlement in Korea? Speaking over the air on December 5, I stated my own belief that nothing should be left undone which might conceivably result in an honourable and peaceful settlement in Korea. I went on to say:

If, for example, provided the military situation is stabilized, there could be a cease-fire followed by negotiations—possibly covering more subjects than Korea—in which the Chinese communists would participate, there might still be hope of reaching such a settlement. At least we would have done our best and the responsibility for failure could be placed where it would belong.

In that same speech, however, I insisted that a cease-fire must precede and not follow peace negotiations, and that is the position from which we have never wavered. I believe we in this government, in this house and in this country are as anxious as anyone to secure a peaceful settlement in Korea, but I think we know that such a settlement would be bought at too high a cost if it denied and betrayed the obligations we as a member of the United Nations had already undertaken in respect to Korea.

In my view it would have been such a betrayal if we had entered into political