

STATEMENT ON KOREA

Delivered on November 3 by Mr. Paul Martin, Vice-Chairman, Canadian Delegation to the United Nations, to the First Committee of the Seventh Session of the General Assembly.

The distinguished Secretary of State of the United States, in his unusually comprehensive speech a few days ago, laid down, I think, for all of us in this debate a standard of objective treatment and good temper which I sincerely hope, in whatever I have to say today, I may be able to follow.

Seven years ago the Prime Minister of my country signed the United Nations Charter. In so doing, he pledged our support to an Organization dedicated to keep the peace and to restore peace, if necessary, by force in the event of aggression. We shared in a great, new and bold experiment in collective security. We reaffirmed our faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person. These solemn pledges were made by all the co-signatories of the Charter on behalf of the peoples of the United Nations.

Canadian Views

This seventh session of the General Assembly has been convened under the same Charter one again to give expression to the deep desire of the peoples of the world that peace should be maintained in those areas where it now exists and of finding ways and means of bringing peace to those areas where at the moment, unfortunately, there is armed conflict. So, as we see it, for the peoples of the United Nations Korea is the challenge and the test of all our pledges and our hopes. In outlining the views of my delegation on the Korean issue now before this Committee, I propose to deal with the central problem of prisoners of war, the extent of agreement already reached at Panmunjom, the draft resolutions now before this Committee, the exploration of possible lines arising out of the twenty-one Power resolution along which progress might be made in the solution of the central issue and the United Nations programme for the relief and rehabilitation of that war-torn peninsula.

Nearly two and a half years ago the United Nations went to the defence of South Korea. That action had the overwhelming support of Member States of this Organization. There was no doubt in the minds of the overwhelming majority of the Member States of the United Nations as to who was the aggressor; nor is there any doubt today. That was constantly clear from the scope and massive weight of the North Korean attack and from the subsequent refusal of the North Korean authorities to heed the Security Council's cease-fire resolution.

Purpose of Intervention

In acting promptly to defend South Korea, our purpose was solely to resist aggression.

It still remains the purpose of this body, and I am sure that most members around the table will so recognize it as the main purpose. As I said in my opening statement in the plenary meeting, Canada would regard that purpose as having been achieved through an honourable truce negotiated on the basis of the present battle lines.

With an armistice, the task of repairing the ravages of war will become our urgent duty. This is an effort which, however, cannot wait for an armistice and has already begun. I cannot help but express here the admiration of my country for the generosity shown by the United States Government which, through its military agencies, is engaged in relief and rehabilitation even as the war goes on.

The United Nations Korean Relief Agency is already co-operating with the Korean Government, and the United Nations Civil Assistance Command in Korea is helping to soften the impact of war on the Korean people and the Korean economy. That Agency is preparing to play an even more extensive role in the rehabilitation of Korea itself. A plan involving the expenditure of \$250 million has been prepared, and the Canadian Government has agreed to assume its fair share of responsibility by substantial pledges to this programme, pledges which have already been honoured. I am confident that other Member States will be equally willing to assume their full responsibility in the urgent and necessary task of relief and rehabilitation in Korea.

Symbol of Collective Security

In my country Korea represents a chapter in world history in which we have taken and continue to take pride. If the peace-loving nations had failed there, it might have meant the failure of collective security. We consider that collective security is essential to our own Canadian security; we have made many sacrifices to maintain it, and the price of its failure, if we the United Nations had not acted, would be too great for any of us to contemplate.

We all know, in spite of forensic effort to the contrary, the history of the Korean war. For Canadians, as for many others represented around this table, there is the eloquent though mute testimony of the casualty lists. There is also the cost in resources and wealth of defending freedom in the Korean campaign. We feel that our participation entitles us to speak in this discussion with some authority and also with deep anxiety. All Canadians, and the Government which reflects their wishes, want a cessation of hostilities. They will not, however, bow to the will of proven aggressors to achieve it.