

*External Affairs*

**Mr. Green:** May I ask the minister a question?

**Mr. Pearson:** Yes.

**Mr. Green:** Will the minister dispute the fact that his policy means asking Canadian troops to fight in Korea with one hand tied behind their backs?

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**An hon. Member:** What a stupid question!

**Mr. Pearson:** No, Mr. Speaker, that is not my policy; and certainly it is not the policy of this government or that of any government that I know of that has troops in Korea.

**Mr. Knowles:** Or of the United Nations.

**Mr. Pearson:** And it is not the policy of the United Nations. It may be that, in spite of all our efforts, the catastrophe of a third world war may not be avoided. It may be that, in spite of all our efforts, this conflict will extend to the continent of China. We may not have the control of that extension. But if the conflict is so extended, let the responsibility for the terror, the anguish and the devastation that it will cause rest in other hands than ours.

**Mr. Green:** It is a policy of fear.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Pearson:** That is the hon. gentleman's interpretation of it, that it is a policy of fear. As I see it, it is a policy of realism and of peace. What is the alternative policy? It is for the United Nations forces to continue inflicting heavy losses on the aggressors, as they are doing at the present time, and at the same time to avoid any measures which are not absolutely necessary from a military point of view, and which might lead to the spreading of the conflict.

As I said a few days ago in this place, there have been no recent indications that the Chinese communists are in any mood to negotiate. I cannot believe, however, that the Chinese government in Peking can be so blind to Chinese national interests as to continue indefinitely suffering the very heavy losses which are now being inflicted on their forces. So we must hope that a day will come when they will realize that it is not China but Russia which is being served by the aggression in Korea in which they have participated.

If that time comes, they may then be ready to enter into negotiations leading to a settlement in Korea and also to a settlement of other Far Eastern issues. Then, as now, the United Nations will stand ready to

[Mr. Pearson.]

negotiate, as has been made clear many times, and most notably by the general assembly when it approved overwhelmingly the statement of principles drawn up by the United Nations' cease-fire committee. There is, I am afraid, no other answer than this that I can offer to the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge), who argued on behalf of his group that the time is opportune now for another attempt to settle the Korean question by negotiation.

No one would be much happier than I if negotiations could be opened tomorrow with a view to reaching an honourable settlement of the war in Korea along the lines suggested by the hon. member himself. But the steps which he proposed—and which he begged me to take up with the United Nations—were very similar to those I outlined when I spoke at the United Nations on January 26 last. There are a few differences in detail, and those differences will, of course, be carefully studied, and will be borne in mind if there ever is an opportunity for negotiation in the near future.

But it is necessary to remember, Mr. Speaker, that all the recent efforts of the United Nations—including this statement of principles to which I have referred—have been, to say the least, rudely rebuffed by the Chinese communist regime. The approaches made by the good offices committee have been rebuffed, and unofficial feelers by individual countries have not been any more successful. The hon. member for Kootenay West suggested that we might propose to the Indian government that they contact the Peking government with a view to entering into negotiations. The Canadian government has kept in constant touch with the Indian government on this question, and the Indian government in its turn has been vigilant in watching for any sign that the Peking regime might be willing to discuss a settlement in Korea and in the Far East generally on any terms that we could even consider. Although it would certainly be improper for me to reveal what the Indian ambassador in Peking has been reporting to his own government, I can say that his inquiries in Peking have not given any grounds for believing that the Chinese communists are yet ready to negotiate on any terms that could conceivably be acceptable to the United Nations. And that is what I meant when I said that for the time being, especially while the Chinese military offensive is going on, it would appear that there are no further steps that could be taken, either by the United Nations collectively, or by any other members individually,