

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 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 Central 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.

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 negotiations, as distinct