

The text of the resolution adopted by the Assembly appears as Appendix III. It provided that after both sides had agreed to repatriation based on the principles of the resolution, a Repatriation Commission should be set up to which all prisoners of war would be released. The Commission would arrange for their repatriation in accordance with the Geneva Convention. The question of the disposition of those who did not wish to return home was to be referred to the political conference which the draft armistice agreement drawn up by the negotiators at Panmunjom recommended should be called, and if after 30 days the conference was unable to agree, the responsibility for the care, maintenance and final disposition of the remaining prisoners was to be transferred to the United Nations.

When transmitting the text of this resolution to the Foreign Ministers of the People's Republic of China and the North Korean regime, the President of the General Assembly in his covering message emphasized the wide agreement reached by the General Assembly and appealed to both Ministers to accept these proposals of the United Nations as forming a just and reasonable basis for an agreement which would serve to bring about a constructive and durable peace in Korea. The Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Peking Government, Chou En-lai, and later the Foreign Minister of North Korea, rejected the resolution as a basis for negotiations. Both replies called for the realization of a complete armistice as the first step and asked that the question of the "total repatriation of prisoners of war" be then referred to the commission proposed in the Soviet resolution which had been rejected.

The Assembly's consideration of the prisoner of war problem at the pre-Christmas part of its session thus did not bring about an immediate settlement of the principal question which was blocking the conclusion of an armistice in Korea. It did, however, afford an impressive demonstration of the solidarity of the non-communist members of the United Nations on the issue and played its part in the later developments in the armistice negotiations.

One further question relating to Korea was discussed by the Assembly before Christmas. Riots had occurred on December 14 among prisoners in United Nations hands on the Island of Pongam and in their suppression prisoners had been killed. On December 21, one day before the intended adjournment, the Soviet Delegation claimed that this incident amounted to "the mass murder of Korean and Chinese prisoners of war" and asked for an urgent meeting to discuss it. The request having been granted, the Soviet Delegate introduced a resolution which condemned the "inhuman butchery" committed by the United States military authorities. The Assembly rejected this resolution by a vote of 45 to 5 (the Soviet bloc) with 10 abstentions (African and Asian states).

Discussion of the Korean problem at the resumed session which began on February 24, 1953, at first led to no progress. The large majority of the Assembly continued to support the proposals contained in the Indian resolution. The Acting Chairman of the Canadian Delegation expressed the hope that if the Soviet Representative had anything to propose that was not contrary to the principles of the Assembly resolution, he would do so, but the only response was a reiteration of the Soviet proposal which had been