



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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No. 51/2 Statement by Mr. L.B. Pearson,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
and Chairman of the Canadian Delegation
to the United Nations General Assembly,
made in the First (Political) Committee
on January 26, 1951.

Before expressing the views of my delegation on the two resolutions^x which are now before us, I would like to outline recent developments in this Committee, as I understand them, which have led us step by step to the situation with which we are now concerned.

I would like to begin with a few words about the work of the cease-fire group of which I had the honour to be a member and the results -- or rather the lack of results -- of that work. In dealing with this matter, I speak, of course, as one member of that group and not in any sense for the other two members with whom it was my great honour and privilege -- and these are not mere words -- to be associated in that joint effort. If we did not succeed, it was not due, I assure you, to any lack of industry, wisdom and skill on the part of my two colleagues.

Our first attempt failed because the proposals for a cease-fire which we made were not even examined by the Peking Government. We ourselves felt that these proposals which were acceptable to the United Nations Unified Command provided a reasonable basis for discussion.

It would, of course, have been easier for us to explain our purposes to the Peking Government if the representative of that Government, who was in New York at the time, had been willing to meet and co-operate with the group. He, however, had been told by his Government to adopt a completely unco-operative and negative attitude toward us on the grounds that our group was illegally constituted. The absurdity, of course, of this argument is patent and need not be gone into.

A more serious reason for the refusal of the Peking Government to co-operate in the first stages of the cease-fire work seems to have been the alleged fear that they would be lured into a cease-fire arrangement which would be followed, not only by a discussion of Far Eastern questions in which they would participate, but by a new United Nations offensive in Korea. In this respect, our cease-fire proposals seemed to them as a trap. We accepted the possibility of genuine fear and misunderstanding on this score and attempted to remove it by further assurances to Peking on, I think, December 19.

x See Appendix I, page 14.