

" --or by the United Nations, and the view which has been taken more recently is that the United Nations is the appropriate place where it should ultimately be decided."

I then also said in the House last October--and I quote from my statement then as reported at page 254 of Hansard:

"However--and this is important--before we can proceed to any of these further Asian matters which are dealt with in the United Nations resolution of last February, which I think is still valid, the aggression in Korea must first be brought to an end. That is the immediate danger, and that is our immediate purpose, to end that war on honourable terms. If and when that can be done we will not refuse to discuss any other Asian questions relevant to the situation out there."

I think the policy of the Government on this matter has been made quite clear in this House.

Now, what is the situation at the moment in Korea? In a military sense it seems to be pretty well stabilized except in the air, and the stabilization has taken place along a line which is roughly the 38th Parallel, some part being above that Parallel and a small sector below it. But while the military situation in that sense is somewhat stabilized, the armistice talks which are going on are stabilized only in the sense that it is exceedingly difficult to detect much progress in them. They take the form of offensives and counter-offensives, attacks and counter-attacks, and it is impossible to be either optimistic or pessimistic about an eventual satisfactory conclusion. Certainly we must all agree, that they are being conducted by the United States negotiators on behalf of the United Nations with persistence and with patience.

Speaking the other day in this House, the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar expressed the view that as the military armistice talks had bogged down in non-military discussions, the Canadian Government might take the initiative in suggesting that a political conference might be called without waiting for the conclusion of an armistice. I think that was the burden of his observations on this point at that time. If that suggestion were adopted it might lay Canada open to the kind of criticism which is sometimes levelled against some schools of thought in the United States; we might be accused of seeking to submerge the problems of a military armistice into the larger problems of a political conference, just as some want to submerge the military problem of Korea into the much larger and more difficult problem of a war with China.

The supplementary report of the United Nations group on cease-fire in Korea, which was made public on January 11, 1951, clearly proposed that the Far Eastern situation should be dealt with in three stages. The first, cease-fire in Korea; the second, the settlement of the Korean question, and the third, the settlement of other Far Eastern questions. All Western dealings with the enemy in Korea have been based on this three-stage programme, and we cannot now reasonably expect to ask our allies, particularly the United States, to abandon this procedure. Therefore I suggest we must continue to try to get the armistice first and then political talks afterwards.