

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Ottawa - Canada

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Following is the text of a letter from the President of the Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. L.B. Pearson, which has been cabled to the President of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Dr. Syngman Rhee:

"Dear Mr. President,

As President of the General Assembly of the United Nations I have been shocked to hear of the unilateral action which you have sanctioned in bringing about the release of non-repatriable North Korean prisoners from the United Nations prisoner-of-war camps in Korea.

" I take this occasion to recall the decisive action taken by the United Nations when aggression was initiated in June, 1950, and the satisfaction which you expressed in the response of the United Nations to the urgent appeals made by you for military and other assistance. That collaboration, aimed at the repelling of aggression and the restoration of your country to a condition of peace and economic well-being, has been marked by three years of effective effort on the part of Members of the United Nations, and of your Government and people, under the direction of the United Nations Command. In view of what this collaboration has meant to your people it is most regrettable that you have taken action which threatens the results already achieved and the prospect of a peaceful solution of remaining problems.

" This release of North Korean prisoners from United Nations prisoner-of-war camps in Korea is particularly shocking in view of the progress made by the armistice negotiators in Panmunjom, which has resulted in the acceptance of principles laid down in the United Nations General Assembly's resolution of 3 December, 1952, endorsed by 54 Member Nations. The acceptance of the principles underlying this resolution, especially that of no forcible repatriation of prisoners, which has been the basis of your position as well as that of the United Nations, has only been obtained after two years of patient and persistent negotiation by the United Nations Command.

" The action taken with your consent, in releasing the North Korean prisoners, violates the agreement reached by the two sides on June 8, 1953, embodying these principles, and it occurs at a time when hostilities are about to cease, and when the questions of the unification of Korea and related Korean problems can be dealt with by a political conference involving the parties concerned.