

External Affairs

In meeting the onslaught of the Chinese communist forces then, the United Nations forces in Korea have suffered heavy losses but they have inflicted immensely heavier losses on the enemy. They can take pride in the fact that their heroic resistance has lessened the danger in other parts of Asia. I believe that is something that has already been accomplished by way of benefit to the cause of freedom.

Another way in which the cause of freedom has benefited through United Nations action in Korea is that the whole of the free world is now aroused, as was pointed out this afternoon, and alerted to the danger so that more rapid progress is now being made in increasing the armed forces in being in the free world. We have now some reason to believe that before long these forces may be large enough to deter any would-be aggressor. This improvement in our position we owe, I think, largely to the sense of urgency which the war in Korea brought us, and also to the energetic leadership of the United States of America.

This war in Korea has also been the occasion of another discovery which must be encouraging to free men everywhere. It is that collective military action against aggression is possible, and can be effective. It is certainly true even yet that three-quarters of the United Nations forces now fighting in Korea, apart from the South Koreans themselves, are being provided by the United States. But I think equally remarkable is the fact that no fewer than sixteen countries are now contributing contingents to the United Nations forces, and that all those contingents are being welded together in a strong and dependable United Nations army. It may be objected that all this is very well, but that if the United Nations army in Korea has not a clear mission which it can hope to fulfil, this whole grand exercise in international co-operation is futile. What, then, is the United Nations mission in Korea? Essentially, I think, Mr. Speaker, and I repeat what I said the other day, to defeat aggression, and by the lesson of that defeat to help prevent the outbreak of world war III.

If the aggression in Korea had been allowed to succeed without any attempt being made to resist it, other acts of aggression would certainly have followed. The strength of the free world would have been nibbled away piecemeal in accordance with the master plans of the Politburo. Eventually, a stage would have been reached when the remaining countries which were still free and independent would have realized that they had either to wage war with fewer resources and with much slighter hope of success, or

[Mr. Pearson.]

else be engulfed under a wave of Soviet tyranny. Since they would certainly have chosen war rather than slavery, a third world war in those circumstances would have been inevitable.

To the infantryman slogging over the muddy fields of Korea, it may seem odd to hear someone say that his mission is to prevent a third world war. He may well be forgiven for not seeing very much difference between a world war and the bloody business in which he is now engaged. I certainly sympathize with that view. But it is necessary to remember that in the present circumstances a new world war will be very different from the campaign now being fought in Korea. It would be an atomic war which would result in the death of hundreds of thousands of people at one stroke, and which would leave the earth pockmarked and infected with radioactivity for years to come, even if it did not, as is conceivable, result in something far worse. That is the nightmare we are trying by every means in our power to avoid. When viewed in that light I believe that our soldiers in Korea, and the soldiers from other countries of the United Nations, will see that their task, however disagreeable and dangerous it may be, is supremely worthwhile.

Now, Mr. Speaker, exception was taken to my statement of our objectives the other day by the hon. member for St. John's West. He repeated his views this afternoon on my statement that our objective in Korea was to defeat aggression. That statement left him somewhat indignant, and he challenged me to uphold it, that the defeat of armed aggression was the sole military purpose of the United Nations in Korea.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): May I point out that the minister is not really representing what I said. My notes show that the minister has said some people are under the impression that we are fighting in Korea to defeat communism, but that is not correct. We are fighting to defeat aggression. The distinction between what the minister is now saying—

Mr. Pearson: I do not know what the hon. member's notes show. I know what is in *Hansard*, and *Hansard* is the record of this house. In any event, Mr. Speaker, he did challenge me. He will admit that.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): Oh, certainly.

Mr. Pearson: He challenged me to prove—I think I am right in saying this—that our sole military objective in Korea was the defeat of aggression.