

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

CANADA

No. 52/39 Statement by the A/Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the Seventh Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Mr. Paul Martin, made in the opening debate on October 17, 1952.

I am proud, as the Acting Head of the Canadian Delegation, to find myself addressing a fellow Canadian as President of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The support which you received for this high office is, if I may say so, a tribute both to Canada and to you personally. It is a recognition of your - and our - devotion to the cause of peace for which the United Nations Organization was created and remains dedicated.

And now, ... for the first time since our countries pledged themselves to the ideals for which the United Nations stands, we have a permanent home. I think it is fitting that, as others have before me, we should pay our respects and offer our best thanks to those whose skills and talents have made possible the completion of these magnificent buildings. Although, as the Secretary-General has said in the introduction to his report, "the situation today had not changed in any fundamental way for the better", I do believe that this session of the General Assembly could be a turning point in our affairs - a turning point on the road towards establishing the United Nations and all it stands for on a solid and enduring a footing as the rock on which these permanent buildings now stand.

I think, however, that our distinguished past President, Dr. Padilla Nervo, did well to remind us in his fine address on Tuesday, that our situation could easily turn, not for the better but for the worse. The United Nations cannot indefinitely survive an annual increase of international tension, nor an annual repetition if I may say so, of propaganda debates. I may say to the distinguished delegate from Poland that I do not propose to follow his talk - what the world wants is not another peace pact but that we should live up to the obligations that have already solemnly been arrived at. I thought Dr. Nervo was right to insist on the primary role of the United Nations being one of conciliation and to apply that principle to Korea.

It is perfectly obvious that the United Nations is not in any sense a world government. The only basis on which we can operate is the basis of consent. We cannot dictate an armistice in Korea or impose upon the world a system of general disarmament. Such great ends can only be attained by free agreement based on a mutual desire for peace and stability.

These are the goals we all seek, and yet there is no agreement. Our task is not made easier when one group of nations directs a deliberate and sustained campaign of hate against another group, or when all efforts at compromise and conciliation are met by a stream of abuse directed particularly against the United States and incidentally against all who are friends of that great democracy. We had an example of that a few moments ago.