

ately or not, has, I think, added to our confusion.

I would now put the following questions to Mr. Gromyko, asking him to hand them to Mr. Vyshinsky concerning his draft resolution. First, when, where and by whom would the prisoner of war issue be discussed if his draft resolution were agreed upon? Second, would all the progress made at Panmunjom have to be abandoned and an entirely new set of negotiations undertaken by the commission? Third, would this commission be created before an armistice had been concluded, or is it suggested that the cease-fire talks should continue while the commission discusses other problems related to the "peaceful settlement of the Korean question . . ." and so on, as both sides have already agreed to do within three months of an armistice being concluded? And finally, does Mr. Vyshinsky want to begin these political discussions before an armistice, or should we infer that the commission will come into being only after the armistice negotiations have proved successful?

Nothing New

The second point that I should like to make is that, in the absence of further explanation, there seems to be nothing new in the Soviet Union draft resolution. Mr. Vyshinsky will remember that last year, during the sixth session of the General Assembly, it was decided by an overwhelming majority of fifty-one in favour and only the five Soviet bloc members against that consideration of the Korean situation should be deferred until the conclusion of an armistice.

The priority established by the General Assembly last year still holds good this year. Last year it was the overwhelming view that without an armistice it would not be realistic to attempt to reach agreement on the terms of a political settlement. I am sure that the same overwhelming majority of this Committee still feels that way this year and that it still agrees that first things must come first.

The third point I have in mind is this. The draft resolution of the Soviet Union proposes the establishment of a commission for the peaceful settlement of the Korean question. On 7 October 1950 the General Assembly did, in fact, create a Commission and directed it to assist in the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government in Korea. It is the report of this Commission which we are now considering. The resolution leading to the establishment of this Commission was approved by forty-seven Member States. I presume, however, that this is not the type of commission Mr. Vyshinsky has in mind since he refers to the participation in it of "the parties directly concerned and of other States."

I would like to remind Mr. Vyshinsky here that among the five points put forward on 11 January 1951 by the Cease-Fire Group of the

General Assembly, there was a proposal for the establishment of some appropriate body which would concern itself with the problems of a political settlement. My delegation still stands by these proposals. I should like to emphasize, however, that the political conference proposed — and I do not exclude a wider representation of States — should not take place until agreement has been reached on a cease-fire.

Outstanding Issue

Basically there certainly is only one issue which divides us on this question of a commission, and that is one of timing. The Unified Command cannot agree, it seems to us, to the holding of a political conference before an armistice has been concluded. The draft resolution of the Soviet Union conveys the impression that the commission which they suggest should be established immediately or forthwith. If this is their intention, the difference in timing is so important that it makes the draft resolution as it presently stands unacceptable.

However, in our desire to be as objective as possible with regard to this and other proposals, I wish to examine it further. Taking the Soviet Union draft resolution in the context of the statement made by Mr. Vyshinsky, there is perhaps another construction that could be placed at least on the central idea of the commission which it proposes. Mr. Vyshinsky, it will be remembered, spent a good deal of time discussing the prisoner of war problem and the question which he puts upside down as "forced retention" of prisoners. Then he submitted his draft resolution. Does Mr. Vyshinsky intend this as a back-handed way of suggesting that, among other things, the commission might directly or indirectly satisfy itself as to the real wishes of the prisoners?

It may be inferred from Mr. Vyshinsky's statement that, given a type of screening under which prisoners of war could freely express their will, the number of those who would refuse to return to their homeland would be infinitesimal. So much the better. Throughout the discussions at Panmunjom on this issue, it often looked as if there would have been little difficulty with this question had the numbers of prisoners intending to resist repatriation by force been smaller. The Communist Command came close to saying as much when they acquiesced in the Unified Command's proposal to determine more exactly the wishes of the prisoners. At that time, as it will be recalled, they even issued an amnesty declaration in an attempt to influence the prisoners in their decision.

No Quibbling Over Number

We are not quibbling over their number. We know there are prisoners of war who are unwilling to return to Communist control. No