

This presented itself in a concrete form at the General Assembly on September 19 last. A draft resolution was presented that day by the Indian delegation calling upon the assembly to decide that the Chinese Government in Peking should represent China at the United Nations assembly. Persuasive arguments could be adduced both for and against such action.

It could be maintained, and it was maintained, that the United Nations would have more chance of dealing effectively with the situation that then existed in the Far East if the Chinese Government, which had effective control of the mainland of China, were represented in its deliberations. It was argued that the United Nations would be a healthier organization if dissenting views were stated within rather than without the organization. On the other hand, it was difficult for governments which had not recognized the Peking regime to see representatives of that regime seated in the United Nations. To seat representatives of the Chinese Communists had also become far more difficult after the attack by North Korean forces on the Republic of Korea had taken place. It was apparent that the Indian resolution, on which our delegation abstained from voting, would not command the required majority in the assembly, and it was suggested--the suggestion in fact came from the Canadian delegation--that the question of Chinese representation should be considered by a special committee. It was hoped that in this way the question could be deferred for a short time until a suitable solution could be reached.

It may be asked why, if our abstention on the Indian resolution showed that we did not actively object to China being represented in the United Nations by the People's Government in Peking, we had not taken previous action in Canada to recognize that government. We had in fact, as the House knows, given serious consideration to such action. We had been impressed by the argument that recognition by Canada and other countries would facilitate the representation of China within the United Nations, and consequently might make easier the peaceful settlement of certain Far Eastern issues. We had nevertheless also been influenced by what still seem to me to be valid views about making such a change at that time, and by advice which we had received from many quarters, including many quarters in this House, to proceed very cautiously in this matter. Furthermore, a number of countries which had recognized the Chinese Communists had had great difficulty in getting the Chinese Communists to recognize them, at least to the point of entering into effective diplomatic relations with them. For example, the United Kingdom had recognized the regime in Peking but it was far from clear that that regime in any effective sense recognized the United Kingdom. Then came the attack on Korea in June. There was much evidence that that attack had been prepared with the approval, and indeed with the support, of the Chinese Communists, and we did not feel justified in taking any action toward recognition until the circumstances surrounding the aggression in Korea had become clearer. I need hardly add that when late last year the Chinese government in Peking joined in the aggression in Korea, it was inconceivable that countries which had hitherto withheld recognition would at that time decide to change their policies.