

17. Excerpts from a broadcast by the Secretary of State for External Affairs over the Trans-Canada Network, December 5, 1950

... Ever since the attack on the Republic of Korea, we have believed that the efforts of those who supported United Nations action, should be directed solely towards defeating the aggression and thereby halting the chain reaction which might have followed its success. The men who decide the policies of the Soviet Union and of their communist satellites could gamble with the future of the world in order to extend the boundaries of the system under their control. We were not prepared to gamble in that reckless way. Conscious of our share of responsibility for the preservation of peace and freedom, and indeed for the preservation of human kind from the mass destruction which modern weapons make possible, we believed, and continue to believe, that we should not try to do more, in defeating this aggression, than restore the freedom and unity of Korea. The brave and strong leader in this United Nations effort is the United States. I am sure that our neighbour, in spite of provocation and notwithstanding Chinese Communist charges to the contrary, has had no thought of using the Korean situation to strengthen or expand its position in Asia or to menace any other state. If that had been its policy, United Nations action in Korea would not have received the support of 53 of its member states, including Canada . . .

It is now clear that in a further reckless act the Chinese Communists have intervened in Korea in very large numbers. Their final purpose is not yet beyond doubt, but certainly they have committed themselves to an incursion far in excess of any that might be explained by nervousness over local Chinese interests along the border between Manchuria and Korea. In this dangerous situation, it remains our view that if and when the military position is stabilized, we should try to begin negotiations with the Chinese Communists by every means possible. I am aware of the difficulties, I assure you, but I believe that nothing should be left undone which might conceivably result in an honourable and peaceful settlement in Korea. If, for example, providing the military situation is stabilized, there could be a cease-fire followed by negotiations—possibly covering more subjects than Korea—in which the Chinese Communists would participate, there might still be hope of reaching such a settlement. At least, we would have done our best and the responsibility for failure could be placed where it would belong.

I know that the policy I suggest will be called "appeasement" by some. "Warmonger", "fascist", "appeaser", "red", "peace", "democracy", such words are now used so loosely and irresponsibly that their coinage has become debased. So let us not be frightened by words. The action which was taken at Munich in 1938 and which has made "appeasement" a by-word, was open to two charges: that it was short-sighted because it was based on illusions about the nature of the government which was the aggressor at that time, and that it was shameful because it sacrificed the freedom of one country in the interests of the security of others. Neither of those accusations can be brought against the policy I have outlined. It is not appeasement. It is an attempt through diplomacy to reach a *modus vivendi* with the Asian Communist world. The United Nations Commander in Korea himself has remitted to diplomacy the task of deciding what to do in Korea in this new situation created by Chinese