

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 51/3 Statement by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly, made in the First (Political) Committee on January 30, 1951, explaining the Canadian vote on the Arab-Asian and United States resolutions on Korea.

Irrespective of the decision which the Committee may make in regard to the procedure which had been suggested to it by the representative of Egypt, I wish to take this opportunity to explain in a very few words the vote which my Delegation will cast on the two resolutions* which are now before us and on which I thought we were about to vote.

In respect of the Asian resolution, though we support its underlying principles and pay tribute to the sincerity of purpose and the high idealism of those who have sponsored it, I regret that we cannot support it for the following reasons:

First, because, though it does embody the essential principle that there must be an end of fighting before there can be a discussion of political questions, it sets up a seven-power agency of a kind, and with a membership, which would not make it satisfactory in our opinion for bringing about a cease-fire arrangement in Korea. For one thing it includes a member of this Committee which has bluntly stated on more than one occasion that it will have nothing to do with a cease-fire except on terms which would be completely unacceptable. My Delegation continues to feel that such terms for a cease-fire must be based on those already submitted by the Cease-Fire Group and that they should be at once negotiated by a small group representing the United Nations, the United States and the Peking Government.

Second, because we feel that any further communications from this Committee or any new proposals from it to Peking should be precise and detailed and should provide for a specific programme to begin on a certain date and to proceed by definite stages, and to our regret the Asian draft resolution as we see it does not provide satisfactorily for this.

* The United States resolution, referred to on page 2, appears in its final form as an appendix to this statement.

Third, because in our opinion the Asian resolution gives too much room for further long-drawn-out and inconclusive discussion before a cease-fire can be arranged and subsequent political discussion takes place.

Fourth, because it does not give previous recognition to United Nations resolutions or action in respect of Korea and in that respect may be interpreted as placing the Peking Government and the United Nations itself almost on the same moral and political footing.

Fifth, because reasonably satisfactory machinery for cease-fire and political negotiation is included in the United States draft resolution.

We cannot vote against the Asian resolution however because, although it does not embody, as we see it, a suitable and definite programme for a cease-fire and effective discussion which would minimize delay and evasion, it nevertheless does emphasize the necessity of discussion and peaceful settlement and it does embody the principle that a cease-fire must precede discussion. Therefore my delegation will abstain on this resolution either as a substitute for or as supplementary to the United States draft resolution.

We shall vote for the United States draft resolution for the following reasons:

- (1) Because the Lebanese amendments, which we strongly support, remove our doubts about the wisdom of certain provisions of the unamended draft;
- (2) Because its finding that the Peking Government, by helping those already designated as aggressors in Korea, has engaged in aggressive action itself in Korea, states in moderate terms facts which we cannot reject without condemning our own intervention in Korea; nevertheless we still feel that it is premature and unwise to confront the Committee with the necessity for a decision on these facts at this particular moment and, as we see it, the methods of peaceful negotiation before condemnation have not yet been completely exhausted;
- (3) Because this resolution with the Lebanese amendment does not close the door to peaceful negotiation; on the contrary it very rightly emphasizes that even a report on collective measures is to be subordinated to the work of the Good Offices Group; it supports the doctrine of the Charter that mediation, conciliation and peaceful settlement should always have priority over enforcement action;
- (4) Because the statement of the United States representative last Saturday was frank and unequivocal in agreeing that this draft resolution gave no one any authority in Korea or the far east which he did not already possess under United Nations resolutions;
- (5) Finally, because, we do not believe that by passing this resolution we are slamming the door to subsequent negotiation or that the government in Peking would have any justification for interpreting our action in that way.

This draft resolution is a very mild condemnation indeed compared to that which has been hurled at the United Nations in general and the United States in particular in respect of its action in Korea. Denouncing us as aggressors in Korea has not prevented the Peking Government from expecting those of us who have been so denounced to sit with it and negotiate; nor has it prevented that Government itself from agreeing to participate in such negotiations. If the passing of this resolution ends, in the eyes of the Peking Government, all hope of peaceful discussion and settlement, then this can only strengthen the view, which I do not necessarily share, of those who have felt that that Chinese Government was not sincere at any time in agreeing to negotiations.

I hope, therefore, that whatever happens to this resolution, the door will remain open for negotiation and peaceful settlement.

APPENDIX I

General Assembly Resolution, January 31, 1951: Korea
(Vote: 44 in favour (including Canada), 7 against,
9 abstentions)

The General Assembly

Noting that the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members, has failed to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in regard to Chinese Communist intervention in Korea;

Noting that the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China has not accepted United Nations proposals to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Korea with a view to peaceful settlement, and that its armed forces continue their invasion of Korea and their large-scale attacks upon United Nations forces there;

FINDS that the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, by giving direct aid and assistance to those who were already committing aggression in Korea and by engaging in hostilities against United Nations forces there, has itself engaged in aggression in Korea;

CALLS upon the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China to cause its forces and nationals in Korea to cease hostilities against the United Nations forces and to withdraw from Korea;

AFFIRMS the determination of the United Nations to continue its action in Korea to meet the aggression;

CALLS upon all states and authorities to continue to lend every assistance to the United Nations action in Korea;

CALLS upon all states and authorities to refrain from giving any assistance to the aggressors in Korea;

REQUESTS a committee composed of the members of the Collective Measures Committee as a matter of urgency to consider additional measures to be employed to meet this aggression and to report thereon to the General Assembly, it being understood that the Committee is authorized to defer its report if the Good Offices Committee, referred to in the following paragraph, reports satisfactory progress in its efforts;

AFFIRMS that it continues to be the policy of the United Nations to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Korea and the achievement of United Nations objectives in Korea by peaceful means, and requests the President of the General Assembly to designate forthwith two persons who would meet with him at any suitable opportunity to use their Good Offices to this end.