



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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REPORT TO PARLIAMENT

Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson, made in the House of Commons in Committee of Supply, May 28, 1954 on the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, the Subcommittee of Disarmament Committee of the United Nations, and the Geneva Conference on Far Eastern Affairs.

Mr. Chairman, this item of my estimates gives me an opportunity, of which I am glad to avail myself, to make a report to the committee about my recent trip to Europe, during which I attended the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, the early session, which were held in London, of the Subcommittee of the Disarmament Committee of the United Nations, which is concerned with disarmament in general and more particularly with the limitation or abolition of weapons of mass destruction; and finally, the Geneva conference on Far Eastern affairs.

So far as the North Atlantic Council meeting is concerned, there is little that I can add to the communiqué which was issued at the time. It was a short, regular meeting of the council, with ministerial representation, at which views were exchanged on the international situation generally, and on the western European and the Atlantic situation in particular, and during which we also discussed ways and means of making the council a more effective body for consultation on foreign affairs.

In so far as the Disarmament Subcommittee is concerned, as hon. members know, it consists of the representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States, France, the U.S.S.R. and Canada. It was set up by the full committee to go into the question of disarmament, as I have said, in general, and atomic disarmament in particular, in restricted and private meetings, in the hope that by meetings of this kind progress might at least be more likely in a field of such transcendent importance as this is.

The Subcommittee will eventually report back to the full committee, and I am not in a position now, as I indicated to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre the other day, to report on the discussions that have taken place because of the nature of those discussions and because of the fact that they are still going on. I can say that, because of the restricted and private character of the meetings, we got to grips with this problem very quickly, and that grip has not been loosened.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I can of course--and the committee would expect me to--report in greater detail on the Geneva conference on Far Eastern affairs. That conference, however, is also still proceeding, and because of that fact there is a limit to what I can appropriately say at this time, and certainly no final report is yet possible.

I have returned from Geneva myself, but the Canadian Delegation remains, and is taking an active part in the work. It is a small delegation, but as I am no longer a part of it, I think possibly I can say with propriety that, in my view, it is a well-informed and efficient delegation. If the situation seems to require it, of course I can return to Geneva without delay.

The conference now has been going on for some weeks, and I think it is generally agreed that while it would be a great mistake to break it off as long as there is any, even remote, possibility of success, it should not be allowed to go on indefinitely if it becomes demonstrably clear that it is being used only for propaganda purposes.

The conference probably should not be referred to as such because in reality there are two conferences going on at the same time in Geneva. As hon. members know, the first one deals with Korea. The origin of that conference is to be found in the United Nations armistice of July 1953, concluded in Korea. It will be remembered that in the terms of that armistice there was a provision that a political conference should follow within three months. That was not possible but the conference is now taking place and though it is not a United Nations conference in any formal sense, I think it can be regarded as fulfilling the provision of the armistice agreement which called for such a conference.

The immediate origin of the conference is to be found in the meeting of the foreign ministers at Berlin of February of this year when it was agreed by those foreign ministers to invite the United Nations governments which had forces in Korea, the Republic of Korea, the communist government of Peking, and the communist government of North Korea, to take part in a conference to meet at Geneva.

The membership of this conference is in a sense two-sided. Indeed, it might be considered as three-sided. There is the United Nations side, which consists of 15 delegations, including the Canadian, there is the Republic of Korea side, which is distinct to some extent from the others because they are not yet a member of the United Nations; and then there is the communist side consisting of the three communist delegations.

We anticipated before we went to Geneva a good deal of difficulty in getting this conference going because of its unique character and composition. There might indeed have been great difficulties over organization and procedure and all that sort of thing which can cause so much delay if any one wishes to use procedure in order to cause delay. The communists very often in the past have been adept at that kind of thing.

But our fears were not realized and by conciliatory attitudes on both sides all these organizational and procedural difficulties were removed without delay and the conference got down to work at once.

In so far as it went, that was an encouraging sign, but the encouragement which we got from our agreement over procedure has not yet extended to any noticeable progress in the substance of the questions with which we were dealing.

The objective of the conference, of course, was a simple one. It was to convert the armistice which had been signed in Korea into a peace settlement which would last, and on our side, at least, to achieve that settlement by agreement in accordance with United Nations resolutions and decisions on the subject which were meant to facilitate a free, united and democratic Korea.

We must not, of course, forget that we were not in a position at Geneva or indeed elsewhere to impose that kind of settlement on a defeated enemy. And we must not forget either that we have no obligation to impose that kind of settlement on Korea by force. Therefore, it could only be done by agreement, and agreement, of course, has not been easy to obtain.

In seeking such an agreement to attain the objectives laid down by the United Nations, the United Nations and the Republic of Korea delegations have worked closely together in friendly co-operation. They have not always of course, seen eye to eye on means, but have been in agreement in regard to ends.

Such differences are, I suppose, inevitable in discussion between representatives of free governments, but I know the House will agree when I say, Mr. Chairman, that we should try to keep them to a minimum in the face of the common menace which confronts us all.

The communist delegations at the Korean conference spoke as one. They spoke in the same vein and indeed often in the same words in their accusations and attacks largely directed against the United States. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that 90 per cent of the content of their speeches consisted of propaganda and polemics. We got the same distortions of recent developments in Korea to which we have been accustomed at the United Nations, and we got the same falsification of fact and of history. It was interesting to note that the dialectics and diatribes of the new communist delegations were just about the same as that of the old hands.

The delegates on the United Nations side, though anxious to get on with the business of negotiating a Korean settlement, have not allowed these unfounded accusations to go unanswered. To reply to the slanderous attacks and abusive propaganda which form such a depressing proportion of the communist speeches at meetings of this kind is a time-consuming and unpleasant task, but when the eyes of the world are focussed on a conference it is a task which I think we cannot afford to forgo lest it should be supposed in any part of the world, especially in this case in the Asian part of the world, that silence may indicate some kind of consent.

Therefore, in my own intervention in the general debate on the Korean question at Geneva I attempted on May 4 to follow the course which had already been laid down by others in dealing with some of these communist charges, and particularly I ventured to point out that, contrary to the assertions of Mr. Molotov, who took it upon himself to speak for Asia, we in the West did understand, and fully accepted, the significance of what has been taking place in Asia over recent years, and that we were indeed sympathetic in the march of the peoples of Asia toward national freedom and greater human welfare.

I added, however, that the right to be free did not include the obligation to be communist, nor did "Asia for the Asians", which is a phrase Molotov and others had used, mean Asia for the cominform.

I also pointed out that our own national experience in Canada refuted completely the wild charges which were levelled by communist delegations to the effect that the people of the United States were either aggressive or imperialist in their outlook.

Now I should explain in a few words what the communist peace plan for Korea was as put forward at the Geneva conference. In principle it involved the repudiation of United Nations plans on which we had previously agreed, and if it had been carried into effect it would also have necessitated the exclusion of the United Nations as a belligerent from the substance and the supervision of the peace settlement. It would have required us on our side to accept the fact of United States and Republic of Korea aggression, and of the charge that the United Nations in this matter had merely acted as the victim and the tool of United States imperialism.

Obviously any proposal based on these premises was not acceptable to the United Nations delegations. There were also other details which made this plan unacceptable.

The two governments of the Republic of Korea and North Korea were to be considered on the same political, legal and moral level, and acceptance of this was to be recognized in all-Korean commission with equal representation of the north and south, though the south in population is probably five or six times greater than the north. This all-Korean commission was to work out plans for all-Korean elections, free from outside supervision except-- and this has been an additional proposal of the communists since I left Geneva--by what they call a neutral commission.

We are not quite clear about this neutral commission but it is certainly to be divorced from the United Nations. Its function is to assist the all-Korean commission, and its composition would presumably exclude all United Nations members who have participated in Korean military operations. It could, however, include such neutrals--and I use that word in a Pickwickian sense--as Poland or Czechoslovakia. Then also under this plan all foreign forces were to be withdrawn within six months. The powers directly interested in Korea--and it was made clear that they would include Communist China and the U.S.S.R.--were to assist in Korean development as a democratic state. The United Nations, however, was to keep out.

Even cursory examination of a plan of this kind makes its unacceptability quite obvious. It looked to us like a snare and a delusion. Indeed we wondered whether it was really meant to be accepted, at least in that form. It is certainly unrealistic to the point of absurdity to think that two sides which fear and hate each other as much as do North Korea and South Korea, after fighting each other viciously if indecisively for years, should sit down amicably and work together for an all-Korean commission, on a fifty-fifty basis, with each side having a veto over the decisions of the commission and in that way produce a new Korea by free elections. Of course we pointed out the weakness and indeed the impracticability of this plan, but the questions which we addressed to the other side were unanswered.

Indeed it is clear that this is a scheme designed to provide for the establishment of an interim government, along the pattern of the communist proposals in Germany, in which the communist representatives would hold the power of veto. In other words, the commission would operate as the communist members wished it to operate or not at all. We all know, of course, that this is the familiar first step in the establishment of communist dictatorship through the perversion of democratic procedures.

We might have accepted the impossibility of this scheme without any further argument and, pinning the responsibility squarely where it belongs, namely on the communists who were putting forward this scheme, called the conference off on that issue. But most of the United Nations delegations--indeed, I think all of them--felt that they should put forward their own proposals and their own views as to what would constitute a good Korean settlement. For that purpose, Mr. Chairman, I should like to put on the record the Canadian views of what should be done to reach that desirable objective, or in other words the basic principles which we think should underlie any agreement for a free democratic and united Korea. If I may just enumerate them briefly, those principles are as follows:

First, a unified Korea should preserve the state structure for Korea which has been endorsed by the United Nations, with such constitutional changes as might be necessary to establish an all-Korean government.

Second, the people of Korea should be given an opportunity to express their views as to their future government and for that purpose there should be held, with a minimum of delay, free and fair elections for a national assembly and possibly also for a president.

Third, the conditions for such elections should include equitable representation by population over the whole of Korea.

Fourth, to ensure that such elections should be fair and free, they should be supervised by an international agency agreed on, if possible, by the Geneva Conference but acceptable to the United Nations. In order to ensure maximum objectivity--and that is going quite a long way to meet the views of the other side--

we felt that this supervisory agency might consist of nations which do not belong to the communist bloc and which did not participate in military operations in Korea.

Fifth, arrangements should be made for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea by stages, that withdrawal to be completed in a short period, to be fixed by the conference, after the post-election all-Korean government had begun effectively to function; in other words, withdrawal might begin at once by both sides and be completed within a short time after the Korean government had begun to function.

Sixth, a reaffirmation of international responsibility under the United Nations to participate in the relief and rehabilitation of Korea through economic and material assistance. Finally, an international guarantee under the auspices of the United Nations of the territorial integrity of unified, free and democratic Korea.

It was hoped that some kind of proposal based on principles of that nature might be put forward as coming from all sixteen powers. That procedure has not yet been possible, Mr. Chairman, but we are very close in our views. Indeed, as a result of negotiations between the delegations on our side, all sixteen powers are very close together now on what constitutes the principles for a good Korean settlement.

Meanwhile, the government delegation of the Republic of Korea has put forward its own proposals for a settlement. We think that these are acceptable as a basis of negotiation but we have doubts about one or two of the points included in their proposals, more particularly that which would give to South Korea a veto on the election in that part and their insistence that all Chinese troops be out of Korea before the six-months period would end. We feel now--and this is the attitude we are taking at Geneva where the matter is being debated this afternoon--that these proposals on the communist side and the proposals on our side should go to a small negotiating committee. If that suggestion is followed, we shall soon be able to find out whether progress is possible.

It would be unwise to be too optimistic on that score. We therefore ask ourselves what should be done if, at this Korean conference at Geneva, we cannot succeed in bringing about the unification of that unhappy land. I think it would be wise, under these circumstances, to suspend, not to terminate, the conference and to agree to look at the problem again some months ahead when conditions might be a little bit different. I think it would also be wise if this conference, in some form, could confirm armistice arrangements which would remain in effect until a peace settlement becomes possible.

I admit that we are still far short of the achievement of a peaceful solution of the Korean question. It is an intensely difficult problem and we shall need a large fund of patience if an acceptable solution is to be attained; but there is still hope that such a solution will eventually be attained. Meanwhile I feel--

and it is no unimportant result if I am correct in this feeling--that after the Geneva discussions the renewal of hostilities in Korea is much less likely than it might have been before that conference opened.

I should now say something about the Indo-Chinese side of the conference. The situation in respect of this particular conference is, as Sir Winston Churchill said the other day, "in constant flux," and of course it is impossible therefore to make any final report on what has happened or speculate with any degree of assurance on what is likely to happen. The invitation to the Indo-Chinese conference came, as hon. members know, from the Berlin meeting in February. At that meeting of the foreign ministers it was decided that the membership of the Indo-Chinese conference should consist of the four inviting powers, the Chinese People's Republic and other interested states. Therefore at Geneva the inviting powers were confronted at once with the problem of deciding, and only they could make the decision, who were the other interested states.

There were various alternatives that were canvassed. The first was that the conference would consist of the four, the Chinese Communist Government and the belligerents, the belligerents including the three associated states of Indo-China and the Viet Minh. Another proposal was that the conference should be widened somewhat to include also the neighbouring states and others directly and immediately concerned or who have commitments in that area.

Finally, it was suggested in some quarters that the conference might be extended even wider to include additional communist states, neutrals and others. After a good deal of discussion among the inviting powers it was decided that the limited conference of the four, the Chinese communists and the belligerent states gave the best prospect of progress, and success and that was the decision which was eventually adopted.

As far as Canada's position is concerned, we felt we had no complaint in the circumstances about non-membership in this conference. We have of course in Canada a very definite interest in this problem but no special or separate responsibility for Indo-China or for Southeast Asia. We have no regional or special commitments in that part of the world and no question of accepting such has arisen at Geneva. So the policy of our delegation in respect of this very limited conference, which I would point out again excluded even the neighbouring states, was to avoid on the one hand involvement in any specific commitments for which the delegation did not have a mandate and, on the other hand, to avoid any appearance or attitude of indifference to developments, the consequences of which, if they deteriorated into conflict, would certainly concern us and might involve us.

With these considerations in mind, we kept ourselves fully informed of the formal conference talks on Indo-China and participated in many useful informal discussions with delegations who were more directly concerned than we were with the problem of Indo-China and of security in Southeast Asia. Our co-operation and our consultation in these discussions was especially

close with the delegations of the Commonwealth and of the United States. Here, if I may, I should like to pay a very sincere tribute to the work that the foreign secretary of the United Kingdom is doing at this conference. His contacts with what we may call the other side gave him, in a sense, a mediating position on occasions on those matters where mediation was possible, and he is playing that invaluable role, if I may say so, with wisdom, patience and skill.

The problem of Indo-China as we see it is two-fold. There is first the short-range problem, and that might in its turn be divided into two parts. The first part is how to bring the Indo-Chinese war to an end on terms with France, which has borne the heat and the burden of the day there at great sacrifice for many years now, and the associated states of Indo-China could accept. The second point, so far as the short-range problem is concerned is to work out international arrangements with a maximum of free Asian participation to guarantee any settlement that might be reached.

But there is also the long-range problem of how to build up a collective security system for South-east Asia, again with a maximum of free Asian participation, so that new aggression may be prevented and the peace maintained. The short-range problem was of course made more difficult by the character and developments of the war and that in turn tended to complicate, colour and at times almost give an atmosphere of crisis to the second and longer range objective. Crisis diplomacy, is at times in these days unavoidable, but it is not always the most effective agency for the solution of long-range problems. In the search for a solution to these problems one viewpoint emphasized that we should concentrate first on the immediate problem of the war, then work out arrangements to guarantee the armistice settlement and only afterwards deal with the bigger problem of collective security and the future. It was felt by those who held this view that the exigencies of the military situation, and they certainly existed, should not push those concerned into premature or ill-considered discussion of political or defence arrangements which would not have the solid foundation of general and wide support which was essential, and which would have given the communists an excuse to say that the Geneva conference had been sabotaged.

It was felt by this school of opinion that before attempting to organize security you must be sure that you know what you are going to organize, also that all the free countries of Southeast Asia should at least be invited to participate in the consideration of the problem, and finally that there should be reasonable assurance of agreement and unity at home in regard to the acceptance of the commitments which might be necessary.

That was one view, one approach to this problem. The other approach, the other viewpoint, argued that recent events had shown the necessity of not only making a just peace in Indo-China but of taking steps, even while the conference was going on, to show by readiness to consider arrangements for collective action that the pattern of communist aggression in Asia could not be

repeated without meeting strong and collective resistance; that convincing evidence should be given now that any state which wanted to be free would be assisted in staying free.

It was felt by those who held this viewpoint-- and there were of course shades of viewpoint between these two--that the adoption of this position and this attitude would not only make early peace in Indo-China more likely, by underlining the risks the communists would be taking if they prolonged the war, but would also act as an effective deterrent against communist aggression in the future. The United States, of course, has been reported as leaning to the latter view, and the United Kingdom to the former. Therefore alarming and often exaggerated conclusions have been drawn of Anglo-American divisions and differences. That was not unnatural in the circumstances, the circumstances being that there were at least 1,500 journalists in Geneva looking for news. Included in those 1,500 there was a small group of Canadian journalists and I should like to pay my tribute to the full, and I thought objective and careful, reports that were sent back home by the small group.

While differences, differences in emphasis and differences in approach, are I think unavoidable in a coalition of free states, especially in circumstances of this kind, it is of importance of course that they should be resolved. It is of vital importance, and I know that this is appreciated on all sides and indeed in all countries except the communist countries, that these differences should not become differences of policy and principle between our two closest friends, the United Kingdom and the United States. It would be the greatest possible tragedy if Asia were allowed to split the west. I am confident that this will not occur.

So far as the immediate problem of Indo-China is concerned, the short range problem that I mentioned, the delegation of France put forward proposals to solve it and so did the communist delegations. The French proposal put forward by Mr. Bidault, who is playing a very difficult part in Geneva with great skill, enumerated certain points of settlement, and his points were supported by the United States, the United Kingdom and the associated states of Indo-China.

First, there should be an armistice to bring the fighting to an end, and then a political settlement based on the independence of the three states, which would be internationally supervised and guaranteed. Secondly, there should be separate consideration for the three states of Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam. In so far as Laos and Cambodia were concerned, the Viet Minh should evacuate those countries at once. So far as Viet Nam was concerned, there should be an evacuation of the Red River delta by agreement upon a no man's land around the periphery of the delta beyond which all Viet Minh forces were to retire. In central Viet Nam, the Viet Minh troops would have to withdraw to a prearranged position, and they would have to evacuate the south.

The communist plan included proposals for an armistice in Indo-China and a political settlement to be negotiated simultaneously over the whole of Indo-China and all three states would be treated on the same basis. It also included recognition of what they called the liberating regimes, not only of the Viet Minh but also of Laos and Cambodia. We had not heard anything about those latter two regimes before we went to Geneva. It provided for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Indo-China, and for elections in all three countries without any effective international supervision.

It seemed on the face of it, though they are still negotiating these proposals and it is unwise to give final conclusions in regard to them, that this communist plan was designed to bring communist regimes to power. At times it seemed also that the communists were indulging in delaying and obstructive tactics, encouraged no doubt by the military situation in Indo-China. However, Mr. Chairman, negotiations have been continuing during the last ten days since I left Geneva. They have been concerned with these two main considerations: first, the possibility of a negotiated cease fire and, secondly, a political settlement. These negotiations seem now to be at a critical stage. We are being kept carefully and closely informed of them by our delegation at Geneva.

I believe it is too early to predict whether a negotiated settlement can or cannot be reached on honourable terms which would bring an effective end to the hostilities, provide a basis for a workable political settlement, recognizing the interests of the indigenous peoples of the countries concerned, and which would be a wise move in the direction of creating positions of stability in the Southeast Asia area. So long as negotiations are still going on, however, I think it would be unwise and indeed unnecessary for me to speculate on the result of the failure to end the war. Nevertheless whether success or failure results, the problem of general security in Southeast Asia remains.

As I see it, the solution to that problem depends largely on whether the countries most immediately involved can agree on the objectives and principles that should underlie any collective arrangements to maintain and strengthen security in that area. I hope I may be pardoned, Mr. Chairman, if I put forward, on the basis of my own association with this problem in recent weeks, some considerations which in my view affect the search for security in Southeast Asia.

In the first place, I think we must accept the fact that the international communist conspiracy is working for, and has made progress in, securing control of Southeast Asia. We should certainly be aware of the danger to international peace and security in this development, a danger which cannot be exercised by comforting interpretations of Asian communism as merely agrarian reform or as nationalism painted red.

It is true, I think, that the urge for national freedom and for social and economic reform, and not devotion to communism as such, is the mainspring of the greatest revolution of our time, the emergence of the masses of Asia from colonial control, feudal restrictions

and western pressures. But communist imperialism, directed from Moscow or from Peking or both, has been too successful in exploiting, and in some cases in capturing these forces, even though communism as the agent of aggressive and reactionary imperialism cannot bring either freedom or progress to those it envelops. We know that, Mr. Chairman, but there are millions of destitute and despairing people in Asia who do not as yet.

In the second place we should, I think accept the fact that if this danger exists, and I think it does, there can be no objection to, indeed there should be approval of, regional collective security arrangements organized to meet those dangers in the right way, by those immediately concerned, under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. We cannot support the principle of collective security in one part of the world and reject it in another. I think it is right and important that the United States of America should be reassured by its friends on this question of principle. Nevertheless, we should also recognize that in practice the type of collective security arrangements suitable for the Atlantic area might not be practical or desirable in Southeast Asia.

An understanding of these needs and these differences will assist, indeed I think will be essential in finding the right regional solution to the problem of security in that part of the world, once it is agreed that such a solution is necessary to supplement and make more binding the general application of the United Nations Charter. Any such regional solution, I think, might well embody the following principles:

First, arrangements reached must be consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. If they could be associated in some form with the United Nations, so much the better.

Secondly, they must be divorced from anything that could be called colonialism and not designed to maintain regimes, colonial or national, that have little or no popular support.

Thirdly, it should be recognized that the problem cannot be dealt with effectively in military terms alone, and that no mere military agreement is likely to be satisfactory or enduring. Indeed military aggression of the conventional sort is not likely to be the main danger so much as communist imperialism exploiting those forces within the state--and not always unworthy forces--in order to bring about subversion, civil war and the forcible installation of communist regimes.

It should also be recognized that, as President Eisenhower said on May 12, no country can be saved from communism unless it wants to be saved.*

Then, fourth, as I see it, any solution must not be, or susceptible to the interpretation as being, a purely "western" one, or one from which free Asian countries feel that they have been excluded. Surely we must recognize that, whether we agree with all their policies or not, little of a substantial or permanent character is likely to be achieved in establishing peace and security in Southeast Asia, or any other part of Asia, without the

advice, co-operation and assistance of the free Asian countries. I think it is most important--and I am sure the House agrees with me--that those countries should feel that, even if they are not members of it, any collective security arrangements in Southeast Asia that may be worked out should be in their interest, and have taken into consideration their interests. If not enough Asian states feel that way, the foundation of any Southeast Asian security organization will not be very firm.

In this connection, the Commonwealth association can play and has played a valuable role. And that is one reason why, in my opinion, it was helpful and wise to keep the Asian members of Commonwealth informed, as they were kept informed, closely and continuously, of Geneva developments. It is also one reason why I regret that India, or some similar Asian state or states, was not a member of the Geneva conference.

The working out of an arrangement which would be based on the considerations I have ventured to mention will not be easy, and I think that it will take time. But there is dilemma here, in that time may be against those who desire to build up a security system to deter aggression in Southeast Asia. After all, there is a war going on there. It is not easy, in diplomacy, to reconcile considerations of defence urgency with the necessity for careful political preparation and of securing general and wholehearted agreement. There can be danger both from over-timidity and from over-zealousness. There can also be trouble between friends if there is doubt about timing, about exactly what is being planned, about what we are trying to secure, and about what we are trying to prevent.

We should certainly be clear on that last point-- what we are trying to prevent. Is the united action which it is desired to bring about to be against communism as such, regardless of the means, military or otherwise, which it adopts to secure its ends in any particular Asian country; or is the commitment for collective action against military aggression only? If it is to be the first, then we should realize that arrangements to achieve this end will be interpreted as a declaration of implacable and fixed hostility, with all action short of general war, and even at the risk of such war, against Asian communism.

The other concept is that which is embodied in NATO. Here the commitment for action, in contradistinction to consultation, is clear and explicit. And it comes into operation as soon as a military aggression has been committed by one state against another--but not sooner.

I do not think it will do any service to the unity of those who are working together for peace if there is not a very clear understanding on this point, and if any negotiations are not based on that understanding.

Now, if I may close by referring a little more specifically to the policy of the Canadian Government in respect to the questions we have been discussing at Geneva, and which are still under discussion there.

We will continue--and I am sure there will be general agreement on this--we will continue to assist in bringing about a Korean peace settlement, consistent with United Nations principles and decisions; but we will not repudiate or betray those principles or decisions.

If the Geneva conference should not at this time achieve such a settlement, we will favour a re-examination of the problem at a future date, whether at the United Nations General Assembly or by a resumption of the present conference called for that purpose.

We will oppose any move by anyone to resume hostilities in Korea.

So far as Indo-China and Southeast Asia are concerned, we recognize that Canada has a very real interest in what is happening there, and what is likely to happen there. As a country with hundreds of miles of exposed coast on the Pacific, Canada is naturally concerned with problems affecting security in the Pacific and in Asia. Moreover, we know from the experience of two world wars that peace is indivisible and that a threat to peace anywhere can soon cover the whole world.

Our inevitable concern for developments in Southeast Asia is increased by our close relationship to the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the three Asian members of the Commonwealth. The growing anxiety of these latter three over hostilities going on so near to their homelands can be readily appreciated, since their security would be very seriously threatened if an aggressive communist nation took control, either by internal subversion or by direct military intervention, of one after another of the countries in the area.

Added evidence of our concern for the security and well-being of the nations of South and Southeast Asia is to be found in our active participation in the Colombo Plan, whereby we have sought to associate ourselves with the area's economic development.

In so far as accepting special political and defence commitments is concerned, there is of course a limit to what a country of Canada's population and resources can do. We have limited strength, in both men and materials; and our commitments, Mr. Chairman, are already heavy. Existing undertakings, such as those under NATO, are such as to circumscribe what Canada can and cannot undertake, militarily and otherwise, not only in Southeast Asia but elsewhere.

And therefore, while it is true that if peace is threatened by communist aggression anywhere, it is threatened everywhere, it is also true that Canada cannot be expected to accept special or regional defence commitments in every part of the world where collective arrangements may be advisable. We have of course, through membership in the United Nations, accepted the provisions of the charter. Canada has, therefore, already definite, if general, obligations in the maintenance and restoration of peace and security in all areas where these are in danger. In this connection, it should be realized that the situation in Indo-China, with all its consequences to the peace and security of Southeast Asia, has not yet been

brought to the United Nations, and is not before the United Nations at the present time. If or when that position should change, Canada's policy, like those of other member states, will of course depend upon the nature, the purposes and the scope of any action which might be recommended by the United Nations. Any action involving an extension of Canada's present commitments would be placed before parliament.

The responsibility for seeking recourse to the United Nations would rest with the states and governments in the areas which are most directly concerned, and any such approach would, I assume, depend upon the outcome of the direct discussions which are now going on in Geneva, and also on a clear assessment of the possibilities and limitations of effective United Nations action. It is clear--at least it seems clear to me--that the United Nations organization possesses a fund of experience and provides available procedures for peaceful settlement which, in other circumstances, have helped in the past to put seemingly intractable problems on the road to solution, or to halt deterioration in situations threatening the peace, and I would hope that the United Nations might prove useful in this situation, too. But whether at the United Nations or at Geneva, or wherever the road may lead, the search for peace and security goes on.

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