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CHINESE REPRESENTATION

Text of Statement to be made by the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, P.C., Q.C., M.P., on the Question of Chinese Representation, in the Plenary Session of the United Nations General Assembly, on Wednesday, November 23, 1966

Mr. President:

The issue of Chinese representation in the United Nations is again before us. It has been before us in one form or another for sixteen years. In spite of all our best efforts the UN has not yet been able to discover a way out of the impasse in which it finds itself today.

One reason why better progress has not been made is that the options we have had before us do not reflect the real nature of the problem. The real nature of the problem is that the China of today is not the China of 1945.

One of the options which has been before us would have us ignore the changes that have taken place altogether. It would have us act as if the People's Republic of China did not exist. It would have us continue to exclude from our deliberations and from the whole framework of international co-operation a government which has the capacity to influence the shape of world affairs for good or for ill.

The other option also asks us to close our eyes to a part of the reality of the Chinese situation. It would have us do so by extinguishing for all practical purposes the international personality of a government which controls the destiny of some 12 million people, a greater population than that of three-fifths of the member states of this organization.

That is why these options have not carried us forward. They do not take account of the fundamental changes which have occurred in China since the United Nations was established. They do not point to an rational solution of the problem. They do not point to a solution which is in accord with that common interest which should be the basis of a world organization.

I do not think we shall ever be able to resolve this question on a reasonable basis so long as we proceed from the narrow concept of a contest of votes. If we are to proceed in the spirit of the Charter, any solution should be sought in terms not of contest but of consensus.

Only by agreement among ourselves on a way out of the dilemma, followed by negotiated acceptance of a reasonable solution by the parties concerned, can we hope to reach any just and satisfactory outcome. I do not suggest that this can be an easy process, or that what we in Canada have been proposing in our consultations is a short-cut to a solution. There are no short-cuts which do not violate both common sense and the spirit of the Charter. What I do suggest is that, unless we are to throw up our hands and turn away from our responsibilities, a start must be made in an effort to find a consensus on this issue.

What we have to decide at this point in time is this: are we content once more to choose--or refuse to choose--between a set of unsatisfactory options? Or should we devote our full efforts and energies to the search for a constructive alternative?

We cannot afford to shelve this issue for very much longer if the realities of a diverse world are to find effective expression in the United Nations. I also want to make it clear that the Canadian Government for its part is not prepared to stand by and see this situation perpetuated indefinitely. / My colleagues and I have devoted much time in the last few months in an effort to open the way for a forward move on the question of Chinese representation at the United Nations.

I do not propose to linger over the question of importance on which we are being asked once again to pronounce ourselves. It has been the view of my delegation in previous years that this is an important question and we do not think that the passage of time has in any way detracted from its importance. It is important for the United Nations. It is important for the maintenance of international peace and security. And it is important, in the final analysis, because the people of China are important. My delegation, therefore, does not propose to seek a resolution of this issue by denying its importance.

We also have before us once again the proposal of the Albanian delegation and other cosponsors. The intent of this proposal is to seat the representatives of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. With this we are in full accord. But the resolution embodying this proposal goes on to stipulate that this can be done by expelling the representatives of the Republic of China. The Canadian

/ without doing our part to solve the representation issue at the United Nations.

position on this resolution has been that two wrongs do not make a right. We can see neither sense nor justice in the General Assembly denying to the Government of the Republic of China the right and responsibilities of United Nations membership or in withholding from its people the benefits of international cooperation. If we are to seek a rational and realistic answer to this problem before us, I cannot see that such an answer is to be found in the terms of the Albanian resolution.

I wish now to turn to the third proposal which we have before us. I refer to the proposal tabled by the Delegations of Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Italy and Trinidad and Tobago. I do not think I am revealing any secret if I say that Canada took an active part in initiating the consultations which resulted in the tabling of this proposal. The countries with which we consulted are countries whose views of what must now be done appeared to us to be in general harmony with our own. I would like to take this opportunity of expressing to the representatives of these countries our sincere appreciation of the efforts they made to accommodate themselves to our approach to this issue. I should like particularly to pay a tribute to the United States delegation for the spirit in which they endeavoured to meet our position, and to say that I fully appreciate the value of the United States being able to announce its support for this alternative resolution.

It is a matter of great regret to Canada that the proposal which has emerged as a result of our joint deliberations is not one which, in our view, goes far enough in charting the course which this Assembly should now take in the interest of the United Nations and that of the larger world community.

The proposal before us provides for the establishment of a Committee to explore and study the whole situation pertaining to Chinese representation and to make appropriate recommendations to the next Session of the General Assembly. This proposal represents very little forward movement over a similar proposal which Canada initiated at the Fifth General Session of the General Assembly in 1950. I would have hoped that, with the experience of the intervening years, this Twenty-first Session of the General Assembly might see its way clear to laying down a much more specific mandate by which the proposed committee would be guided in exploring the elements of an equitable solution of this question. In the absence of such a directive I fear that much valuable time may be lost by any committee which this Assembly will establish.

I would like to say that I have been disturbed by some of the statements which have been made concerning the tasks of the proposed committee. I want to make it clear

that what is now required in my view is not a matter of study or research. What we seek from the committee are not questions but answers. What we look to the committee to do is to act on behalf of this Assembly in mapping out a viable solution and paving the way for forward movement on this issue. This surely is the basis on which the committee must pursue its endeavours if it is to make the sort of recommendation which we have the right to expect it to put before us at our next session.

It has been suggested that one question which should be put to the Government of the People's Republic of China is whether it is willing to be seated in the United Nations. I am quite ready to acknowledge that statements which have come from Peking have been such as to implant real doubts in our minds about the general attitude of the Government of the People's Republic of China towards the workings of the United Nations. On the other hand, countries friendly to the Government of the People's Republic of China have in successive years tabled proposals aimed at the seating of that government in the United Nations. We must assume, I think, that this would not have been done without Peking's consent.

It has also been suggested that the Government of the People's Republic of China be asked whether it is willing to adhere to the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations. Now it is obviously of the greatest importance that all member governments respect and observe the obligations of the Charter. The question is properly put, in accordance with Article 4 of the Charter, to any state which is applying for membership in the United Nations. But China <u>is</u> a member state of the United Nations. The issue before us is not one of admitting China to membership. It is rather how China as a member state can be represented in our midst in such a way as to reflect the realities of the present political situation.

But I can see a further drawback to this whole procedure of asking questions at this stage. I would submit, Mr. President, that the real responsibility of any Committee we appoint is to devise a basis on which this Assembly would consider it reasonable for the people of China to be represented in our midst. The time for asking questions is after, not before, such a basis has been devised. The real responsibility which is ours is to formulate proposals which can be put to the parties in full confidence that

they represent a reasonable approach to this issue. We can commend our proposals to the parties but we cannot compel their acceptance. At the very least, however, we would have absolved ourselves of the responsibility for perpetuating a situation which lacks the elements of common sense.

In providing guidelines to an appropriate solution, the proposal before us refers to "the existing situation and the political realities of the area."

What are these realities, Mr. President? Among the most important are the fundamental changes which have taken place since the founding of the United Nations. When the Government of the Republic of China signed the United Nations Charter, the island of Taiwan was under the control of the Government of Japan. By 1949 a revolutionary upheaval on the mainland of China resulted in the removal of the Nationalist Chinese Government to Taipei and the establishment of a Government of the People's Republic of China in Peking. The real situation since then has been and continues to be that we have two Governments exercising control over two areas of territory, each claiming to be the Government entitled to the Chinese seat in the United Nations.

One of these is the Government of the Republic of China, with which Canada has had long and close diplomatic relations. This government has been a member in good standing of this Assembly and its subsidiary bodies every since the founding of the United Nations. It controls a territory whose economic development can serve as a blueprint for progress in other developing countries. Its representatives have played an important part in the economic and social organs of the United Nations and in the programmes which are designed to raise standards of living throughout the developing world.

The other Government, the Government of the People's Republic of China which controls a far greater area and a far greater population, is not represented here and never has been. This is a situation we deplore both because we firmly believe in the principle of universality and because we believe that lasting solutions to the certain important problems facing the world community today cannot be found without the participation of the Government of Peking.

The Canadian Government for its part has consistently, both by its statements and by its actions, done whatever it could to encourage mutually advantageous contacts between Canada and Continental China and for that matter between it and the rest of the international community. This position should not of course be considered by anyone to involve any endorsement of the policies or ideology of the Peking regime.

I do not believe that this Assembly has the right to pronounce judgment on the conflicting territorial claims of these two Governments. I think that the decisions or actions of this Assembly on the Chinese representation issue should be without prejudice to the eventual settlement of that dispute or to the view strongly held by both Governments that China is a single sovereign entity. But if we have no rights in that regard we do have a moral obligation under our Charter to see that pending a final settlement of this dispute we make the sort of arrangements in this Assembly which will allow the maximum participation of the people of China in the work of the United Nations without depriving those who already belong of the voice to which they have as much a right as anyone else in this Assembly.

How do we do this in practice? The essence of the position which we have been advocating is that representatives of both Governments should be seated in this Assembly. This could be done as an interim solution pending the settlement of the jurisdictional dispute between the two Governments. We believe that such an interim solution should be reflected in all the organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

I would also go one step further than this, Mr. President, and suggest that if the Study Committee is to make a realistic appraisal of the problem, it should include in its recommendations some reference to the Security Council. I realize full well that the Assembly cannot impose its views on the Security Council. I do not think, however, that any credible proposal for a solution of this issue can afford to ignore the problem of the disposition of the Chinese seat in the Security Council.

Mr. President, it was with these practical requirements in mind that the Canadian delegation in the course of the consultations we have held, suggested the following guidelines as the basis for a reasonable interim solution:

FIRST -- The participation of the Republic of China in the U.N. General Assembly as the member representing the territory over which it exercises effective jurisdiction;

SECOND -- The participation of the People's Republic of China in the U.N. General Assembly as the member representing the territory over which it exercises effective jurisdiction;

THIRD -- The participation of the People's Republic of China in the Security Council as a permanent member.

I want to make it clear at this point that the solution we envisage is in no way intended to imply the existence of two Chinas. Both the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of China firmly adhere to the concept of one China and it is not for the United Nations to propound concepts which are at variance with the hopes and aspirations of the people of a member state. This is an internal matter which is for the Chinese people to resolve and from which the United Nations, in accordance with the clear dispositions of the Charter, is bound to stand aside.

Some eleven years ago my delegation was instrumental in helping to break the deadlock which then debarred a substantial number of States from being admitted to membership in the United Nations. The action we took at that time was prompted by our concern for the principle of universality which was so eloquently commended to us in the memorable address given in this Assembly last year by His Holiness Pope Paul VI. In his words:

> "Once more We repeat Our wish for you: go forward. We shall say more: strive to bring back among you any who may have left you; consider means of calling into your pact of brotherhood, in honour and loyalty, those who do not yet share in it. Act so that those still outside will desire and deserve the confidence of all; and then be generous in granting it."

We are under no illusion that a more genuinely universal organization will necessarily be able to solve all the problems to which solutions have stubbornly eluded us so far. On the contrary, we do not exclude the possibility that the injection of new and perhaps radically different points of view may -- in the short run at least -- retard rather than accelerate the momentum of our work.

But there are advantages in the concept of universality which we cannot discount. Even if a more broadly based U.N. is not able to find solutions to some of the crucial problems of peace and security which confront us in the world today, it will at least have established a much better claim to bringing these problems within the framework of its discussions. Moreover, it seems to me that if the United Nations is to be "a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" in the attainment of common ends, as the Charter intended it to be, then it must be concerned to bring into its deliberations at least those nations which are bound to have to assume a major share of the responsibility.

By way of conclusion, Mr. President, let me say this. Canada believes that we must stop marking time on this issue. We must try to end the stalemate which has attended our discussions for a full sixteen years. We think the proposal to set up a committee falls short of what is required at this time in the way of specific directives. Nevertheless the committee does afford us an opportunity of moving forward if we are prepared to seize that opportunity and provided the committee is so constituted as to enable forward movement to be made.

We think that what is at issue here is the capacity of the United Nations to live up to the purposes of the Charter, to represent the world as it is, and to bring the great weight of its influence to bear on the issues of peace and security. Although, in the nature of things, we can only move forward on the basis of resolutions, I think I have made it clear that in our view this issue is not amenable to solution on that basis alone. It will require the exercise of diplomacy, good-will and accommodation on all sides, both within our organization and without. If that is the spirit in which the solution of this issue is approached, then I am not unhopeful that we may be able to unblock the road to progress towards making the U.N. a more effective, a more representative and a more credible forum of international deliberation and action.