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UNCURK

Text of Statement made in the First Committee by the Canadian Representative, Gen. E. L. M. Burns, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C., Adviser to the Canadian Government on Disarmament, on Item 31: The Korean Question: Report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, on Thursday, December 15, 1966.

Mr. Chairman, Canada's interest in and concern with the Korean question is of long standing. My country was one of the 16 nations which sent troops under United Nations auspices to help the Republic of Korea repel an attempt from the North to take over the peninsula by force. Later Canada took part in the Geneva Conference of 1954 which tried to find a diplomatic solution to the problem of Korean unification, but failed. Since then we have kept in touch with the situation and have maintained our interest in the search for a solution. Clearly a solution some day must be found and my Government wishes to reaffirm its view that the desire of the Korean people for peace, unity and freedom must be the paramount consideration.

The establishment, by peaceful means, of a unified and independent Korea under a representative form of Government is the primary purpose of UNCURK whose report is now before us. Canada continues to believe that UNCURK has a useful role to play and that the previously defined objectives of the United Nations in Korea remain valid. It should be remembered that the people of Korea find themselves divided from each other today as a result of developments which they could not control. We earnestly hope that this source of insecurity and instability will be overcome so that all the people of Korea may live, work and flourish together.

We have before us, Mr. Chairman, two draft resolutions on substance of the Korean question. The draft resolution in Document A/C.1/L.389 sponsored by 14 countries does not, we must say, represent an acceptable approach. We regret to note that it ignores the competence and authority of the United Nations in the Korean question and proposes a hasty dissolution of UNCURK. In addition it attempts to take a decision that the Korean question should not be discussed in future. Surely no question, Mr. Chairman, can be put on index prohibitorum in that way. At every session of the General Assembly all Delegations have an opportunity to propose, either in the General Committee or in the General Assembly itself, whatever items they wish to have placed on the agenda.

The other resolution of substance before this Committee is contained in Document A/C.1/L.392 of which Canada is one of the 14 co-sponsors. The Canadian Delegation has co-sponsored this draft resolution because we consider that the United Nations has a general responsibility to achieve by peaceful means the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Korea under a representative form of government and the full restoration of international peace and security in the Korean area. We also consider that this draft resolution, which has adopted a fresh approach toward this long standing question, puts within the proper framework the question of withdrawal of U.N. forces. In view of these considerations the Canadian Delegation believes that the draft resolution in L.392 merits wide support.

