

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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UNITED ACTION FOR PEACE

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 plenary session on November 3, 1950.

As one of the sponsors of the resolution which is now before the General Assembly, I should like to add a few words concerning it before the vote is taken, and also a few words, although it is tempting to say more than a few words, on the statements made to the General Assembly by the leader of the Soviet Union delegation.

When he spoke yesterday, Mr. Vishinsky complained of the rattle and the thunder of our speeches in support of this resolution. According to him, they were "mendacious sneers and rude outbursts against the Soviet Union". All the sponsors of this resolution, in his opinion, had "vied with each other in impudence and crudeness", and he urged the participants in this debate to stick to the resolution and argue either for it or against it, strictly on its merits. Then what did he do in his own speech? When he came to the rostrum, he attempted to drag the debate down to the level of an attack on various individuals and, more particularly on Mr. Dulles. So far as I could see from where I sat, Mr. Dulles seemed to receive this verbal assault with equanimity. He probably realized that he was safe since a debate in the General Assembly is not a purge. He may even have taken some satisfaction, as an author, from knowing that his book was receiving so much valuable publicity.

Moreover, instead of sticking to the resolution, Mr. Vishinsky spent most, or a great part, of his speech in discussing the report of the Bell Commission on the Philippines, Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia, the election, or rather the continuation in office of our Secretary-General, the characteristics of monopoly capitalism and, especially, the events of the autumn of 1939, events which do, in fact, bear a relationship to the resolution which is before us.

On this subject, we were privileged to hear from the leader of the Soviet delegation the pure party line on the cordial but temporary friendship struck up at that time between the Nazis and Moscow, and I must tell him frankly that his account of that episode simply will not wash. He assured us that the sole purpose of the Soviet-German pact in 1939 was to enable the U.S.S.R. to fill gaps in its defences for the attack which it knew was coming. If that is a true explanation, why did the Soviet Union do its best, after the destruction of Poland, to force the nations of the British Commonwealth and France to stop fighting Hitler, and why did

they accuse them of aggression in continuing the war? If those countries had stopped fighting at that time, would the Soviet Union have been stronger to withstand the attack from Hitler, who would then have been in virtual domination of all of Western Europe, an attack which Mr. Vishinsky assures us the rulers of Moscow knew was coming? If they did know it, why did they spurn all the attempts made by the United Kingdom Government to warn them of their danger as efforts to divide them from their friends of that moment, the Nazis?

In our view, Mr. Vishinsky's version of the history of that period will not stand even the most superficial analysis, and his account of what happened in Korea in June 1950 -- and that also has a very immediate connection with our draft resolution -- seems to us to be equally flimsy and to fall to pieces at the slightest examination. He insisted yesterday, as he has insisted before, that it was the Soviet Union which tried to bring about a cease-fire in Korea in order to stop the war, and that it was the United States of America which did not permit this pacific solution.

I do not need to remind the General Assembly of some elementary facts. On June 25, after North Korean forces had crossed the 38th parallel and were streaming south with armoured columns, the Security Council met to consider a report from its Commission on Korea which had confirmed those facts, and it was the Security Council on that day, and not the Soviet Union, which asked for a cease-fire and called on the North Korean forces to withdraw beyond, or to, the 38th parallel. That was a splendid opportunity for the Soviet Union to support an appeal to cease fire.

Did the Soviet Union support the Security Council in its efforts to stop the war, or did it encourage the forces of North Korea, which were then triumphantly advancing? So far as I am aware, there was no whisper of support from the Soviet Union at that moment for the Security Council's appeal to cease fire. And what was the reason? Possibly, as we have not had a reason from the Soviet Union delegation, I might suggest an answer.

The Soviet Union may have refused to support the Security Council's call for a cease-fire at that time because then the North Korean forces were enjoying the first fruits of aggression and were advancing pell-mell down the peninsula. The interest of the Soviet Union in a cease-fire bloomed later. They were not early advocates of this idea, as Mr. Vishinsky would have us believe, but rather, their interest was expressed later, on August 1 when they called for a cease-fire. At a time when their friends were in possession of most of Korea and the brave and embattled forces of the Republic of Korea, of the United States, and of other Members of the United Nations stood at bay, waiting until United Nations forces should have gathered sufficient strength to take the offensive, then, and then only, did the Soviet Union suddenly become pacific and realize the great advantages of a cease-fire.

The history of this is of importance only insofar as it helps us to meet the future, as we are attempting to do in this resolution. Let us admit that all of us, nations and individuals, made mistakes in the dismal thirties. But some of those mistakes we do not intend to repeat if we can avoid it. We are not going to repeat the mistakes of the thirties

when collective security was betrayed -- we can admit that -- and when states fell one by one before the aggressor. Nor are we going to repeat the mistakes of June 1950 when we were not organized to carry out quickly the collective security obligations we had undertaken when we signed the Charter. The purpose of the first of the three resolutions before the General Assembly is to help us to avoid making these mistakes in the future.

This resolution has been attacked, and very vigorously attacked, as aimed against, for one thing, the unanimity of the great powers. That, as I see it, is nonsense. No one has more to gain from such unanimity than the smaller and middle-sized powers. But what is the use of a unanimity which can be achieved only by doing nothing, which is used as a cloak of obstruction and reaction? That kind of unanimity is meaningless and will get us nowhere.

Resolution "A" has also been attacked as a violation of the Charter. In this Assembly some honest doubts have been expressed about its constitutionality, and, as honest doubts, the sponsors of the resolution respect them. Nevertheless, we feel convinced that the resolution is within the terms of the Charter. We believe that the Assembly has the power to make recommendations on the subjects dealt with in it, although it would not have the power to make decisions which would automatically impose commitments or enforcement obligations on the Members of the United Nations.

There has been a great deal of legal argument in respect to this resolution, but I suspect that nothing that we can do or say on that subject will make any impression on the delegations of the Soviet bloc, who keep on repeating that it is a flagrant violation of the Charter. It should not, however, escape notice that those same delegations, who use such hard language about the legality of this resolution and have constituted themselves as the guardians and guarantors of the purity of our Charter, have at the same time submitted an amendment to resolution "C", which is before us, which would certainly make that resolution completely and entirely a violation of the Charter. Article 23, paragraph 1 of the Charter reads:

"The Security Council shall consist of eleven Members of the United Nations. The Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America...".

But the amendment to resolution "C", which has been introduced by the Soviet delegation, proposes that the first part of the operative part of the resolution should be redrafted to read as follows:

"Recommends to the permanent members of the Security Council, namely, the People's Republic of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States of America...".

You will note that in that listing of the permanent members of the Security Council, the Soviet Union delegation has added one little word to the list contained in Article 23

of the Charter. That one word, however, the word "People's" before the words "Republic of China", is enough to show, I think, that in this amendment the Soviet Union is attempting to rewrite paragraph 1 of Article 23 of the Charter. Would that, by any chance, be a violation of the Charter?

In resolution "A", we are making further progress toward organizing collective security. That is our goal. It is a good goal, and it is one which we are determined to reach, especially we of the smaller and middle Powers who know that by no other means can our security be ensured against those who threaten it. What this resolution does has been, I think, sufficiently explained by previous speakers, but let me mention one or two things which it does not do.

It does not sabotage the Security Council. It merely establishes peace machinery under the Assembly to supplement the Security Council when the latter body sabotages itself. If the Security Council can work effectively to defend the peace and defeat the aggressor, this resolution will never have to be invoked. And no one will be more pleased by that than its sponsors and supporters.

Also, this resolution does not, as some friendly critics in Asia have suggested, organize the Assembly for war. It merely lays down methods by which, through Assembly action, Members of the United Nations can implement obligations already undertaken under the Charter.

Thirdly, this resolution does not set up an international force. It recommends that Members place national contingents at the disposal of the United Nations to carry out obligations and recommendations which those Members accept. These contingents must be equipped, trained and ready to join in international police action, so that, if a June 27 1950 occurs again, the United Nations will have forces from many of its Members ready to meet the aggression, and not from one or two alone. To make this provision effective, the provision in paragraph 8 of resolution "A", it will not be enough for a few countries to take the action recommended. We must all, within the measure of our capacities, contribute to its implementation. That will be the test of the sincerity of our words in favour of collective security and that will be the test of the effectiveness of this new effort to put international force behind the collective will for peace of the United Nations.

Finally, this resolution, even if it is fully implemented, will not itself bring peace. That, in the long run, can be done only, as Section "E" of resolution "A" indicates -- and for that section we are indebted to the Chilean delegation -- by establishing conditions of economic and social decency and security throughout the world; and, in the shorter run, by the stronger Powers' settling the problems which now so tragically divide them and which threaten to engulf us all in the tragic consequences of failure.

In this resolution, we have made a bold step forward toward a genuine and effective system of collective security. This is our answer to those who would frustrate and make futile the efforts of the Security Council to carry out the task for which it has primary responsibility, the maintenance of international peace and security. This resolution is also our warn-

ing to those who would threaten the peace and who are tempted to commit aggression. If they yield to this temptation, they will not only find opposed to them the collective conscience of the peaceful world, expressed through the United Nations; they will also find that this conscience can express itself through international forces organized and equipped to carry out the decisions of our world organization, decisions which will have no other purpose than the defence of peace. We are organizing collective security not for war but to prevent war, not for the pursuit of national policy but for the defence of international peace. In this high endeavour, all men of goodwill everywhere and all nations which follow the policies of peace will be on our side.

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