

7th Session

393rd Plenary Meeting, 11th November, 1952

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This year we meet again in an atmosphere of mounting crisis. The maintenance of peace and security is our common purpose; yet we have not so far succeeded in achieving it. Fighting goes on in Korea; armaments continue to be piled up. today, seven years after the termination of the Second World War, we are as far from the settlement of Germany and Austria as we were the first year after the war. Few of us can escape responsibility for this tragic state of affairs, and none dare think of the terrible alternative, should our efforts finally fail. In the words of our Prime Minister, "there are no halfway houses left for us; we can work wholeheartedly with all the strength in us to prevent the calamity of war; or we can allow the world to sink into an abyss which will bring us to uttermost destruction, and ruin the proud structure of present-day civilisation".

The problem of paramount importance before this General Assembly is that of peace in Korea. Day after day, as we debate this issue in committee, fighting continues, men are killed and rival armies move up and down that unhappy country, which is now a heap of ruins. Our immediate task, therefore, is to end hostilities and, with that object, to explore every avenue to bring about a quick settlement of the only issue which now stands in the way of an armistice. We have not given up hope that the difficulties in the way of a solution will prove surmountable, and we trust that wisdom, perseverance and patience will lead to agreement between the parties themselves. An armistice in Korea, however, is but the first step towards the task of unification and rehabilitation

of that country.

With respect to the larger problem in the Far East, our position is well known. I must, however, restate the view of my Government, namely, that the Central People's Government of China should be brought into the United Nations. Until the issue of Chinese representation is settled in accordance with the actual facts of the situation, our discussions here must continue to be unreal. On such problems as, for example, the reduction of armaments and armed forces, the absence of the representatives of China, in our view is a serious limitation. We hope that renewed thought will be given to this matter.

We also hope that in the discussions on the question of the admission of new Members, a step forward will be taken at this session to break the deadlock by the recognition of the principle of universality of membership. Without it, our Organization cannot deal effectively with the problems arising in different parts of the world.

I referred to Korea at the outset because the continuance of hostilities there is the most immediate challenge to the peace-making functions of the United Nations, but there are other dangers to peace in other parts of the world which are not the less threatening because they are less apparent. I refer to the situation arising from the continuance of colonial rule over peoples who are fast awakening to political consciousness.

The transition from such rule to self-government must be effected smoothly and with speed. India has always taken a keen and active interest in the problems of peoples of dependent areas, whether they are Non-Self-Governing or Trust Territories. "The dignity

and worth of the human person" springs to life and vitality only under freedom. It is a hopeful feature of this year's session of the General Assembly that several delegations have referred to the importance and urgency of solving colonial problems. We were in particular impressed by a notable passage in the speech of the leader of the United States delegation [380th meeting], in which he pointed out that of 800 million dependent people in the world at the end of the Second World War, no less than 600 million had achieved their freedom in these few years. That great fact, of which we in Asia are deeply conscious, is proof of the change which is fast coming over the world today. It has implications which go far beyond the territories which have attained freedom.

We deeply sympathize with the peoples of Tunisia and Morocco in their desire for self-government. It is their legitimate aspiration, and we had thought that the political wisdom and sense of history of the great Power governing their destinies would lead to a statesman-like approach to the problems arising out of their demands. This is not the occasion for replying to the leader of the French delegation, who made a statement yesterday [392nd meeting], and my delegation proposes to deal with the question in detail in the committee concerned. One of the achievements of the United Nations is that its efforts brought freedom to Indonesia and Libya, and other peoples naturally look to this Organization for similar support. We as Members, are in fact pledged to take joint and separate action for the achievement, among other things, of "friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of self-determination of peoples". We therefore trust that the United Nations will support the assertion and the attainment of that principle by the peoples of Tunisia and Morocco.

I should like to emphasize the fact that new life is stirring in the continents of Asia and Africa, of which the General Assembly should take due note. In the first half of the present century,

we saw the emergence in Asia of a movement for self-expression and self-development. It was handled by the parties concerned with realism and statesmanship, and the results are seen today both in terms of goodwill and in the awakening of the other peoples of Asia to their new responsibilities. We hope that similar realism and statesmanship will be applied to similar movements in other areas.

Elsewhere on the African continent, the situation is fast deteriorating owing to the pursuit of a racial policy supported by a series of legislative and executive measures designed to perpetuate the domination of one race over others. The bitterness created by it is sowing the seeds of a conflict which may overwhelm the entire continent. This policy is a serious menace to all that the United Nations stands for, and my delegation earnestly hopes that this session of the General Assembly will recognize the potential dangers of the situation and deal with it in a manner that will bring peace and contentment to the peoples of South Africa.

Here I should like to tell the representatives that, even as we meet here today, thousands of men and women belonging to different groups in South Africa have united and launched a movement of passive resistance against the wrong being done to them. They have not resorted to violent rebellion, though there have regrettably been sporadic outbursts by other groups during the last few days, the full reasons for which are not yet known to us. The "passive resisters" have followed the inspiring example of Mahatma Gandhi and are enduring, in a disciplined manner, imprisonment and even whipping for daring to assert their rights to these fundamental freedoms to which we are all pledged. Such a demonstration of spiritual strength can never prove futile, and I should like to take this opportunity of paying tribute to the courage and sacrifice of these men and women and to give them the assurance that there is a large measure of

appreciation all over the world for their heroic stand.

I wish now to refer to an event in India which has occurred since the last session of the General Assembly. Following upon the framing of our new Constitution, which has established a secular democratic republic, we have held our first general election. To grant adult suffrage without distinction of class, religion, race or sex meant a single electoral roll of a 172 million men. 105 million voters exercised their vote. The orderliness with which the election were conducted and the grasp of political issues which the voters revealed have been of the utmost encouragement to us, and are facts of considerable significance.

That, however, is only the first step on the road to real democracy. We realize that a heavy responsibility rests on the central and State governments which have come into existence as a result of these elections. Our people expect, more than before, quick solutions for their numerous economic and social problems. Our independence in 1947 brought us, however, the legacy-and with it also the problems-of an under-developed country. The conditions of hunger, disease and ignorance are a challenge to national statesmanship everywhere, but in our country the challenge becomes more formidable because of the accident of natural calamities and the strains and stresses inevitable at the end of a country's strength must lie within it and not outside, we have first set out to put our house in order.

In the economic and social spheres, our five-year plan is designed to harness all our resources, human, technical and natural, to the task of economic and social reconstruction. We are convinced that such reconstruction must be based primarily on our own effort, and that the wealth of a country lies essentially in and with its own people. But we believe also that co-operative effort through international agencies must be further promoted in

order to quicken the process of development.

The establishment of agencies for ensuring the flow of capital for development, the provision of financial assistance for essential projects like land reform or the utilization of natural resources, technical and other aids to increase productivity, these and many others must be undertaken by the United Nations in its great objective of strengthening the foundations of peace.

These matters are of vital concern, especially to the recently emancipated countries like India, and generally to the under-developed countries. Failure to achieve economic and social objectives will mean the disillusionment of peoples.

We are 360 million, and if we succeed in our plans to raise the standards of living and bring our people the fruits of prosperity and progress, we shall be creating conditions of enduring stability in Asia. Our thoughts and actions are therefore riveted to that task.

One last word. These past seven years of varied fortunes of this Organization have brought both success and failure. That the failures have been great may be a cause for distress but not for despondency. We, of the Indian delegation, believe that only faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter and action in the national and international spheres in accordance with them will bring the peoples of the world together into closer understanding and collaboration. The great Powers whose unity seven years ago brought the edifice of the United Nations into being and whose differences today threaten to destroy it, shoulder a tremendous responsibility for the maintenance of world peace. We hope that they will continue to serve that end despite

difference in ideology, and that others, like ourselves, who appear in the words of the poet to "only stand and wait", will also serve in their own humble way.
