

represented a real test by the Communists of the United States policy of peace through strength. Kennan underlined the possible implications which the events in Korea might have, particularly in regard to Germany. If the Communist efforts in Korea and other weak spots in the Pacific were successful, he had no doubt that a similar test of strength would follow in Germany. There was no disposition on the part of the Ambassadors to disagree with this view and several of them expressed general agreement with, and appreciation for, Kennan's review of the background of the considerations which had led to the President's decision on Korea.

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Ambassador in United States
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM WA-1417

Washington, June 27, 1950

SECRET. IMMEDIATE.

KOREA

1. In other messages today I have described the action taken by the United States Government and the reasons given by the State Department which led to the decision of the President. This message contains some thoughts of my own.

2. Since I learned on Sunday morning of the attack on South Korea I have been in doubt whether the necessary degree of resolution and military strength would be forthcoming here to defeat what must certainly be an effort directed from Moscow to undermine the position of the Western countries, and of the United States in particular, in the Far East. The President's decision and the reasons given for it go much further than I had expected and reveal that the United States, in spite of domestic controversy over Far Eastern policy, can promptly adopt firm and far-reaching measures. I share the belief expressed today at the State Department that the risks of inaction are greater than the admitted risks of the steps announced. The resolution and prompt action of the United States should obliterate in this context haunting memories of the results of indecision and attempts at compromise in relations with Germany, Italy and Japan in the years before the war.

3. One striking feature has been that the United States has shouldered the load which it alone was in a position to carry, without seeking to secure pledges of material assistance from other countries in advance. They are concerned, of course, to establish that their action is in support of the United Nations and in conformity with the recommendations of the Security Council, but initially at least they are now seeking from other friendly countries no more than moral and diplomatic support. At this morning's meeting at the State Department no word was said in favour of more direct aid by other countries, and it was positively asserted that only the United States was able to undertake any immediate measures.