

3. The Minister of National Defence outlined the military situation in Korea. The forces necessary to deal with the situation, together with American commitments in other parts of the world, including Germany and Japan, would take almost all available American strength. Neither the Commonwealth countries nor the European democracies would be able to supply any substantial forces for Korea. The consequences of the situation were very grave and would mean that, from roughly September for a period of about one year, almost all the trained and equipped forces of the Western countries would be committed and very little would be available to meet an emergency elsewhere or to strengthen Europe if the need arose. While the Russians might not have deliberately inspired the Korean conflict in an effort to promote a general war, they would undoubtedly realize the advantages of a situation where almost all effective democratic forces were involved outside any main theatre.

The Chiefs of Staff had advised that Canada was not in a position to contribute ground forces in Korea. Any participation of this nature would involve the brigade group which it was felt was essential for the defence of North America. With respect to a further naval contribution, there had been no indication that additional units would be helpful and it was considered that none could be made available in the light of our North Atlantic commitments.

There were two air contributions that might be offered. One, the provision of Mustang fighters, would not be effective as it had been ascertained that the United States already had in the area all the fighter aircraft that could be usefully employed. On the other hand, the provision of a transport squadron of North Star aircraft would appear to be valuable assistance. The United States had indicated, informally, that transport was in short supply and any Canadian contribution along these lines would be welcomed. Five North Stars could be made available within thirty-six hours; one more within two weeks; and four more within two or three months, making a total of ten, which could operate from the mainland to Honolulu or from the mainland to Tokyo.

The Korean situation had pointed up strikingly the weaknesses of the democracies, and it had been thought desirable to consider further

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