

Korea; general situation; request for contribution
of Canadian forces

2. The Secretary of State for External Affairs outlined the military situation in Korea. There appeared to be about a 50-50 chance of holding the South Korean bridgehead. A communication had been received from the United States Ambassador requesting the contribution of a Canadian ground force. He outlined the assistance that had been promised by certain other United Nations countries. His own opinion was that the government should recommend to Parliament that a brigade group be specially recruited as volunteers for a United Nations force to fight in Korea. Canada had every interest in strengthening the U.S. position as leader in the struggle against Communism. The lesson of effective United Nations co-operation would not be lost on the U.S.S.R.

3. The Minister of National Defence said the decision of the British government to make a brigade group available had apparently been made notwithstanding the advice of the Chiefs of Staff concerning the lack of available United Kingdom strength. The political considerations which led the United Kingdom to that decision applied with even greater force to Canada. He suggested possible ways in which a ground force could be raised for use in Korea.

4. The Minister of Trade and Commerce thought pressure to send troops would be irresistible once the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand had agreed to send ground forces.

5. The Minister of Fisheries agreed. He did not see how Canada could honourably fail to come to the aid of the United States.

6. The Leader of the Government in the Senate thought that, irrespective of any aid to United Nations forces in Korea, Canadian preparedness should be increased. Parliament ought to be summoned at an early date.

7. The Cabinet, after further discussion, agreed that decision be deferred on the dispatch of a Canadian ground force to assist the United Nations forces in Korea; the Secretary of State for External Affairs pending further consideration, to continue discussion of the matter with the Secretary of State of the United States.

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