



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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Statement made on July 19, 1950, by the Prime Minister, Mr. L. S. St-Laurent, on further Canadian assistance to United Nations forces in Korea.

The attack of the North Korean aggressors on South Korea is a breach in the outer defences of the free world. Each of the free nations has its responsibilities. So far as Canada is concerned, we have our obligations as a member of the United Nations. We have our obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty. We have our joint responsibility with the United States for the defence of the North American continent.

The resistance to aggression in Korea is to restore peace and to check those aggressive forces which threaten a world war. As an essential step to this end the nations of the free world must examine urgently and carefully where each can make its weight most effectively felt in the overall defence pattern.

The Cabinet has had under consideration the communication addressed last Friday by the Secretary General of the United Nations, to the 52 nations which had supported resistance to aggression in Korea. The Secretary General has asked these governments to consider what assistance they could offer to the United Nations Commander.

The Cabinet has given full and earnest study to the Secretary General's request for assistance in the light both of the needs of the Korean situation and of the other interests and responsibilities of Canada. In this connection, the Cabinet has had before it detailed reports from the three Armed Services and the advice of the Chiefs of Staff. We have also been in touch with the civil and military authorities of the United States.

Already three Canadian destroyers are proceeding to Korean waters. To be prepared for other eventualities, including the requirements for supporting the ships now in the Far East, authority has been given for the Navy to place additional ships in commission, to bring others up to full complement, and to recruit whatever additional men are needed. In making this decision the Government has kept in mind the well understood role of the Canadian Navy in protecting sea lanes against submarines, mines and coastal raids.

Having in mind the other obligations for the employment of Canadian ground forces, the Cabinet has reached the conclusion that the despatch, at this stage, of existing first line elements of the Canadian Army to the Korean theatre would not be warranted. However, with a view to strengthening the Canadian Army to meet future requirements the Cabinet has authorized recruiting above present ceilings and the acceleration of other aspects of the Army programme. Should a decision be taken by the Security Council of the United Nations to recruit an international force for service, under the U.N. Commander, in Korea, the Canadian Government will give immediate consideration to Canadian participation in such an undertaking. Any participation of this nature would require approval by Parliament in accordance with my statement made in the House of Commons on 30th of June.

It has been indicated to the Government that transport by air is an immediate need. The Government has, therefore, decided to provide at once a long range RCAF transport squadron for service in the Pacific air lift. The programme for increasing the operational strength of the RCAF is being accelerated. Canadian aircraft production is being speeded up, and additional personnel will be recruited and trained.

The Korean situation cannot be viewed in isolation. The attack on the Republic of Korea has increased the cohesion of resistance to aggressive Communism in other parts of the world. The measures which the United States Government have taken and are taking are far-reaching and significant. Here in Canada we also shall press on with measures which will increase the preparedness of this country. We are increasing immediately our defence effort and expenditure. We are also giving consideration to further measures of aid by this country to our North Atlantic partners.

Grave decisions may lie ahead but it is deeply sustaining to know that the well-nigh unanimous weight of Canadian public opinion is behind the Government in its decision that Canada do its share in resisting aggression and restoring peace.

S/c
