

Korea

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE **Memorandum of Conversation**

DATE: May 20, 1957

1957 JUN 19 AM 9 42

SUBJECT: Introduction of Atomic Weapons into Korea.

OFFICE OF DIRECTOR
S/P

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PARTICIPANTS: M. Jacques Vimont, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., French Embassy
M. Pierre Landy, Counselor, French Embassy

Mr. Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary
Admiral Radford, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Mr. William T. Nunley, EUR

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COPIES TO: Mr. Howard L. Parsons, Director, Northeast Asian Affairs

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Mr. Robertson explained our request for Mr. Vimont to come to the Department of State as a desire to discuss the Communist violations of Article 13(d) of the Armistice Agreement in Korea. He explained that the Armistice had three significant purposes: (1) to establish a cease-fire; (2) to convene a peace conference within 90 days; and (3) to freeze the military status quo and maintain a military balance between the Communist forces and the United Nations forces.

The Armistice, intended to cover a period until a political settlement could be reached, has now stretched into nearly four years. Mr. Robertson said that it took almost a year to get the Communists to agree to a political conference and at the Geneva meeting in mid-1954, after two months of persistent negotiation by the United Nations, the Communists showed absolutely no negotiating position regarding the unification of Korea except on their own terms. In other words, this is another case of the usual Communist practice of keeping agreements only so long as and to the extent which it suits them to do so.

Mr. Robertson explained that the Communists have brought extensive equipment into north Korea in violation of Article 13(d). Our intelligence indicates that they now have between 600-700 modern airplanes and modern artillery. In the meantime, the United Nations Command has scrupulously observed the Armistice Agreement. Consequently, the United States now has two divisions in the Republic of Korea, equipped as at the time of the Armistice. Much of this equipment is no longer in production. If the Communists had not violated Article 13(d), we could replace on a piece-by-piece basis the nearest equivalent to that in existence at the time of the Armistice Agreement. However, the Communists, having introduced jet planes and modern artillery have upset the military balance which

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The Armistice was intended to preserve. The Communist violations were reported to the Sixteen two years ago by Admiral Radford. They were also discussed with the Sixteen in early 1956, just prior to the action to withdraw the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams from both the north and southern zones of Korea.

In correcting this situation, which the United States considers essential at this time, it must be done in a manner to demonstrate that it was the Communists who were the violators of the Armistice and not the United Nations Command. In connection with this, we are consulting with the six countries who still have forces in Korea (i.e., the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Turkey and Thailand) and with the French. Before any action is taken, we will inform the remaining members of the Sixteen, as well as the Swiss and the Swedes. (At this point, Mr. Robertson read the proposed course of action, outlined in the attached paper).

Mr. Vimont responded that he would report the conversation as soon as possible and would inform the United States Government of his Government's reaction.

Mr. Landy asked about the nature of the armaments which the United States proposed. He referred to recent press reports indicating that major types of atomic weapons would be included.

Admiral Radford responded that the United States has no intention of equipping the army of the Republic of Korea with dual-capable weapons. In addition, anything which the United States does for United States forces will be done gradually and naturally. As far as modern airplanes are concerned, it is the intention to rotate new squadrons into the Republic of Korea to enable pilots to learn the terrain, rather than to locate such equipment in Republic of Korea territory. He added that it was the intention to put in more modern tanks and more modern artillery for the United States forces.

Mr. Robertson explained that we recognize the importance of emphasizing our allegiance to cease-fire provisions of the Armistice and re-emphasizing that our course of action is only a defensive measure.

Admiral Radford explained that the situation regarding the deterioration of our position in Korea as explained to the Sixteen two years ago has accelerated during the last two years. It has now reached the point where the possibility exists that a sudden breakthrough by the Communists could not be adequately handled. This position is one which invites aggression through weakness. At the same time, it generates doubts on the part of the Republic of Korea as to the intentions of the United Nations and the United States to defend the country in case of aggression.

The conversation concluded with Mr. Vimont's observation that the world will understand that this action taken by the United States is in response to a course followed by the Communists. However, the world will also want to know whether the United States intends to go beyond actions which the Communists have taken. Admiral Radford responded that the world would have to trust the United States in this connection bearing in mind that the United States has worldwide responsibilities against which actions in the Republic of Korea are constantly evaluated.

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With respect to the timing and presentation should it be decided to introduce these weapons into Korea we are thinking of proceeding as follows:

a. No later than July 1, 1957, and sooner if possible, the Senior UNC Representative in the MAC would make a statement at Panmunjom along the following lines:

The Communist side has violated the Armistice Agreement in the following particulars:

(1) It has introduced reinforcing combat equipment of the types referred to in paragraph 13(d) in contravention of the provisions allowing only piece-for-piece replacement of equipment worn out and destroyed after the date of the Armistice.

(2) It has also introduced combat equipment and weapons of entirely different types and capabilities from any it had in Korea at the time of the Armistice.

(3) It has failed to report introductions of such equipment.

(4) It has introduced such equipment at ports of entry other than those specified in the Armistice Agreement.

(5) It has frustrated attempts of the United Nations Command to have these illegal actions properly investigated by appropriate international bodies for this purpose under the Armistice.

Details of specific violations would be included in the MAC statement.

The United Nations Command has again and again protested these violations by the Communist side and has attempted in vain to have it comply with the provisions of the Armistice Agreement. All procedures established by the Agreement for the settlement of disputes have been exhausted by the United Nations Command. (The repeated protests and the methods of settlement pursued will be made specific in the statement before the Military Armistice Commission.)

The United Nations Command intends to maintain the Armistice Agreement. However, the flagrant, repeated, and willful violations of that Agreement by the Communist side undermine provisions which were specifically designed to assure the stability of the military armistice.

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A cardinal purpose of these provisions was to insure the freezing of the military status quo by maintaining the relative military balance existing on July 27, 1953.

The Communist side, by its repeated violations of the Armistice Agreement, has seriously upset the relative military balance by building up military capability in the area vastly superior to that which it had at the time of the Armistice. On the other hand, the United Nations Command, due to its scrupulous observance of the Armistice Agreement, has not increased its combat equipment and is still equipped with the same type of weapons it had at the time of the Armistice. Furthermore, due to the long period of time since the Armistice went into effect, its equipment and weapons have become obsolete and outmoded, and those needing replacement cannot be replaced from stocks on hand or currently in production. This situation aggravates the imbalance. The possibility that this situation would arise was not foreseen at the time the Armistice Agreement was negotiated, and, indeed, it would not have arisen had the Communist side proceeded to negotiate in good faith the "peaceful settlement" that was contemplated by the Armistice Agreement.

In view of the fact that the Communist side has grossly violated the provisions of paragraph B(d), the UNC considers that it is entitled to be relieved of corresponding obligations under the provisions of this paragraph until such time as the relative military balance has been restored and the Communist side, by its actions, has demonstrated its willingness to comply.

The stability of the Armistice and the maintenance of the relative military balance, which it was the primary purpose of these provisions of the Armistice Agreement to insure, can now only be restored and maintained by the replacement by the UNC of its old weapons with new items currently available. The UNC is taking appropriate steps to this end.

It should be clearly understood that:

(1) The only purpose of the United Nations Command action is to restore the relative balance of military strength that the Armistice was intended to preserve.

(2) The United Nations Command does not intend to start an arms race and draws attention to the fact that the replacement weapons are being deployed for defensive purposes only.

(3) The United Nations Command intends, as it has in the past, fully to observe the cease fire and all the provisions of the Armistice Agreement save to the extent to which it is

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entitled to be relieved from compliance because of Communist violations of section 13(d) and of those covered in its statement to the MAC of May 11, 1956.

b. Simultaneous the Military Amistice Commission statement, a joint State-Defense statement based on it would be issued in Washington.

c. No later than August 1, 1957, and sooner if possible, the Unified Command would transmit a full report of the action taken and reasons behind it to the United Nations. Prior to this statement conferences will be held with all sixteen members of the United Nations Command in Korea and informal notification of the course of action will be given to the Swiss and Swedish members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission.

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Krea

May 16, 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROBERTSON

**Subject: Modernization of United States
Forces in Korea**

1. I have read Mr. Parson's memorandum to you on this subject, drafted May 14, 1957.

2. S/P continues to support the introduction of more modern and more effective non-nuclear weapons for both US forces in Korea and ROK forces. These can include planes capable of carrying nuclear weapons. These we continue to believe are justifiable under a flexible and realistic interpretation of the Korean Armistice Agreement.

3. I remain opposed to introducing nuclear weapons into Korea.

(a) Even on the proposed rationale--to redress the military balance--there has been no showing that Communist strength in North Korea has been increased to an extent requiring us to station nuclear weapons in Korea. We have assertions of a Communist air force buildup. How the proposed nuclear weapons counter this is not apparent. We know that substantial reductions in Communist ground forces have taken place.

(b) The security of the Republic of Korea depends on its treaty relationship with the US. Stationing a few nuclear weapons in Korea will not enhance this security, especially since aircraft with nuclear capability will be available under the agreed parts of the program. To the contrary, the introduction of such weapons may well stimulate an arms race in Korea, and make more difficult the creation of conditions leading to gradual further reductions in the support costs of ROK forces.

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(e) Many nations will not consider our action as justified by any showing we ^{can} make and may interpret it as a further sign of our effort to heighten tensions. The political costs, both in the free world and in the Soviet bloc, seem to me far in excess of any supposed military benefits.

Robert R. Bowie

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March 29, 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE ROBERT CUTLER

Subject: New Equipment for U.S. Forces in Korea

1. In response to your letter of March 16, 1957 we attach a list of proposed new equipment for U.S. Forces in Korea.
2. The Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that, in consonance with U.S. policy to provide U.S. forces with a selective and flexible nuclear capability, all items on the attached list should now be approved for the modernization of U.S. Forces in Korea. They believe that only by so modernizing U.S. Forces can they achieve the training and operational versatility to use both conventional and nuclear weapons.
3. The Department of State believes that under a liberal interpretation of Article 13(d) of the Armistice Agreement we may replace obsolete and worn-out equipment with new items "as close in effectiveness and type as consistent with modern standards of production". The Department does not consider that such an interpretation will cover the introduction of weapons whose atomic capability is their primary feature. Accordingly, the Department has been willing to approve all items on the attached list except two: the 280 mm "Atomic Cannon" and the 762 mm "Honest John" atomic rocket.

Robert R. Bowie
Assistant Secretary of State

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Mansfield D. Sprague
Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)

F. W. Farrell
Lt. General, USA
Special Assistant to the JCS for
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S/P:WmLeonhart:ab

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LIST OF NEW EQUIPMENT FOR U.S. FORCES IN KOREA

AIR FORCE

All-weather fighters (F-86Ds)

(F-102)

Tactical Bombers (B-57) (Jet)

Reconnaissance (RF 84F)

Jet Fighters F-100

Cargo Aircraft C-130

ARMY

280 mm gun

155 mm gun (Self-propelled) (M-53)

75 mm AAA Gun (Skysweeper with tractors)
(May be deleted on the basis of
obsolescence and possible replacement
by other wps at a date not yet
determined.)

Twin 40 mm (M-42) (Antiaircraft)

Armored Personnel Carrier M-59

762 mm rocket (Honest John)

NIKE-1

Recoilless Rifle, 106 mm (M-40)

Tractor M8A1

Helicopters H-21

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