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221. Memorandum of Discussion at the 326th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, June 13, 1957¹

Washington, June 13, 1957

[Here follow a paragraph listing the participants at the meeting and agenda items 1–2.]

3. *U.S. Policy Toward Korea* (NSC 5514; NSC 5610; Memos for NSC from Executive Secretary, subject: “U.S. Objectives [Page 444.] and Courses of Action in Korea”, dated October 12 and November 6, 1956; NSC Actions Nos. 1624, 1660 and 1695; NSC 5702; Memo for NSC from Executive Secretary, subject: “Evaluation of Alternative Military Programs for Korea”, dated January 30, 1957; NSC 5702/1; Memos for NSC from Executive Secretary, subject: “U.S. Policy Toward Korea”, dated April 2, June 10,²and June 12, 1957;³[document number not declassified]⁴.)

Mr. Cutler briefed the Council on NSC 5702/1, with particular reference to the revised paragraphs 9, 10 and 19–b,⁵copies of which were handed out to the members of the Council. (Copy of briefing note filed in the minutes of the meeting.) Mr. Cutler also distributed the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on these and other paragraphs in NSC 5702/1. After indicating that it had still proved impossible for the Planning Board to present agreed recommendations on the modernization of U.S. [Page 445.] forces in Korea, [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] Mr. Cutler first called on Secretary Dulles for comment.

Secretary Dulles said that the State Department agreed that at the earliest possible date a statement should be made to the appropriate UN authority that, in view of Communist violation of the Korean Armistice Agreement, the United States proposed henceforth to exercise greater flexibility in the armaments maintained in South Korea. On this point, at least, there was no dispute between State and Defense. Thereafter, however, we come to the second phase: What, precisely, do we do to implement the policy set forth in the initial statement referred to above? We in the State Department, continued Secretary Dulles, were inclined to feel that it would be much preferable if we could confine our [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] in Korea to dual-purpose weapons (both conventional and nuclear), [1-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]. For when you begin to put into foreign territory very conspicuous weapons [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] there was bound to be a great degree of difficulty. In particular, Secretary Dulles said he had in mind these huge 280 mm. guns, for which it was necessary to rebuild roads and bridges so that the guns could be transported. He could not understand why in the world it was essential that we be able to haul these great monsters around. In any case, to advertise the existence of such huge weapons as these would be bound to cause very serious repercussions for the United States throughout Asia. Sending such weapons to Korea would be resented throughout Asia because such [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] were identified with the West and with the hated doctrine of white supremacy, quite apart from the weapons effects themselves. [4-1/2 lines of source text not declassified]

[1 paragraph (18-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

Mr. Cutler pointed out that as a result of the proposed package deal, the United States would save \$127 million in costs to South Korea over a period of four years. Again citing the figures in the Financial Appendix to support his argument, Secretary Dulles reiterated his belief that the savings that we would realize from the introduction of the complete list⁶of modern weapons

(copies of which had been distributed to the Council members) would scarcely compensate for the political and propaganda liabilities which would be thrust upon us. Indeed, said Secretary Dulles, he was not even sure that there was a necessary interdependence between the introduction of these modern weapons and the reductions in ROK armed forces.

In summary, Secretary Dulles stated his feeling that the proper way to proceed in this program was, first of all, to serve the notice of our intentions that he had spoken of initially; and thereafter sit down and negotiate with the ROK [Page 44.6] authorities in order to determine what we can do to induce the desired reduction in ROK active forces. He expressed the hope that we could achieve the desired reduction in ROK forces by providing dual-purpose weapons for modernizing U.S. forces in South Korea, but avoid paying the higher price of introducing such monster weapons as the 280 mm. guns and the Honest John rockets.

The President inquired whether the 280 mm. gun really was so clumsy and so immobile a weapon. He added that in general he had very little confidence in immobile weapons. Admiral Radford replied that he didn't think the 280 mm. gun was quite as bad as it had been depicted, but at any rate we were not manufacturing any more. However, we had five or six such guns in Germany, and they were proving useful, even though they were now five or six years old and would gradually be replaced. Secretary Quarles added that in a technical sense both the 280 mm. gun and the Honest John rocket could be described as dual-purpose weapons; [2 lines of source text not declassified].

Governor Stassen passed a note to Secretary Dulles, who then pointed out the possible threat of some counter move by the Soviets or the Chinese Communists if such weapons were introduced.

Secretary Quarles commented that the position of the Department of Defense could be summarized in the following terms: The Department felt that we must move into this situation very promptly if any changes were to be made in the existing levels of the ROK armed forces. Far from wishing to reduce their active divisions, the ROKs wish to increase their active divisions. Accordingly, it would be wise for the United States to possess a free hand in modernizing its forces in South Korea with all available weapons, if we hope to bargain successfully with the ROK for a reduction of their own forces.

Secretary Humphrey said that what really concerned him was what we thought we saw down the road in Korea. Did we propose to go on spending \$600 million a year in assistance to South Korea for the rest of our natural lives? Secretary Quarles replied that the outlook was certainly not very promising, but that he did not see any better course of action until and unless some unforeseen break should occur.

Mr. Cutler pointed out that the reduction in ROK active divisions, as set forth in the package deal in NSC 5702/1, was only the first step. It was hoped that further reductions could be achieved later and, in any event, acceptance by the ROK of this package deal would result in savings for the United States of \$127 million over a period of four years. Both Secretary Dulles and Secretary Humphrey commented that they did not believe this saving in itself to be of very great significance. [Page 44.7]

Admiral Radford expressed surprise that Secretary Humphrey would scorn a saving of \$127 million. Admiral Radford then went on to state that the Council might be somewhat confused as to precisely what the Joint Chiefs of Staff had in mind in suggesting the package deal set forth in NSC 5702/1. The United States, he pointed out, has some 60,000 troops in Korea, our two divisions rotating on a front line which stretched for 150 miles. Except for a Turkish brigade, there were practically no other UN troops in Korea. While, as the Secretary of State had pointed out, a U.S. nuclear offensive [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] would eventually stop any Communist invasion of South Korea, the Communists could not be stopped before they had overrun the 60,000 U.S. troops. Hence, the Joint Chiefs of Staff felt that defensive [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] should actually be in place in South Korea to protect the security of our own U.S. troops and to prevent them from being overrun in the initial phases of a Communist offensive. Moreover, from the point of view of the ROKs themselves, their capital, Seoul, was only 25 miles distant from the front lines; and since this capital had already been overrun three times, the ROKs were only too well aware that it could be overrun once again. Accordingly, the ROKs also would feel much safer if the invasion routes into South Korea were covered by defensive [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] deployed and in place.

Secondly, said Admiral Radford, we do not actually know precisely what the ROK authorities will agree to by way of a reduction of their own forces. We think they will agree to reduce their 20 active divisions by four, and they might be willing to eliminate these four divisions, which would reduce the total ROK forces to 16 active divisions and 10 reserve divisions. We might be able eventually to reduce even more. General Lemnitzer, for example, thought that at some future time we might induce the ROKs to reduce to a level of 10 active and 10 reserve divisions. But in any case, our Number One reason for wanting to introduce the Honest John rockets and the 280 mm. guns for our forces in South Korea, was to provide for the security of these U.S. forces in South Korea.

Thirdly, continued Admiral Radford, he had often discussed these nuclear weapons in the course of his visits to the various countries of the Far East. Most of the military men in the friendly nations of Asia accepted such weapons. The only exception, where there was still a strong hostile feeling toward nuclear weapons, was Japan; and even in Japan many military men and diplomats agreed on the vital necessity of an atomic defense.

Fourthly, Admiral Radford said that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were convinced that they could not continue military [Page 44.8] planning along the lines agreed in our basic policy without being able to count on the use of nuclear weapons.

Finally, Admiral Radford said, there was the related problem of the command of UN forces in Korea. If the United States reduced its forces in Korea much below their present size, we might find real difficulty in retaining a U.S. military man as head of the UN Command. The Koreans would wish to have one of their own nationals as the UN Commander. And if some incident occurred which resulted in a renewal of hostilities between North and South Korea, we might well not ever be able to determine which side was responsible for renewing the war.

In conclusion. Admiral Radford again stressed the fact that the Joint Chiefs of Staff felt that the Council's decision with respect to the package deal in NSC 5702/1 would be a crucial decision from the military point of view. The Joint Chiefs simply could not see their way to assure the security of U.S. forces in Korea unless we were in a position to equip our forces there with the complete list of modern weapons.

[1 paragraph (12-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

Mr. Brundage complained that when the Council initiated its study of a package deal for reducing U.S. forces in Korea, we had hoped that we could not only cut the costs of U.S. military assistance to South Korea, but that we could also cut the costs of maintaining U.S. forces in South Korea. At the present time there seemed very little prospect that this latter objective could be achieved. Secretary Humphrey agreed, and said that it was extremely difficult to see what the future would bring, in view of the steadily increasing cost of U.S. defense programs and new weapons.

Secretary Dulles replied that the only answer was to keep working on our objective of convincing all our allies to depend more on the deterrent capacity of our nuclear retaliatory capability, and less on local defenses. There simply was not going to be enough money available to maintain both the U.S. deterrent capability and large military establishments in allied countries throughout the world. We must project into the future for South Korea something that is far less costly than the present area defense system in South Korea. This must move ahead with the deterrent theory, with the theory that the real deterrent to aggression rests in the existence in the United States of a great retaliatory capability. Nevertheless, Secretary Dulles reiterated his feeling that if the Council were to adopt the package deal proposed by the Department of Defense in paragraphs 9 and 10 of NSC 5702/1, we should be incurring a very heavy liability and one for which we would get no adequate return. If we are going to deploy these particular weapons—the Honest John rockets and the 280 mm. guns—we should insist that the [Page 44.9] reduction of active ROK forces be much more substantial.

Admiral Radford pointed out that the problem we are thus confronting in South Korea was not confined to that country alone, but applied also to Germany and to all the other areas around the perimeter of the Soviet Union. Everywhere, accordingly, we faced this problem of convincing our allies that we do possess the necessary nuclear deterrent to aggression and that we are

prepared to use this deterrent in case these allies are attacked. Most of our allies are still not convinced of this determination, and that is why they insist on seeing military power in being and situated in their own territories which are exposed to Communist aggression.

Secretary Humphrey said that he could not deny the validity of Admiral Radford's argument, but the real question was—do we want to continue the existence of large local military establishments in Europe, or do we prefer to maintain these local military forces in South Korea? With the rising costs of weapons, we could not do both.

Admiral Radford replied to Secretary Humphrey by pointing out that if the United States lost South Korea it would presently lose its entire position in the Far East. General Lemnitzer had stated that the limit that he can go down to, in terms of active divisions in South Korea, is the number of divisions required to patrol the long front line. He believed that 10 ROK active divisions were too few, but that some number between 10 and 16 active divisions, including the U.S. divisions and the ROK Marine division, might be appropriate.

Secretary Humphrey responded by pointing out that as we looked ahead we must think in terms of U.S. deterrent nuclear power being the answer to the defense of the Free World, and contemplate the redeployment of our U.S. forces from foreign areas. We must not only begin to think in these terms, but we must begin promptly to move our forces out. Our allies won't like it, but they will in effect have to accept it. It is not necessary for the ROK to agree to the departure of our forces; we will be polite but firm. On the other hand, if we continue with our present deployments overseas and with the costs of new weapons mounting every day, the financial situation will become altogether hopeless.

Admiral Radford answered that the problem outlined by Secretary Humphrey was the problem that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were wrestling with every day. It has long been our policy to redeploy U.S. forces from overseas, but we have simply not been successful in selling this policy to our allies.

Mr. Cutler turned to Secretary Humphrey and asked him whether he was proposing to continue to help the South Koreans or simply to abandon them. Secretary Humphrey repeated his views on reliance on the U.S. deterrent capability. [\[Page 450\]](#)

The President turned to Admiral Radford and inquired what conceivable reason there was that both of our U.S. divisions in Korea should be located continuously on the front line. Admiral Radford replied that only one at a time was in the front line, but that both U.S. divisions were necessary to defend South Korea against invasion and a sudden overrunning of its territory by the Communists. Governor Stassen pointed out that it would be extremely difficult to get allies like the South Koreans voluntarily to consent to the redeployment of U.S. forces because of the loss of the foreign exchange which accrued through the expenditures of U.S. military personnel. Secretary Humphrey stated that it was still hard for him to see why this should be difficult. Admittedly we must be polite and diplomatic; but the United States hardly needed anyone's consent but its own to the redeployment of its own armed forces. Admiral Radford pointed out that the United States would find it very hard to hold its alliances together if it acted in such matters arbitrarily.

The President turned to Admiral Radford at this point and said that he certainly agreed that the United States should introduce into Korea jet aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons; but if we had these nuclear-capable jet aircraft together with all the other modern weapons in the list, this would certainly constitute a considerable atomic capability ready to use in Korea. Moreover, it was not necessary to inform anybody about the deployment *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* in South Korea, except, of course, if you also put in the Honest Johns and the 280 mm. guns. These were so conspicuous that you would have to explain their introduction to the whole world, as Secretary Dulles had pointed out.

Admiral Radford said that in any case we would have to tell the South Koreans what *[less than 1 line of source text not declassified]* we were introducing. Otherwise we should not be able to convince them of the feasibility of reducing their own forces.

Secretary Humphrey expressed his unalterable opposition to the United States maintaining a battle line all around the world made up of forces equipped with nuclear weapons. The over-all cost of such a course of action would be terrific. It was this that worried him so constantly. Admiral Radford pointed out in response his own view that if in 1950 the United States had

maintained the very small forces it had in South Korea, we should probably have avoided the Korean war.

The President looked around at the members of the Council and said that we could continue to talk about this problem for weeks on end, but he believed that in view of the State position we should begin by making the proposed announcement on the introduction of new weapons for our forces in South Korea. In point of fact we have two very good men [Page 451] representing us in South Korea, in the persons of Ambassador Dowling and General Lemnitzer. Therefore, the second step was to direct them to go and talk to Rhee and see if we can make some kind of an arrangement for reducing ROK forces, but an arrangement that will not include the introduction of [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] the 280 mm. gun and the Honest John rocket. Admiral Radford pointed out that such negotiations with the ROK were bound to take a considerable time, and that General Lemnitzer was due to come home at the end of the month. The President replied that the sensible thing was to have Lemnitzer stay on for a while. This job was more important for the time being than his job of Vice Chief of Staff of the Army.

Admiral Radford turned to the President and said he was puzzled about one aspect of the problem of the package deal. He had himself taken part in certain of the negotiations which had been directed by the President the last time the Council paper was discussed—the negotiations with the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, etc. So far as Admiral Radford knew, representatives of these allied countries had agreed with our proposal to modernize our forces in South Korea, and they had actually read the list of weapons which we proposed to send to South Korea. The only problem that had come up in the course of these negotiations was whether we envisaged giving the ROK forces nuclear weapons, which of course we had assured them we did not intend to do. These allied representatives have also recommended that if the United States determined on this course of action to modernize our forces, we should do it very promptly. Otherwise we were bound to run into difficulties in the United Nations. It was believed that the introductory date should not be later than June 15.

Secretary Dulles stated that he was ready to move in this matter at once, and to make the announcement of our intention to modernize our forces in Korea by next Monday.

Admiral Radford said that there were still two questions remaining in his mind. The first of these was that we did not wish to agree to report to the Military Armistice Commission the modern weapons which we send into South Korea. Assistant Secretary of Defense Sprague pointed out that the proposed statement as presently drafted did not specify precisely what weapons were to be sent to South Korea. Secretary Dulles agreed that such precise specification was not desirable, and that what we sought was flexibility. We should therefore confine our announcement to stating that we are sending in modern weapons. Thereafter we will go to President Rhee and begin our negotiations with him. Admittedly such negotiations are likely to be very difficult, but it is in the course of these negotiations that we shall become involved with the question of [Page 452] the types of weapons involved in the modernization of our forces. Secretary Dulles then repeated his view on the vital necessity of educating the world to acceptance of the theory of U.S. deterrent power as the primary safeguard of the Free World against Communist aggressions. He also expressed strong doubt that the North Koreans or the Chinese Communists would ever dare to launch an invasion of the ROK as long as they knew that we would use this retaliatory power to wipe out their entire industrial capacity.

Admiral Radford's second point consisted in stressing the importance of a final settlement of the Korea problem and the achievement of a free and united Korea. Admiral Radford did not suggest, in answer to questions, how this objective might best be achieved.

At this point Mr. Cutler attempted to suggest an appropriate action by the National Security Council in terms, first, of issuing the proposed announcement that the United States was modernizing its forces in Korea, and secondly, a directive to Ambassador Dowling and General Lemnitzer to begin negotiations with President Rhee looking toward a reduction of current ROK force levels. He was interrupted by the President, who again expressed his dislike of advertising our introduction of modern weapons by including among them such monster weapons as the 280 mm. gun. Secretary Quarles said he understood

the problem, but hoped that the Defense Department could be given some clear conception of the degree and kind of modernization of our armed forces which was now being contemplated. The President replied by stating his belief that [8-1/2 lines of source text not declassified].

The Vice President pointed out the importance of what was to be said about this course of action at press conferences of the President and the Secretary of State after our announcement had been made public. The press was sure to ask what precisely we meant by modern weapons, and it was important to determine the answer. The President said that we would simply refuse to disclose details of the weapons that we were going to send.

In response to a further question on the nature of the Council action, the President directed, in the first instance, that the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense were to agree on a message to Ambassador Dowling and General Lemnitzer outlining the general problem as we saw it here and directing them to see what they could do to convince Rhee of the desirability of reducing ROK active forces in return for the modernization of the ROK Air Force and the modernization of our own U.S. forces in Korea.

Secretary Dulles said he wished to point out that, in a certain sense, the Council was confronted by an entirely new situation in the interval since it had last considered the Korean problem. All the world now knows that the United States is up [Page 453] against serious budgetary problems. We can therefore go to Rhee and tell him that we simply do not have the money to maintain his forces in the style to which they have been accustomed. We must certainly take a stronger line with Rhee than we have in the past.

Mr. Cutler inquired whether we could direct Ambassador Dowling and General Lemnitzer to begin their negotiations promptly and to report back to Washington not later than July 1. Secretary Dulles replied that there was no chance that such negotiations could be completed by July 1. He did, however, add that he hoped that General Lemnitzer could be held over in Korea for the necessary time, for we should look upon these negotiations as a major operation, as a truly drastic treatment.

Agreeing with Secretary Dulles, Secretary Humphrey said that drastic as the proposal was, it was merely the beginning of an operation which we should have to conduct all over the world. In other words, at long last the New Look has come home to roost with a vengeance.

However, Secretary Dulles concluded the discussion with a word of caution about too rapid redeployment of U.S. forces from overseas, and expressed the thought that, with the development of new tactical nuclear weapons, as outlined by Admiral Strauss earlier,⁷ the United States might be able to maintain defenses in foreign areas at minimal cost.

*The National Security Council:*⁸

- a. Discussed the draft statement of policy on the subject contained in NSC 5702/1, and the revisions thereof submitted by the NSC Planning Board in the reference memorandum of June 10, 1957; in the light of the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff transmitted by the reference memorandum of June 12, 1957.
- b. Noted the President's directive that:
 - (1) The United States should cause to be issued at the earliest possible date the announcement being prepared by the Departments of State and Defense to the effect that, in view of Communist violations in North Korea of the Korean Armistice, the United States was proceeding to modernize the defenses of the UN Command in South Korea.
 - (2) The Secretaries of State and Defense should agree upon prompt instructions to Ambassador Dowling and General Lemnitzer directing them, in the light of increasing costs of the U.S. defense effort and the deterrent provided by U.S. retaliatory capability, to negotiate with President Rhee for a substantial reduction in active ROK [Page 454] forces, with resultant improvement in the Korean economy, in return for converting the three remaining ROK Air Force squadrons to jets and modernizing U.S. forces deployed in Korea.
 - (3) Following the announcement in (1) above, U.S. forces deployed in Korea should be modernized; [4-1/2 lines of source text not declassified].

- Deferred action on NSC 5702/1, as amended by the reference memorandum of June 10, 1957, pending reactions to the
- c. announcement and the results of the negotiations referred to in b above.

Note: The action in b above, as approved by the President, subsequently transmitted to the Secretaries of State and Defense for appropriate implementation.

[Here follows agenda item 4.]

S. Everett Gleason

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1. Source: Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records. Top Secret; Eyes Only. Drafted by Gleason on June 14.↵
 2. In the June 10 memorandum to the NSC, Lay transmitted the revised pages of NSC 5702/1, prepared by the NSC Planning Board in the light of consultation by the Departments of State and Defense with selected allies pursuant to NSC Action No. 1695–b. The revised pages incorporated amendments to paragraphs 9 and 19 of NSC 5702/1 and were circulated for insertion in the extant copies of NSC 5702/1. Copies of Lay’s covering memorandum, without the enclosure, are in Department of State, S/S–NSC Files: Lot 63 D 351, NSC 5702 Series, and *ibid.*, S/P Files: Lot 62 D 1, NSC 5702. The revised pages are in the copy of NSC 5702/1 in the S/P Files cited above.↵
 3. A copy of this June 12 memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense was circulated to the NSC under cover of a memorandum from Lay, also dated June 12. The Joint Chiefs recommended that the Secretary concur in the proposed revisions to paragraphs 9, 10, 11, and 19 of NSC 5702/1, provided that the Defense–JCS positions on paragraphs 9c and 19b were adopted. Approval of the Department of State position on those paragraphs, they felt, would “sanction continued delays and postponements in implementing a required security program.” (*Ibid.*, S/S–NSC Files: Lot 63 D 351, NSC 5702 Series)↵
 4. See footnote 4, Document 217.↵
 5. The revised portions of these paragraphs continued to reflect the divergence of views between the Department of State and the Department of Defense–Joint Chiefs of Staff that had existed since the beginning of the policy review. A basic difference involved paragraph 9c. The Defense–JCS version of paragraph 9c stipulated that U.S. forces in Korea should be equipped with modern weapons, such as Honest John rockets and 280 mm. atomic-capable cannons. The State version of the paragraph qualified the authorization to introduce such weapons by stipulating that the action must be based upon “reasonable support” from the principal allies of the United States, and must result in desired reductions in military assistance for Korea and in Republic of Korea force levels. The Defense–JCS position on paragraph 10, which related to force level reductions on the part of the Republic of Korea, was that such reductions should be undertaken only if the Defense–JCS position on paragraph 9c was adopted. In paragraph 19b, the Department of State proposed that if atomic-capable weapons were introduced into Korea, the timing and method of the public presentation of the announcement and the introduction should be determined by the Secretaries of State and Defense, taking into account the views of principal allies. The Defense–JCS position was that the paragraph should be deleted.↵
 6. Printed as an attachment to Document 209.↵
 7. For text of the discussion of agenda item 1, “Types of Nuclear Weapons,” see vol. xix, pp. 524–525.↵
 8. Paragraphs a–c and the Note that follows constitute NSC Action No. 1731, approved by President Eisenhower on June 15. (Department of State, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, Records of Action by the National Security Council)↵

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