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A REPORT
TO THE
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

by

THE NSC PLANNING BOARD

on

UNITED STATES TACTICS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING AN ARMISTICE IN KOREA

June 15, 1953

WASHINGTON

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Auth: EO 11652
Date: 16 May 1975
By: Jeanne R. Davis
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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NOTE BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

to the

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

on

UNITED STATES TACTICS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
AN ARMISTICE IN KOREA

References: A. NSC Action No. 777-d (2)
B. NSC 118/2

The enclosed draft statement of policy on the subject, prepared by the NSC Planning Board in response to NSC Action No. 777-d (2), is submitted herewith for consideration by the National Security Council at its meeting on June 18. Also enclosed is an NSC staff study for Council information in this connection.

The enclosure incorporates relevant courses of action from NSC 118/2 and is intended, if adopted, to supersede paragraphs 2-a and 2-d of NSC 118/2.

The Planning Board is preparing for subsequent Council consideration a report on the position which the United States should take during the political negotiations with respect to the Republic of Korea, as called for by paragraph 17 of the enclosed statement of policy.

It is recommended that, if the enclosed statement of policy is adopted, it be submitted to the President with the recommendation that he approve it and direct its implementation by all appropriate executive departments and agencies of the U. S. Government under the coordination of the Secretaries of State and Defense.

JAMES S. LAY, Jr.,
Executive Secretary

cc: The Secretary of the Treasury
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

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DRAFT

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Proposed by the

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

on

UNITED STATES TACTICS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
AN ARMISTICE IN KOREA*

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. An armistice in Korea would not indicate that Communist China had abandoned its basic objectives or its willingness to seek these objectives by armed force. The danger of aggression would continue, particularly in Southeast Asia, while the Communists would attempt to exploit the armistice as a tactical device to weaken and divide the free world.
2. After an armistice the major allies of the United States would be increasingly unwilling to support the United States in maintaining political and economic pressures against Communist China. As a result, existing differences between the United States and its major allies over policy toward China would be intensified, and this might lead to a serious breach between the United States and its major allies over the Far East.

*This statement of policy is based on the assumption that the Republic of Korea will cooperate satisfactorily with the UN in carrying out the terms of the armistice.

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3. It is important to our national security, as well as to the objective of obtaining an acceptable settlement in Korea, that political and economic pressures against Communist China be developed and maintained during the immediate post-armistice period, and that the expected opposition of our major allies to such pressures be overcome.

INTERIM COURSES OF ACTION

(to be pursued during the political negotiations for a peace and until a review of basic U.S. policies toward China and toward Korea is completed)

Pressures Against Communist China

4. Continue to recognize the Government of the Republic of China on Formosa as the Government of all China, and as the sole representative of China in the UN and all other international organs; continue to extend economic and military aid to the Republic of China on Formosa.

5. Use all feasible means to prevent seating of the Chinese Communist regime in the UN and related bodies.

6. Continue the U.S. total embargo on trade with Communist China, prohibition of U.S. shipping to Communist China, and current financial controls with respect to Communist China.

7. Make every feasible effort to induce other free world countries, pending a settlement regarding Korea: (a) to maintain their current levels of controls and restrictions over

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trade and shipping with Communist China and North Korea, and, where possible, to extend their embargo lists to include the remaining items hitherto proposed by the United States, either bilaterally or in multilateral bodies; and (b) to tighten enforcement of such restrictions.

8. Together with the other 15 co-signatories, issue the "greater sanctions" statement* immediately after an armistice is signed, in order to demonstrate that the 16 UN members now participating in the Korean action will again be united and prompt in resisting a renewal of armed attack, and to warn the aggressor that in all probability it would not be possible to confine hostilities within the frontiers of Korea if there is a renewal of armed attack.

9. Issue, with France, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, and as many other co-signatories as possible, a supplemental statement to the effect that any communist aggression elsewhere in Asia, following the armistice, would be considered inconsistent with its terms and purposes.

10. Continue a program of covert operations designed to assist in the achievement of U.S. objectives vis-a-vis Communist China and Korea.

UN Military Strength in Korea

11. Maintain UN military strength in Korea at a level consistent with U.S. objectives and with the terms of the armistice.

*For text of statement, see Annex.

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12. Carry on a vigorous campaign to secure additional armed forces from other UN members for service in Korea, with a view to possible limited redeployment of U.S. forces.

Security in UN Forces

13. Continue in effect all pertinent instructions to the UN Command involving the maintenance of the security of UN forces in the Korean area.

Aid to the Republic of Korea

14. On the assumption that the Republic of Korea will cooperate satisfactorily with the UN in carrying out the terms of the armistice:

a. Continue to develop and equip dependable ROK military forces in accordance with the present program, with a view to the assumption by the Republic of Korea of greater responsibility for the defense of Korea.

b. Conclude a treaty with the Republic of Korea guaranteeing its political independence and territorial integrity. Such a treaty should cover the territory now or hereafter brought peacefully under the administration of the Republic of Korea.

c. Working in and through the organs of the UN where feasible, continue to strengthen the government and democratic institutions of the Republic of Korea, and continue to contribute to the United Nations effort for economic recovery and rehabilitation in the Republic of Korea.

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Political Conference

15. Endeavor in the UN to obtain agreement to the establishment of a UN Delegation to undertake negotiations looking toward an eventual political settlement which would establish a united, independent and democratic Korea.

16. Adhere firmly to the UN interpretation of the armistice agreement that only Korean problems will be discussed at the political conference to follow the armistice.

17. Develop as a matter of urgency the position which the United States will take during the political negotiations with respect to the Republic of Korea.

Persuasion of Allies

18. Conduct a high-level diplomatic campaign to persuade our allies to accept U.S. courses of action.

19. Make an inventory of economic measures we could take, if necessary, to induce our allies to accept U.S. courses of action.

Review of Policy

20. Undertake, in the light of the post-armistice situation, a fundamental review and reassessment of our basic policy toward Communist China, as well as our position with respect to Korea.

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ANNEX

AGREED "GREATER SANCTIONS" STATEMENT

"We, the United Nations members whose military forces are participating in the Korean action support the decision of the Commander-in-Chief of the UN Command to conclude an armistice agreement. We hereby affirm our determination fully and faithfully to carry out the terms of that armistice. We expect that the other parties to the agreement will likewise scrupulously observe its terms.

"The task ahead is not an easy one. We will support the efforts of the United Nations to bring about an equitable settlement in Korea based on the principles which have long been established by the United Nations, and which call for a united, independent and democratic Korea. We will support the United Nations in its efforts to assist the people of Korea in repairing the ravages of war.

"We declare again our faith in the principles and purposes of the United Nations, our consciousness of our continuing responsibilities in Korea, and our determination in good faith to seek a settlement of the Korean problem. We affirm, in the interests of world peace, that if there is a renewal of the armed attack, challenging again the principles of the United Nations, we should again be united and prompt to resist. The consequences of such a breach of the armistice would be so grave that, in all probability, it would not be possible to confine hostilities within the frontiers of Korea."

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NSC STAFF STUDY

on

UNITED STATES TACTICS IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING AN ARMISTICE IN KOREA

1. If an armistice is reached in Korea, a change in the international situation may be expected to take place of such magnitude as to justify a fundamental review and reassessment of U.S. policy and courses of action with respect to Communist China. This change will arise from the reaction of our allies to an armistice rather than from any change in Chinese Communist policy or objectives. We believe, in fact, that conclusion of an armistice in Korea by the Communists on terms acceptable to the UN would not represent a basic change in Chinese Communist policy, but would merely represent a tactical shift designed to create "an atmosphere in which resistance to Communism and Soviet imperialism will be weakened".* An armistice in Korea would signify merely that the Communists have found it unprofitable to continue the war there, but the danger of renewed aggression would be unrelieved, particularly in Southeast Asia, where Chinese Communist-backed military operations against duly constituted authority continues in Indochina and Malaya. Cessation of hostilities in Korea, while encouraging, would not in itself constitute sufficient evidence that Communist China has abandoned its basic objectives nor, even more importantly, its willingness to seek these objectives by armed force.

2. The change anticipated in the international situation will be in the nature of an intensification of differences between the United States and its major allies over policy toward China. It is our estimate that only the continuation of hostilities by the Communists against the UN in Korea has prevented a serious breach between the United States and its allies over this issue. After the cessation of hostilities in Korea the major allies of the United States will be increasingly unwilling to support the United States in maintaining political and economic pressures against Communist China. As a result, the United States will be confronted with a new international situation.

3. Thus it must be estimated that there is a real danger that the United States will find itself diplomatically isolated in its posture towards Communist China, in the event there is an

*Conclusion of SE-42, "Current Communist Tactics", April 24, 1953.

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armistice in Korea. Chinese Communist intervention in Korea and the continuing hostilities there have assisted us in developing and maintaining political and economic isolation of the Chinese Communists, and have provided in the eyes of many of our allies justification for the United States policies of protection for Formosa, economic and military assistance to the Chinese Nationalists, and continued insistence on Chinese Nationalist representation in international organizations. The termination of hostilities in Korea will undoubtedly bring increased pressure from many of our allies for relaxation of restrictions on trade with Communist China, for further development of political relations with Communist China, and for admission of Communist China into the UN or other international organizations. Under these circumstances, we must estimate that there will be increasing opposition on the part of our allies to United States insistence on continued representation for the Nationalists in the UN, and in particular to any Chinese Nationalist interference with the China trade or any type of Chinese Nationalist military action against the mainland.

4. But the United States must find ways and means of overcoming this expected opposition to its policies. In the face of our current estimate that Chinese Communist agreement to an armistice would be calculated to weaken resistance to Communism and Soviet imperialism, the United States must make every effort to see that such resistance is not weakened. In the absence of further evidence that the Peiping regime has changed its standards of international conduct, any relaxation of pressures against it would only serve as an encouragement for further aggression, while restoration of full trade with the Chinese Communists would serve to increase their capabilities for further military activities. For the immediate post-armistice period, therefore, the United States faces the problem of devising tactics toward Communist China that will maintain and develop political and economic pressures against Communist China without creating too serious a breach between the United States and its major allies.

5. While the maintenance and development of political and economic pressures against Communist China will undoubtedly encounter serious opposition from our allies, we believe that for the short run at least this line of action can be adhered to without permanent damage to relations with our major allies, and must be adhered to if we are not to play into Communist hands. In order to do this, a major effort should be made at the highest levels to convince our allies that to relax our guard against Communist aggression in the Far East, merely

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because the Communists have agreed to stop killing UN soldiers, would display weakness on the part of the free world which the Communists could be expected to exploit to the utmost. It should be emphasized to our allies that while we believe it would be folly to relax our defenses against the Communists, neither do we have any intention of renewing hostilities with the Communists so long as they respect the terms of the armistice and refrain from all other aggression. We should explain to our allies that our continued support of the Chinese National Government does not have the objective of building on that Government's military strength for a reconquest of the mainland, but is based upon the strategic necessity of keeping Formosa out of Communist hands, as well as the need for maintaining a rallying point for non-Communist Chinese essential for the political struggle against Communism in the Far East, which we believe will continue indefinitely regardless of the armistice. We should point out to our allies that while we do not desire the indefinite perpetuation of the "cold war" struggle with the Communists, there is no safe or honorable alternative so long as they are dedicated to its perpetuation. All of the evidence which we are able to obtain demonstrates beyond doubt that they are so dedicated, and that they will unhesitatingly resort to force whenever and wherever they estimate their objectives can best be obtained at feasible cost and risk. Under these circumstances, we should explain, we now see no tenable basis for an over-all peace settlement in the Far East. On the other hand, we intend to maintain a posture of willingness to call off the cold war if adequate bases are provided for a sound belief that the Communists are ready to do so.

6. One of these bases would be a satisfactory peace settlement in Korea. It is our intention, therefore, to seek a political settlement in Korea in the political conference provided for by the armistice terms. This conference must be confined exclusively to Korean matters. Chinese Communist agreement to get out of Korea and allow the Koreans freely to choose their Government must not be bought at the price of concessions elsewhere. It must be made a test of the willingness of the Chinese Communists to abandon aggression and respect the rights of their neighbors. Failure of the Communists to meet this test would in our opinion demonstrate that they have not yet given up the policies which led to their aggression in Korea, and confirm the necessity of maintaining pressures against them designed to weaken their ability to break out in renewed aggression.

7. A high-level United States diplomatic campaign along the foregoing lines would seem to afford the best chance of maintaining essential free world pressure against the Chinese Communist regime in the immediate post-armistice period.

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