A REPORT
TO THE
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
by
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
on
U. S. POSITION REGARDING A CEASE-FIRE IN KOREA

December 13, 1950
WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET
NOTE BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
to the
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
on
U. S. POSITION REGARDING A CEASE-FIRE IN KOREA
Reference: NSC Action No. 390

Pursuant to NSC Action No. 390, the enclosed memorandum by the Secretary of Defense and its attached views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the subject, are circulated herewith for the information of the National Security Council and the Secretary of the Treasury.

JAMES S. LAY, JR.
Executive Secretary

cc: The Secretary of the Treasury
13 December 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: U. S. Position Regarding a Cease-Fire in Korea

REFERENCE: NSC Action No. 390

In response to the above action of the National Security Council, there is forwarded herewith for the information of the Council members a memorandum of 12 December from the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the military terms, conditions and arrangements which should be agreed to prior to U. S. acceptance of any U. N. cease-fire resolution for the Korean war.

I am in general agreement with the various conditions enumerated but I wish to state, however, that I do not consider the contents of Paragraph 6 should have been included in this document. I am assured that the possible implication of that paragraph that the Joint Chiefs of Staff felt that a continued fight for the conquest of North Korea was not the purpose of the statement. Rather it was included merely to bring to the attention of higher authorities the certain possibility resulting from a cease-fire negotiation.

/s/ G. C. MARSHALL

Enclosure
MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE:

Subject: United States Position Regarding the Terms of any United Nations General Assembly Cease-Fire Resolution for the Korean War.

1. This memorandum is responsive to the directive of the National Security Council issued on 11 December 1950 which called for, as a matter of urgency, the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as to the terms, conditions, and arrangements which should be agreed to prior to United States acceptance of any United Nations cease-fire resolution for the Korean war.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, from the military point of view, cannot concur in any United Nations cease-fire resolution which does not include the terms, conditions, and arrangements set forth in paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 below. Further, these must be agreed to by all governments and authorities concerned, including North Korea and Communist China, prior to the implementation of any cease-fire arrangement.

3. The cease-fire arrangement:
   a. Shall be confined to Korea;
   b. Shall require all governments and authorities concerned, including North Korea and Communist China, to order a cessation of all acts of armed force; the establishment of a demilitarized area across Korea; and all ground forces to remain in position or be withdrawn to the rear except that all forces which may be in advance of the demilitarized area shall be moved to positions in the rear thereof.
   c. Shall provide for supervision of the general arrangements as well as specific details by a Cease-Fire Commission designated by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which Commission shall have free and unlimited access to the whole of Korea;
d. Shall require all governments and authorities concerned to cease promptly the introduction into Korea of any reinforcing or replacement units or personnel, including volunteers, during the cease-fire period;

e. Shall require all governments and authorities to refrain from introducing additional war equipment and material into Korea. Such equipment and material will not include those supplies required for the maintenance of health and welfare and such other supplies as may be authorized by the Cease-Fire Commission; and

f. Shall continue in effect until a permanent settlement of the Korean question has been arranged.

4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider the following specific details to be essential to any cease-fire arrangement for the Korean war:

a. The demilitarized area shall be a zone on the order of 20 miles in width, with the southern limit following generally the line of the 38th parallel.

b. The cease-fire arrangement shall apply to:

(1) All opposing ground forces in Korea, wherever located. In addition, these forces shall respect the demilitarized zone and the areas in advance thereof;

(2) All opposing naval forces in the Korean area which shall respect the waters contiguous to the land areas occupied by the opposing armed forces, to the limit of three miles off-shore. Naval units designated by the Cease-Fire Commission for sea transport, supply evacuation, surveillance, and humanitarian purposes shall be excepted from the foregoing provision while such units are engaged in these duties; and

(3) All opposing air forces which shall respect the air space over the demilitarized zone and the areas in advance thereof. Air units designated by the Cease-Fire Commission for air transport, supply, evacuation, surveillance, and humanitarian purposes shall be excepted from the foregoing provision while such units are engaged in these duties.
g. Military observers appointed by the Cease-Fire Commission, together with such United Nations Armed Guards as may be available and considered appropriate by the Commission, shall have freedom of movement anywhere throughout all Korea;

d. Prisoners of war shall be exchanged on a one for one basis, pending final settlement of the Korean question;

g. Organized bodies of armed forces initially in advance of the demilitarized zone shall be moved back or passed through to the area of their own main forces. Guerrillas, both north and south of the demilitarized zone, shall be withdrawn and be granted safe conduct through the demilitarized area.

f. Nothing in the agreement shall preclude commanders in the field from providing for the security of their forces, supplies, and installations, except that no security forces for this purpose will be permitted within the demilitarized area.

g. The Cease-Fire Commission shall be responsible for civil government, including police functions, in the demilitarized zone.

h. Refugees shall not be allowed to migrate in either direction into or across the demilitarized area.

5. The Joint Chiefs of Staff feel strongly that, before the United States should accept any cease-fire arrangement, provision must be made for a competent Cease-Fire Commission which shall inspect to insure that the terms, conditions, and arrangements as agreed to in the cease-fire resolution will be carried out by all armed forces including guerrillas in Korea. This Commission shall report promptly to the General Assembly of the United Nations all violations of the cease-fire resolution. The Commission shall be provided with a sufficient number of competent military observers to enable it to carry out its duties and functions.

6. In connection with all of the foregoing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff would point out that execution of any United Nations cease-fire resolution will, in all probability, prevent the attainment of the United Nations objective of a free and united Korea.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

/s/ Omar N. Bradley
OMAR N. BRADLEY
Chairman,
Joint Chiefs of Staff.