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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 24, 1950.

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SUBJECT: Active Assistance for Korea.

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Jooste, Union of South Africa
The Secretary
Mr. Satterthwaite, BNA

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COPIES TO: FE
G - Mr. Matthews
American Embassies, London
Wellington
Ottawa
Karachi

Authority NLT- 7P-49
By HV NLT Date 5-17-79

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Ambassador Jooste called at his request and said that in accordance with the latest appeal from the Secretary General of the United Nations for active assistance in Korea, he was taking up directly with the Secretary the latest views of the Union Government on this question. The Ambassador said he had kept the Union Government informed of the views of the United States on the question of active assistance for Korea and added that he had been asked to reiterate the Union's support to the Security Council's Resolution and to express the Union's admiration of the courageous defense offered by the American forces. The Union Government feels, however, although Korea may remain an isolated situation, the possibility of other acts of aggression, as exploratory probes, cannot be ruled out. The Union Government, for various considerations, feels that it would be most unwise to weaken its position by sending forces to Korea. These considerations are:

1. The existence of the secret commitment of South Africa in the event of war with Russia to sanction Union forces operating in all parts of Africa in defense of that Continent.
2. Strategic position of South Africa in the event of war.
3. Inadequacy

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E. O. 11652, Sec. 1(E) and 5(D) or (B)
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3. Inadequacy of forces in Africa between South Africa and the Mediterranean in the event of war.

4. The very limited equipment now available to the Union Defense forces.

Ambassador Jooste went on to say that any military assistance which the Union Government could give in Korea would be no more than a token detachment which would have little or no influence on the progress of the campaign in Korea. Finally the Ambassador said that notwithstanding its belief that it would be unwise to send forces to Korea it wished to help in any way it could to support the Resolutions of the Security Council and would be pleased to hear from the United States what form this help could take.

The Secretary expressed his disappointment that the decision of the South African Government was not to make ground forces or other actual military assistance available at this time. He pointed out that the United States forces were hard pressed in Korea, that because of the need for rest only two actual divisions were available for the fighting there and actual military assistance was most welcome. He said that if many countries, for one reason or another, were unable to send military assistance, the burden on the United States would be very great and that although some countries felt that since they could only give a battalion it had no effect on the outcome, several battalions from several countries in the form of a brigade and in the end another division or divisions would be ready to help. The Secretary emphasized that military assistance from South Africa was not desired as a token for propaganda effects but actually to help with the fighting.

The South African Ambassador referred to an article in the New York Times of July 23 which said that the United States did not wish very much help from France, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands because they were Colonial powers and the use of troops from Colonial powers would have had propaganda effects. The article said that what this Government wanted was more troops from Asia, excepting China, and Latin America. The South African Ambassador said he did not believe this was more than newspaper speculation and requested the Secretary's views. The Secretary said this was not the case and assured the South African Ambassador that aid from the United Kingdom, France, New Zealand, Australia and Pakistan was most welcome.



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