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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 28, 1950

SUBJECT: Aid to Korea

PARTICIPANTS: The President;  
Prime Minister Robert Menzies of Australia;  
Secretary Acheson

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The President received Mr. Menzies at 3:30 p.m. The interview, including the photographs, lasted approximately one hour.

The discussion opened with general conversation on non-business subjects.

The Prime Minister then raised the question of Australian defense and the sending of Australian ground forces to Korea. He said that Australia was wholeheartedly behind American policy and wished to play its full part in the defense of the free world. To do so Australia would have to increase its defense forces substantially. This required legislative changes. Australia also wished to send ground forces to support the United Nations in Korea. At present, however, it had no forces available. Out of the 2,000 troops in Japan only about 500 were combat troops and these had been enlisted only for service in Japan. The Prime Minister expected promptly upon his return to attack the whole broad subject. He did not think it advisable to confuse the broader issue by attacking first of all the problem of forces for Korea. He wished to get through a universal service bill and to remove restrictions upon the place of service since it was highly likely that in the event of general war Australian troops might be needed in the Near East and in the Far East beyond areas where service was

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now permissible. He had made his announcement that Australia would make ground forces available in Korea in order to commit his Government to that objective, but it would not be immediately possible to provide the forces.

The President expressed the hope that the Prime Minister could make rapid progress both in regard to forces for Korea and the general expansion of the defense program.



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