**Resource sheet 8.2A  
Transcripts of documents used in Lesson 8.2**

*(Note: This document is deliberately repeated from Lesson 8.1)*

Document 1 – CAB 128/18/1, Labour cabinet minutes, 03/07/50

b) Under Article 27 of the Charter decisions of the Security Council on matters other than procedural matters required the affirmative votes of seven members, including the concurring votes of the permanent members of the council; and it was argued that the Council’s resolution of 27th June was not valid since the representative of the Soviet Union, a permanent member, had not been present on that occasion. On the other hand, the Council has on previous occasions taken decisions despite the abstention of a permanent member; the Soviet Government had at least acquiesced in that procedure; and it was arguable that the written constitution of the Council was in process of modification by practice. It was relevant to this argument that forty members of the United Nations had subsequently declared their support of the resolution passed by the Security Council. Moreover, it was provided under Article 51 that nothing in the Charter impaired the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence against an armed attack on a member of the United Nations; and although South Korea was not such a member, the action taken on her behalf was clearly in accordance with the principle embodied in this Article of the Charter.

The Cabinet’s conclusion was that the Prime Minister, while he should not ignore the constitutional points which were being made, should argue that the action which the Western Powers were taking in South Korea was fully in accordance with the spirit of the United Nations Charter and was in fact the first significant demonstration of the principle of collective security against aggression. He would proceed to develop the argument that it was the duty of peace-loving nations to make the machinery of the United Nations work effectively, despite legal quibbles, and not to allow it to be frustrated by the abstentions of a single member; and that for this purpose they were entitled to take advantage of procedures which, though they might appear to conflict with the strict letter of the Charter, had been accepted as reasonable by member States.

c) The Cabinet was informed that the Chiefs of Staff were not disposed to recommend the despatch of any land forces to Korea. The point was also made that the United States action in covering Formosa had freed for other operations the Chinese Communist forces which had been about to attack it, and this increased the potential threat to Hong Kong. No formal request for reinforcements had been received from the United States Government; and in all the circumstances the Government spokesmen in the debate would be well-advised to discount any expectation that the United Kingdom could make further forces available for operations in Korea.

Document 2 – DEFE 11/292, Joint Chiefs of Staff discussion, 03/07/50

13. Malaya

The firm line taken by America in Korea, together with the resultant action by General Briggs’ forces should have a stimulating effect on anti-Communists in Malaya. Allied successes in South Korea would undoubtedly have a salutary effect on all non-Communists in Malaya with a consequent beneficial effect on operations there; on the other hand, a Communist success in Korea would have the reverse effect. Our failure to establish diplomatic relations with Communist China would encourage the non-Communist element to back the Malayan Government.

14. Burma

The Burmese Government are likely to be confirmed in their fear that the Chinese Communists may one day make a direct attack on Burma. It is probable that they will watch developments in Korea and shape their policy accordingly.

Document 3 – DEFE 11/292,Defence Committee discussion, 13/07/50

c) AWT. 10

THE COMMITTEE then turned to the telegram from Lord Tedder asking for certain additional information about the proposed discussions in Washington.

THE COMMITTEE agreed that there was very little additional background to the genesis of the proposal for the talks other than that already contained in the telegram from the Prime Minister to President Truman. The Chiefs of Staff attitude to the proposal had been broadly as follows. The United Kingdom had, in the North Atlantic Treaty, a firm undertaking with the Americans. We had, however, no agreement with the United States on the action to be taken in the event of aggression in other parts of the world. The recent developments in Korea caught both nations unprepared; and clearly illustrated the need for having agreed plans with the Americans to counter future Russian moves of this sort in other parts of the world. It had, therefore, been decided to strike ‘whilst the iron was hot’ and propose discussions with the U.S. authorities at the earliest opportunity.

Lord Tedder had enquired whether the recent Chiefs of Staff paper on global strategy still expressed the British view; and whether this paper was the basis on which he should start in his discussions with the Americans. The Chiefs of Staff confirmed that this was so. It was pointed out that Major-General Redman, who was attending the discussions, would be able to give Lord Tedder any information on developments since he had left London. Political issues would of course loom large in the discussions, but Mr. Dening would be able to give Lord Tedder all the assistance he required on the political side. It would be helpful for Lord Tedder if the relevant documents could be sent out to him by air bag as soon as possible.

As regards the date for discussions, it was agreed that Major-General Redman and Mr. Dening should leave for Washington on Tuesday, the 18th July, and should come to a final meeting with the Chiefs of Staff on Monday afternoon 17th July, when Chief of the Imperial General Staff would be present.

The Committee agreed that a reply to Lord Tedder should be sent on the above lines.

Top Secret

Document 4 – FO 371/81655, Oliver Franks’ letter, 23/07/50

Washington telegram No. 2036 to Foreign Office

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4. The second reason is that despite the power and position of the United States, the American people are not happy if they feel alone. This feeling is paradoxical but it is real and a reality in the Korean situation. The American people will not understand it if they are alone on the ground in Korea. They will think it shows coolness to them or even disapproval of what they are doing. The United States Administration is aware of this feeling and its vigour. It therefore moves the administration to look for assistance on the ground and once again they turn to Britain as the key. It is also true that the Americans who compose the administration share this feeling.

5. For these reasons I should expect the reaction of the United States Administration to a negative decision by us to be deep and prolonged. I am not thinking primarily of the effects which it would have on relatively short term matters however important, such as additional appropriations for European defence and the third appropriation of E.R.P. The important consideration is the effect our decision will have on the basic relationship of the two countries. I believe that because of the rational and irrational elements in the American mind about this for them unparalleled undertaking to act as a policeman in the world, a negative decision would seriously impair the long term relationship. This is so partly because of the significance our decision would acquire as giving a lead, which they expect to be followed by other countries.

6. I have not consulted the Americans on this .

(Copies sent to Lord President of the Council, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Colonies and Service Ministers)

Advance Copies

Prime Minister Mr. Dening

Minister of State Head of Far Eastern Department

Sir W. Strong Head of United Nations Politics Department

Sir P. Dixon

Document 5 – CAB 128/18/50, Labour cabinet minutes, 25/07/50

**Korea Reinforcements. (Previous Reference: C.M. (50) 46th Conclusions Minute 2.)**

3. The Prime Minister said that His Majesty’s Ambassador in Washington had represented very strongly that an early offer by the United Kingdom Government to send some land forces to Korea would make a valuable contribution to Anglo-American solidarity. The Defence Committee had reviewed the position, in consultation with the Chiefs of Staff. They adhered to the view that it would be unsound to divert to Korea troops required to meet other Communist threats in this area, in Hong Kong and in Malaya. They also recognised the military disadvantages of operating in Korea a mixed force with separate supply lines. They had, however, come to the conclusion that this disadvantage was outweighed by the political advantages which would be secured by an announcement that some British land forces were to be sent to Korea. Such an announcement would have a valuable effect upon public opinion in the United States, and it would also give a useful lead to other members of the United Nations. The Defence Committee had therefore recommended that the War Office should arrange for a Brigade Group to be formed, without reducing the strength of the forces now available in Hong Kong and Malaya, and sent out soon as possible to operate in Korea under United States command. They further recommended that the decision to send these land reinforcements to Korea should be announced in the course of the debate on 26th July.

The Cabinet –

Endorsed the recommendation of the Defence Committee that the United Kingdom Government should offer to provide a Brigade Group for service in Korea under United States command.

Document 6 – FO 371/84091, Oliver Franks’ letter, 21/08/50

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir O. Franks.

No. 519 Saving

August 19th, 1950 R. August 21st, 1950

CONFIDENTIAL  
MANDATE

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 519 Saving of 19th August.

Repeated for information Saving to: Tokyo.

PUBLICITY FOR UNITED KINGDOM MILITARY EFFORT IN KOREA

I trust that, as part of the preparation for sending United Kingdom ground forces to Korea, steps are being taken to ensure the maximum amount of publicity in the United States for their participation in any fighting. The British Commonwealth naval and air units have had reasonable good publicity so far, but all our experience in the past war shows that a special effort will be needed if good results are to be achieved and maintained over a period.

2. The importance politically in this country of adequate publicity for the performance of our own troops can hardly be exaggerated, particularly in view of the way operations have gone so far with the Americans bearing the brunt of the United Nations effort.

3. Some possible lines of action are as follows: -

a) The first and by far the most important is that every effort should be made to get American press, news agency and radio correspondents, press photographers and newsreel men, to accompany these troops, if possible, from the time they leave the United Kingdom.

b) Every facility should be extended to any correspondents who might accept the invitation, both in communications and in living facilities.