At eleven o'clock on Friday, June 30, 1950, the President held a meeting in the Cabinet Room to discuss the situation in Korea. Since this was the regularly scheduled meeting of the Cabinet, the entire Cabinet was present, as were representatives from the Departments of State and Defense, and a number of members of Congress. A complete list of those attending the meeting is attached as Annex "A".

The meeting opened at 11:10 a.m., when the President entered the Cabinet Room. The President explained that he had asked those present to attend so that there could be a complete review of the Korean situation to date. The President asked General Bradley to give a summary of the military situation in Korea, which the General proceeded to do with the aid of a map.

The President then referred to the fact that he had had a meeting at five o'clock on Thursday afternoon with various officials, and that he had met again with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at nine o'clock on Friday morning. As a result of those meetings, he was now prepared to issue a statement which he would read.

The President then proceeded to read a short statement which is attached as Annex "B".
After finishing the statement, the President said that he wanted all of the gentlemen present to know all of the facts as far as it was possible for him to pass them on. He wanted all of them to know that what we had done was being done under the auspices of the United Nations; and that offers of help which had come from countries like Canada, Australia, and New Zealand of sending military forces to help General MacArthur were being made for the United Nations.

The President said he was pleased that India had endorsed the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and that it looked like the action which had been taken was going to be unanimous except for Soviet Russia and perhaps some of our satellites.

Following the President's remarks Senator Connally asked the first question. He said he had understood General Bradley to say that a regiment was being sent to ———. He wanted to know where the regiment was coming from. General Bradley assured him it was MacArthur's command in Japan.

Senator Connally then said that he was pleased that the President was permitting American forces to operate when necessary north of the 38 degree parallel; he said that such an order was justified. General Bradley remarked that sometimes the most effective way to hit your enemy is to go after his bases.
Senator Connally concurred and asked General Bradley if we were going to have a unified command.

The President and Secretary Johnson assured the Senator that all military forces would be under General MacArthur.

Senator Connally said he wanted every other nation to understand very clearly that MacArthur was the boss.

Senator Tydings broke in to ask to what extent other nations would be giving direct military assistance to MacArthur. He said he felt quite strongly that it would be very helpful if other countries, like Australia and Canada, could send a few groups -- even as few as one company -- to help in Korea. Tydings said that he was certain that some show of Allied as distinct from American forces was necessary.

There were two reasons for this, he said, the first was for the fact of the American people once the casualty lists began to appear, and the second was the attitude of the world at large. He did not want anybody to think that this was a private American war. He concluded by saying he hoped that some troops, perhaps the British at Hong Kong, could soon join us in the fighting.

The President pointed out that we had not yet committed any troops to actual combat and that our present plan was just to send base troops to keep communications and supply lines open.
Senator Tydings said he understood that he was just looking to the future at such a time as we were actually in the front lines. He hoped that at that time there would be allied ground forces in action.

Secretary Johnson commented that one nation had offered some ground troops to us, but he did not volunteer the name of the nation.

Senator Garnet said he hoped the Administration realized that we must completely support the Southern Koreans. Now that we were in this, there could be no backing down. He said he hoped the President understood.

The President said, "I certainly do understand that."

Senator Lucas said that he wished to endorse what Senator Tydings had said. He thought it very important that there be some token of forces, perhaps South American or European, fighting with us in Korea. The more nations the better, since it would indicate that what we were doing was the United Nations and not a United States action. Like Senator Tydings he thought that even one company would be valuable.
The President commented that the offers of help from other countries have been very satisfying.

Senator Lucas persisted, Keador, he pointed out, was a member of the United Nations Security Council. Keador has joined in supporting the resolutions. Couldn't we get Keador to give some troops?

Congressman Overton Brooks wanted to know if there was any relationship between events in Korea and the Soviet announcement that they were going to close down some power plants in Germany. The President said there was no connection he knew of.

Senator Wiley wanted to know if the State Department was working to get other countries into the fighting with us.

The President replied that Yes, the State Department was working on that. He thought he had made it clear that other countries were volunteering to help us.

Senator Wiley wanted to know if our military forces were alerted all over the world. What about Berlin? Couldn't the Russian announcement about Berlin be interpreted as an (unnamed) sign?

The President replied, "I don't interpret; I am just waiting to see what will happen."
Senator Wiley wanted to know if the Chinese Commisssion were going to help the North Koreans.

The President replied that we had no intellience on that subject yet, but that there were a lot of rumors flying around that the Chinese Communists would fight. They were just rumors and we would have to wait and see.

Senator Smith asked if there were any evidences that Communist aggression was going to break out in other parts of the world.

The President said there were lots of rumors about places like Iran, but they were just rumors.

Congressman Worthy said it would be a fine thing if we could get some Asiatic peoples in the fighting to help us, not just other white people. If we got a few Asiatics into fighting it wouldn’t look so much like “White man’s imperialism.”

The President said that was a very difficult matter, because if we got some Asiatics — like Chiang’s on Formosa, for example — we would have to be carefully careful of the Chinese Communists.

Senator Sherry asked, addressed the President as though he were on the Senate Floor, and wanted to know if the President was going to advise the Congress before he sent ground troops into Korea.
The President said that some ground troops had already been ordered into Korea. If there were a real emergency, he would advise the Congress.

Senator Murray said he thought the Congress ought to be consulted before the President made moves like this.

The President said this had been an emergency. There was no time for lots of talk. There had been a weekend crisis and he had to act. "I just had to act as Commander-in-Chief, and I did. I told MacArthur to go to the relief of the Koreans and to carry out the instructions of the United Nations Security Council."

Senator Murray said "I understand action all right. But I do feel the Congress ought to be consulted before any large scale actions are taken again."

The President replied that if any large scale actions were to take place, he would tell the Congress about it.

The Vice President interrupted to ask if the ships which the British had offered for our use, and which he had been reading about in the morning newspapers, were offered for all purposes, such as fighting, or were they just to help move refugees out of Korea. He was assured that the British offer had no strings attached to it.
Senator Warren rose to his feet again, telling the Vice President that he would like the floor, and he continued making statements similar to those before, to the effect that he thought the President ought to consult Congress before taking drastic steps.

The President responded that as soon as he had definite information that required action by the Congress, he would inform all the members. "If there is any necessity for Congressional action," the President continued, "I will come to you. But I hope we can get those bandits in Korea suppressed without that."

There were some further questions about allied assistance to MacArthur, which General Bradley undertook to answer. He said, as a military man, he would be glad to see other countries asked for help because he thought that would have a helpful psychological effect. But as to actually seeing troops of other countries in the lines, that would be a very difficult matter. MacArthur would find it almost impossible to properly supply and control troops of a number of different countries. The troops of some of the countries that have been mentioned are not trained or organized the way ours are, and they have very different military procedures from our own. As for the suggestion that had been made that some Australian troops be sent to Korea,
General Bradley said it would take six or eight months to get them there and get them in shape to do some fighting. He said that it was out of the question to contemplate anything like that. If it were only for psychological purposes, a few men might be flown in.

It was useless to expect, however, that they could be of real military assistance.

Senator Tydings said he understood the difficulties MacArthur was up against, but he still wanted some foreign troops. "Just a company, just a company or two," he kept repeating.

Senator Warren arose again and said that he had been studying the last sentence of the President's press release. He said that he thought there was a clear inconsistency between what he had been told at this meeting about how far we were going, and the last sentence of the release. He repeated his assertion that he thought the Congress ought to be informed and that the President should take such steps without Congressional approval.

At this point Dewey Short, who had been seated behind the President, arose and stepped up to the Cabinet table to say that he thought he was expressing the opinion of practically everyone in the Congress in saying that the Congress owed the President thanks for the quality of his leadership. Short said that he, personally, was very grateful to the
President for his frankness in telling them what had been going on
and in having General Bradley give them a resume of the military
situation.

The Vice President said he thought there was an inconsistency
between the last sentence of the press release, which came right out
and said that we were going to have ground troops in Korea, and what
he had understood to be General Bradley's request made at the beginning
of the meeting for complete secrecy on the subject of ground troops
in Korea.

General Bradley arose and explained that he was sorry he
had not been more precise. What he had meant to say was that he
hoped all of those present would keep secret the name of the place
to which our ground troops were going to be initially. He had not
meant to ask those present to keep secret the fact that we were going
to send ground troops in. That fact, Bradley continued, could not
possibly be kept secret because there is no effective censorship
in Korea. We already had a number of communications teams in Korea
trying to set up Army communications, and he was surprised that that
fact hadn't leaked out already. The ground troops — consisting
principally of supply troops — would start moving in a few hours into

From a military point of view, Bradley concluded, he
would have preferred to see no reference made at all to American
troops in Korea, but since the fact was bound to leak out, from a
public relations point of view, he thought it was best for the
President to make the announcement in this fashion before there were
any leaks.

Senator Connally asked how many British troops there were
in Hong Kong.

General Bradley said he was not sure but he understood
the British had less than one division in Hong Kong. The only other
British troops in the area are some Australian troops in Japan.
Bradley understood that there were some 1500 Australians in Japan
and he felt that they probably could move fairly promptly to Korea.

The Vice President said he thought the last sentence of
the statement ought to be modified. He did not like it, he said;
the statement ought to say that the President is in control of the
forces and is issuing the orders to them.

The President pointed out that the statement had been
released during the course of the present meeting by Mr. Kiss and
it was too late to make changes. Furthermore, he was afraid he could not agree with the Vice President. "This is all very delicate."
the President said. "I don't want it stated any place that I am telling MacArthur what to do. He is not an American General now, he is acting for the United Nations. It would spell everything if we said he was just doing what we tell him to do." The President continued that, of course, MacArthur was obeying his orders but that we must be very careful not to let ourselves be put in the light to the rest of the world.

The Secretary of Defense said that so far as his Department was concerned, MacArthur was acting for the United Nations, and the President just couldn't say what the Vice President had suggested.

After asking if there were any further questions, the President thanked the members of Congress for having come down and be promised to keep them informed as fully as he possibly could during the next few days.

The meeting ended at 11:45 A.M.