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NOTE DATED 19 MARCH 1953 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND IN KOREA

The Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honor to transmit herewith, for the information of the Security Council, United Nations Command communique No. 1,557, issued in Tokyo Wednesday, March 18, 1953.

UNITED NATIONS COMMAND COMMUNIQUE NO. 1,557, ISSUED IN  
TOKYO 10:00 A.M., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1953 (KOREAN TIME)

Bitter fighting erupted in the western sector of the Korean battlefront yesterday as an enemy battalion assaulted United Nations positions on Little Gibraltar, west of the Imjin River. Hand-to-hand fighting raged for five and one-half hours before the enemy succeeded in disengaging.

Shortly after midnight on March 17 friendly forces occupying a forward position withdrew after a brief encounter with an unknown number of enemy. The probe was followed by the battalion-size enemy assault against United Nations Command positions, with hostile forces reaching friendly trenches. Bitter fighting continued until daylight, when the enemy, suffering heavy casualties, attempted to disengage. Friendly elements carried on the battle with heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery fire. Sporadic fighting continued until the action ended at 10 A.M. yesterday.

Other activity along the front consisted of minor probes in the central and east-central sectors late Monday night and early Tuesday morning. Three squad-size probes in the Rocky Point-Sniper's Ridge area were repulsed, as was a two-man enemy reconnaissance effort north of the Punchbowl.

Haze and low clouds restricted naval air operations during the morning yesterday, but strikes by carrier-based planes of the United Nations Command Fleet pounded targets on both coasts of North Korea in afternoon flights. Enemy rear-area installations along the east coast from Kojo to Songjin were battered, with heavy damage to rail and supply facilities. Sorties flown from the Yellow Sea concentrated on targets at Sogwan and Haeju. Surface elements continued to bombard both rear and front-line enemy installations and positions along both coasts.

United Nations Command fighter-bomber activity also was reduced by bad weather, but the aircraft managed to strike damaging blows at hostile battle-line positions and rail lines. Night intruders blasted supply routes, reporting a number of vehicles destroyed. A supply and storage area near Sinuiju was pounded by medium bombers, as were bunkers and trenches immediately in the rear of the battle line. Cargo aircraft continued over-all logistic support of United Nations forces.

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