

UNITED NATIONS

SECURITY  
COUNCIL



GENERAL

S/2550  
6 March 1952

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

NOTE DATED 4 MARCH 1952 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE THIRTY-SEVENTH REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND OPERATIONS IN KOREA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF 7 JULY 1950 (S/1588)

The Representative of the United States to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to Paragraph 6 of the Resolution of the Security Council of July 7, 1950, requesting the United States to provide the Security Council with reports, as appropriate, on the course of action taken under the United Nations Command.

In compliance with this Resolution, there is enclosed herewith, for circulation to the members of the Security Council, the Thirty-seventh Report of the United Nations Command Operations in Korea for the period January 1 through January 15, 1952, inclusive.

ANNEX A

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND OPERATIONS IN KOREA  
FOR THE PERIOD 1 - 15 JANUARY 1952  
(Report No.37)

I herewith submit report number 37 of the United Nations Command Operations in Korea for the period 1 - 15 January 1952 inclusive. United Nations Command communiques numbers 1130-1144, provide detailed accounts of the operations.

The discussion of agenda item number 3 centered on the three principles proposed by the United Nations Command delegation and quoted in United Nations Command report number 36. Although some slight progress was made, the stand taken by the Communists causes increasing doubt as to their true intentions toward an armistice. They continue to oppose any restriction on the rehabilitation of airfields, their arguments centering on "Sovereign rights" and "interference in internal affairs". The United Nations Command considers these arguments to be illogical and contradictory. Any armistice agreement must necessarily concomitantly result in some abridgment of so-called sovereign rights. The significant fact is that such abridgment is voluntarily assumed and mutually agreed to by the nations concerned. The right to agree, as the United Nations Command delegation has stated to the Communist delegates, is the very **essence of sovereignty**. The Communists have already agreed to limitations on the introduction of personnel and equipment and to observation by non-combatant teams; and they admit that such provisions are required to insure against an increase in military capabilities. The United Nations Command holds that restriction on increase in military air capabilities is also a fundamental safeguard. Additional combat airfields closer to the battle line would permit additional sorties per day by the same aircraft. This would result in a definite increase in military air capability. For either side to construct combat airfields during an armistice, therefore, would cause tensions which would jeopardize the duration of the agreement. The United Nations Command has agreed to the rehabilitation of sufficient airfields in North Korea to insure the full conduct of North Korean civil affairs. Hence, the Communist insistence on unlimited airfield construction is obviously detrimental to the basic objectives of the armistice agreement. It is noteworthy that the United Nations Command delegation has

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repeatedly asked the question: "Do you agree that neither side should increase its military air capabilities during the period of the armistice?". This question has always met with an evasive, equivocal reply from the Communist side.

In an effort to reach a sound solution to the problem of exchanging prisoners of war which would be acceptable to both the United Nations Command and the Communists and at the same time preserve the most humanitarian aspects of repatriation, the United Nations Command armistice delegation introduced the following proposal, which incorporates provisions for all prisoners of war and civilians who have been involved in the conflict:

"Prisoners of war who elect repatriation shall be exchanged on a 1-for-1 basis until one side has exchanged all such prisoners of war held by it.

"The side which thereafter holds prisoners of war shall repatriate all those prisoners of war who elect to be repatriated in a 1-for-1 exchange for foreign civilians interned by the other side, and for civilians and other persons of the one side who are at the time of the signing of the armistice in the territory under control of the other side, and who elect to be repatriated. Prisoners of war thus exchanged shall be paroled to the opposing force, such parole to carry with it the condition that the individual shall not again bear arms against the side releasing him.

"All prisoners of war not electing repatriation shall be released from prisoner of war status and shall be paroled, such parole to carry with it the condition that the individual will not again bear arms in the Korean conflict.

"All remaining civilians of either side who are, at the time of the signing of the armistice, in territory under control of the other side, shall be repatriated if they so elect.

"In order to insure that the choice regarding repatriation is made without duress, delegates of the International Committee of The Red Cross shall be permitted to interview all prisoners of war at the points of exchange, and all civilians of either side who are at the time of the signing of the armistice in territory under the control of the other side."

In defining "civilians" as used in this proposal, the United Nations Command emphasized they were considered to be individuals of either side who on 25 June 1950 were bona-fide residents under the Republic of Korea or the Communist regime in North Korea.

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In summary, the United Nations Command proposal provides for the release of all prisoners of war including soldiers of one side who may have been impressed into the armed forces of the other side. It was pointed out to the Communists that the United Nations Command proposal was consistent in every respect with the initial Communist claim that all prisoners of war of both sides should be released.

As regards repatriation, the proposal permits freedom of choice of the individual thus insuring that no duress or force will be exercised to influence him. It provides repatriation not only for prisoners of war, but for displaced persons and refugees as well, who can equally be considered as victims of war. Those who so desire are permitted to return to their homes as soon as possible. Finally, the United Nations Command proposal provides for a supervisory organ to interview the persons involved, to insure that, whatever their choice, it will be made freely and without fear.

The initial reaction of the Communists in protesting the United Nations Command proposal was characterized by a series of vicious and slanderous remarks, among which the United Nations Command was accused of attempting to keep prisoners of war in slavery, to hold them as hostages and prevent the civilian population in the United Nations Command zone from being repatriated. After continued and sometimes exasperating discussion, it became quite clear that the basic objection to the United Nations Command proposal was not that the Communists did not recognize its workability and humanitarian features, but that they were alarmed at the possibility that large numbers of the prisoners we hold and of the North Korean refugee population now in Southern Korea, would refuse return to Communist control. It appeared most significant that, while supposedly arguing the right of impressed Republic of Korea Army soldiers to remain in the Communist forces, the Communists insisted that prisoners of war of both sides should be forcefully repatriated.

Throughout subsequent discussion, the Communists have attempted to play a variety of themes all aimed at discrediting the United Nations Command proposal. They have been completely unsuccessful in advancing one valid statement that can refute the United Nations Command proposal to extend the right to elect repatriation to every prisoner and civilian internee now in our custody and to every civilian who fled into South Korea at the start of the war. We have emphasized that the decision of each prisoner of war with reference to his

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repatriation would be openly and publicly expressed before a representative of the International Red Cross at the point of exchange, and that the United Nations Command proposal stands openly and conclusively as the most humanitarian, equitable approach to the exchange of prisoners of war, civilians and refugees, and entirely in consonance with the spirit of the Geneva Convention.

The enemy displayed only limited offensive tendencies in the battle area and confined his action mainly to night patrolling and probing attacks employing units up to the strength of a company. One exception to this pattern of activity occurred in the extreme Western sector of the battle line where advances gained by a limited United Nations Command attack were nullified by a successful counterattack by strong enemy forces. During daylight hours the enemy concentrated his efforts towards turning back the numerous United Nations Command patrols. The front lines remained unchanged during the period. Continued anti-guerrilla operations further impaired the dwindling strength of guerrilla forces within the Republic of Korea.

Fighting in the Punji area was heavy as contrasted to the patrol activity along the remainder of the Western front. United Nations Command elements attacked on 3 January to complete the restoration of outpost positions which had been lost as a result of an enemy attack on 28 December. Five days of almost constant fighting were required to drive the numerically equal enemy defenders from these positions. The immediate commitment of two additional enemy regiments to a daylight counterattack forced the United Nations Command elements from the disputed positions. It is estimated that approximately 3,000 casualties were inflicted on the enemy units during the course of this action.

There were no major military developments on the Western or Eastern fronts, the battle scene being dominated by aggressive patrolling by both sides. On two successive nights, 3 and 4 January, strong enemy combat patrols forced the withdrawal of United Nations Command outpost positions in the Mulguju area. On both occasions the positions were fully restored by immediate United Nations Command counter-action.

The second phase of the anti-guerrilla operation in the Southwestern portion of the Korean peninsula was completed on 5 January and the third phase was initiated the following day. As a consequence of earlier successes, the number and size of the dissident groups encountered is decreasing steadily. In

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February 1951 the effective guerrilla strength within the Republic of Korea was estimated at approximately 27,000. Despite the continuous recruitment of additional followers by the guerrillas, the Republic of Korea security forces held this sizeable threat in check and by November 1951 had reduced the dissident strength to an estimated 10,000. During the past six weeks an intensified anti-guerrilla operation has further reduced the guerrilla forces to a strength of about 6,000 effectives.

The enemy's offensive capability remains unaltered. Prisoners of war fail to profess any knowledge of plans for an early offensive. On the contrary, recent prisoners of war reports indicate only plans to continue the defense. The bulk of the available evidence supports the prisoners of war allegations which point to the enemy's maintenance of his present defensive attitude.

In the first weeks of 1952 United Nations Command naval forces and naval and marine air squadrons exerted strenuous efforts to help prevent an enemy build-up during the lull in ground operations. Sustained ground interdiction was continued along both coasts by the surface blockading forces in night and day attacks. Their harassing and supporting bombardments inflicted personnel and material losses on the enemy at the battline and at major North Korean coastal communication centers.

Carrier and land-based naval and marine air squadrons continued the interdiction of enemy rail, highway and sea routes in spite of marginal weather conditions. Patrol squadrons maintained reconnaissance of enemy waters, and furnished anti-submarine patrols for friendly supply convoys.

Minesweeping and naval artillery support fire continued on a round-the-clock basis. The United States minesweeper *Dextrous*, operating near Wonsan, lost one killed and two wounded when she was hit several times by 75 millimeter gunfire from enemy shore-based batteries.

United Nations Command air attacks constituted the most aggressive type of action during the reporting period. The enemy continued to counter these attacks with active air defense forces and passive defense measures which made ground targets difficult to locate and destroy. The combination of small arms ground fire, anti-aircraft artillery concentrations and high performance interceptor aircraft accounted for the destruction of thirty-nine United Nations Command aircraft. Despite frequent air-to-air combat between MIG-15 and United Nations

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Command aircraft the losses on both sides have been comparatively light. Pilots report that many flights of the enemy interceptors are non-aggressive and tend to avoid combat even when they have strong advantages in position and numbers. On other occasions United Nations Command pilots have engaged flights of MIGs which exhibited aggressive spirit, improved tactics and a high degree of pilot technique. On these occasions little advantage is enjoyed by either side and claims for kills and the number of damaged aircraft remains low. This trend in MIG operations is now quite pronounced and lends credence to the theory that Northwest Korea is being used by Communist forces for systematic advanced training of fighter pilots. United Nations Command pilots claim destruction of twelve MIGs and damage to twenty more in air-to-air combat.

The bulk of the fighter-bomber and medium bomber effort was again directed at interdiction of enemy railroad facilities. During daylight hours the principal targets were rail cuts along the open lines and attacks on locomotives, rail cars and supply stacks adjacent to the right of way. At night medium bombers attacked key bridges in the North Korean rail system. The extent of the unrepaired and damaged rail lines south of the Chong-Chon River has permitted the allocation of some rail interdiction effort to targets North of the previous rail interdiction boundary.

United Nations Command army requirements for close support sorties were furnished whenever lucrative targets were uncovered. Aircraft of the Republic of Korea Air Force provided close support for anti-guerrilla operations in rear areas.

Enemy or unidentified aircraft were reported over United Nations Command positions on three occasions. These were all night nuisance attacks with damage to friendly installations being reported as superficial. A typical example occurred during the pre-dawn hours on 1 January when low performance aircraft dropped mortar-shell type fragmentation bombs in the Seoul-Inchon area. There were no United Nations Command casualties, but one Korean farmer was killed and two others injured.

United Nations Command leaflets, loudspeaker broadcasts, and radio broadcasts reported to enemy soldiers, and to Korean civilians under Communist subjugation, the protraction of armistice negotiations by the continued stalling tactics of Communist spokesmen at Panmunjon. These United Nations Command media

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reiterated the determination of the Korean people and the United Nations Command forces to press for the early conclusion of a just and realistic armistice agreement despite continuing Communist obstruction of efforts to restore peace. Wide publicity was given to the United Nations Command proposal to allow prisoners of war to exercise freedom of choice in repatriation. Radio broadcasts and news sheets explained in detail the necessity for prohibiting construction or rehabilitation of military airfields during the period following an armistice.

Under the terms of the approved memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Command and the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency, the Joint United Nations Command - United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency Committee in Tokyo held its initial meeting on 5 January 1952. The meetings, leading towards initial understanding and agreement, dealt with the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency organization, committee membership, rules of procedure, United Nations Command and United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency joint operation, and the procurement of personnel for implementing the civil assistance and economic aid program. The mission of this joint committee is the resolution of mutual problems and responsibilities, during phase one when the United Nations Command has operational responsibility, and planning for phase two when the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency will assume operational responsibility.

(Signed) RIDGWAY

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