

21 Mar 51
CIB

GENERAL

1. Possible Soviet diplomatic "feeler" regarding Korea:

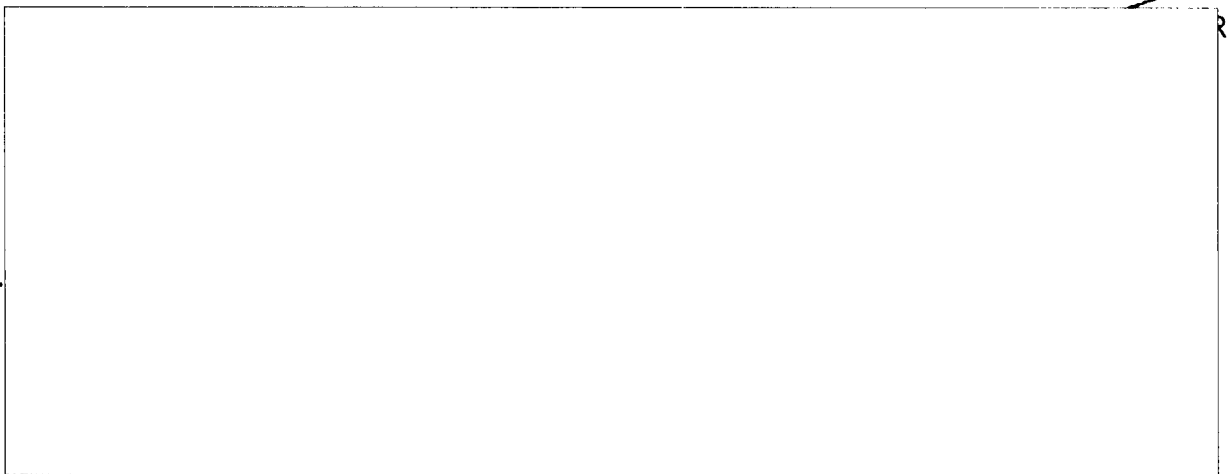
K. Malik
#5572



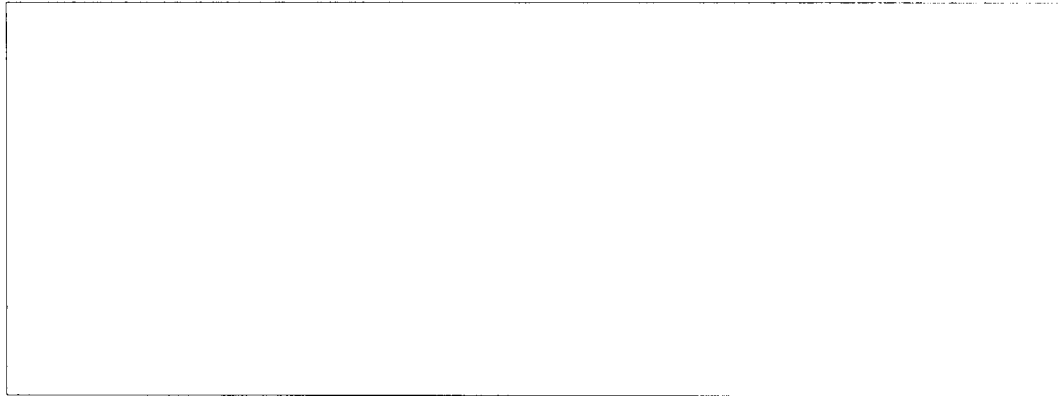
According to the Israeli delegation at the UN, at an Israeli reception on 14 March Soviet delegate Malik twice

took the initiative in raising the Korean question. Malik reportedly asked an Israeli delegate for his views regarding the possibility of a settlement of the Korean war and appeared to be interested in the ensuing conversation, although no specific suggestions were made by either participant. The Israeli delegation was struck by Malik's repeated references to the current Paris meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers and thought Malik showed "great awareness" of the connection between the Korean problem and the Paris conference.

Comment: This is the only available report of a Soviet "feeler" at the UN regarding Korea in recent months. Since the Israelis were active during the January attempt at mediation between the US and Communist China, the USSR may well have approached the Israeli delegation in order to gain information as to how firmly the UN is behind its Korean objectives. British UN Delegate Jebb has suggested that Gromyko be approached in Paris concerning a possible Korean settlement, but the US, British and French deputies recently agreed that it was not advantageous to do so.



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FAR EAST

3. Chinese Communists rotating major units in Korea:

North Korean Military
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A preliminary field translation of a North Korean message from the Combined Chinese-North Korean

Headquarters in North Korea, reporting the position on 17 March of all but one of the Chinese Communist armies believed in the forward area, indicates that the Chinese have begun rotating major ground units in Korea.

At least two armies--the 50th and 66th--are reported moving northward out of Korea "to the homeland." Three other armies--the 40th, 42nd, and possibly the 38th--are reported moving northward. The 39th Army is mentioned, but the message is unclear as to its future disposition.

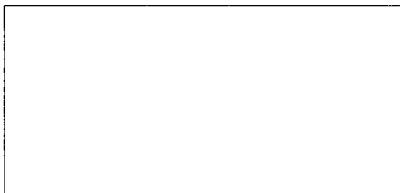
The message further indicates that elements of General Peng Te-huai's First Field Army--the 19th Army Group, consisting of the 63rd, 64th, and 65th Armies and previously believed located in Manchuria--have moved into Korea and are now located near the 38th Parallel due north of Seoul.

Comment: Such rotation would be in line with a previously noted Chinese Communist military practice of replacing badly decimated units in their entirety rather than by

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using individual replacements. The armies apparently being rotated out belong to the Fourth Field Army and the North China Military Special Army Group. They have been in the line for extended periods of time and have borne the brunt of the recent UN offensive.

4. US B-29 encounters night attack:



A US medium bomber flying a night-harassing mission over northwestern Korea on 17 March was attacked by from three to five enemy aircraft at 16,000 feet. The engagement began northwest of Pyongyang at midnight,

with the enemy breaking contact ten minutes later just north of the 38th Parallel. The bomber's air crew reported that the enemy aircraft displayed aggressiveness and flew at a high rate of speed. In this connection, a fragmentary North Korean Air Force message ordered the North Korean Air Division commander at Sinuiju to select his "most superior night pilot and navigator, have them take the... plane and have the...at the Pyongyang airfield on the night of 16 March."

Comment: This is the first instance of night interception of a UN aircraft. The tactics and speed demonstrated by the attackers suggest that the enemy fliers involved possessed an advanced degree of training and that jet aircraft were employed. Enemy use of radar may have been involved, or this may have been a chance interception by some kind of special night patrol. The incident is another indication of a current step-up in enemy air efforts.



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