

~~TOP SECRET SUEDE~~

FAR EAST

5. North Korea's giant chemical complex may retain some capacity: A 12 March North Korean message, reporting the discharge of an officer, notes that he "has been disposed at the Hungnam factory, his former work shop." A 15 March North Korean message reports that the problem of loading vehicles in the Hamhung area with "oxygen and nitrogen" can be solved. A North Korean supply unit in the Hamhung-Wonsan area reports that "the directives of the center for carbide have not arrived at the factory." (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, SK-H-513, 14 Mar; SK-H-696, 16 Mar; SK-H-724, 17 Mar 52)

Comment: The Hungnam chemical complex, the largest in the Far East prior to the Korean conflict, suffered destruction varying from 90 to 95 percent in its five major installations. Calcium carbide was one of the principal products for inter-plant use and for export; and both oxygen and nitrogen were produced in considerable quantities. It is possible that some segments of the considerable industrial capacity of the plant have been rehabilitated in some slight degree.

6. North Korean IV Corps organization suggested: The commander of the North Korean 23rd Brigade in a 12 March message instructed his 5th battalion commander to "draw up the name-list of the persons received from the 10th, 17th, 105th Divisions and other units, from January 25th to today." (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, SK-H-546, 14 Mar 52)

Comment: Probably the 23rd Brigade in converting to a mechanized artillery unit received personnel with armored training from the 17th mechanized and 105th armored Divisions. This message suggests that the four units are subordinate to the same major command, possibly the IV Corps. This corps--believed composed of the 4th, 5th, and 10th Infantry Divisions, the 105th Armored Division, and the 23rd and 26th Brigades--is located in the rear area of western Korea. No recent references have been seen to either the 4th or the 5th Divisions, but the 17th Mechanized Division is known to be still in the area.

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE:  
18-Mar-2010

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7. Chinese Communist unit deals directly with North Korean local government: In a 9 March Chinese Communist message a lower echelon unit was instructed to "please contact the governmental officials of the k'un (county) of that locality and inform them we need 3,000 bottles." (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, K-1444, 14 Mar 52)

Comment: This is the first instance noted of a direct Chinese Communist requisition upon a lower echelon of the North Korean Government. While it is probable that the bulk of Chinese Communist supplies are provided through normal logistical channels originating in China proper, instances such as this will undoubtedly contribute to friction between the Chinese units and Korean villagers.

8. New North Korean brigade possibly formed: A 13 March message from the North Korean 8th Division to its subordinate 82nd regiment at Kaesong mentioned two soldiers, both of whom were from the "22nd Brigade under the direct command of the Supreme Headquarters." (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, SK-H-554, 14 Mar 52)

Comment: The North Korean Army at present is accepted as having four brigade-type units--the 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 26th Mechanized Artillery Brigades--evenly divided between the east and the west coast. While confirmation is still lacking, it is possible that another brigade--the 22nd--might have been formed in the Pyongyang area as a special reserve force.

9. Chinese Communist unit reports frozen feet caused by shortage of footwear: A 4 March Chinese Communist message from the headquarters of an artillery division to its rear area supply unit states that 90 percent of the regiment's shoes are unusable and "recently more than 20 men have gotten frozen feet." The sender requests that a second pair of shoes be issued because the men "do not have additional shoes to wear." (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Co Korea, K-1489, 17 Mar 52)

Comment: This is the second report within the past two weeks of a shoe shortage in Chinese Communist units. As the Communist supply situation has been generally good during the past months, these are probably isolated incidents.

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