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Central Intelligence Agency
Office of Current Intelligence
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INDICATIONS OF COMMUNIST INTENTIONS IN KOREA

CONCLUSIONS

1. A review of available evidence relating to Communist activity since the signing of the armistice provides no indication that the Communists are preparing to renew hostilities in Korea. On the contrary, the bulk of the evidence indicates that the Communists are proceeding on the assumption that the war will not be renewed, whether on UN or Communist initiative.
2. Available indications provide no conclusive evidence as to whether the Communists will try to reach a settlement in Korea, or whether they wish to prolong indefinitely the present non-shooting military stalemate. However, the Communist refusal to accept the UN recommendations on the composition of the political conference suggests an intent to continue their delaying tactics.
3. The Communists continue to maintain substantial military forces in North Korea and Manchuria, and, in North Korea at least, they are improving their air capabilities. These activities are not, in themselves, sufficient to indicate an intention to renew hostilities in the near future. They may be explained as routine military precautions, stemming from Communist concern over the strength of UN forces still deployed in South Korea and the possibility that action by Rhee may bring about renewal of hostilities.
4. So far as the Kremlin attitude is concerned, there are no indications that the Bloc has changed its long-range objectives of achieving the withdrawal of foreign troops and Korean unification under a Communist regime. But for the immediate future, the Malenkov regime seems to have decided to rebuild North Korea as a member of the Orbit and to counter the strengthening of South Korea's economy and armed forces. Moscow's prompt action in announcing plans to aid the reconstruction of North Korean industry suggests that Bloc leaders do not now intend to reopen hostilities which would again expose North Korea's industrial base to UN air attack.

USAF review(s)
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DISCUSSION

Military

5. The most significant military activity since the signing of the armistice has been the repair of airfields in North Korea and the movement of the bulk of the North Korean Air Force from Manchuria into North Korea. Prior to the armistice only two airfields and only eight aircraft in North Korea were serviceable according to FEAF aerial photos. There now are at least 18 airfields in North Korea capable of supporting operations by jet fighters; eight of these are believed adequate for jet light bombers. As of 18 October FEAF estimated that 150 MIG's, 50 conventional fighters and 50 ground-attack aircraft of the NKAF were based in North Korea.

6. Communist ground strength in North Korea has been reduced since the armistice by the withdrawal of two Chinese Armies. There has been some replacement of Chinese forces on the line by North Korean troops. Troops in Korea are engaged in routine training, barracks construction, etc.

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9. If the Communists intend to re-engage UN forces in Korea in the near future they must expect that the Manchurian sanctuary will not remain inviolate. They would therefore be expected to undertake actions prior to resuming hostilities which would neutralize, or at least minimize, the economic and military vulnerability of targets in Manchuria. Communist actions which should be expected, in some degree at least, if a deliberate resumption of hostilities were intended would include:

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- b. Redeployment of fighter aircraft to newly built facilities to provide more uniform air defense of Northeast China/Manchuria.
- c. Major increase of military logistics in Korea and decentralization of supply systems in Manchuria.
- d. Provision of alternate rail lines into Korea.
- e. Forward deployment of air depots from Southwest China.
- f. [REDACTED]
- g. [REDACTED]
- h. Provision of fire lanes or other control devices to prevent fire raids from destroying large areas.
- i. Marshaling of river boats to provide alternate means of transportation.
- j. Emplacement of AAA in critical areas and at local transportation centers.

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10. There is no evidence to indicate Communist preparations along the foregoing lines. On the basis of past experience, it appears probable that if such preparations were under way on a substantial scale, at least some of them would have been detected by US intelligence.

Economic

11. The bulk of the evidence of Communist activity in the North Korean economy indicates that the enemy is not expecting a resumption of hostilities in Korea.

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12. Likewise, in Manchuria and China, economic and industrial activity since the armistice is not indicative of a Communist intent to resume hostilities. China appears to be primarily concerned with the successful implementation of the five-year plan, originally apparently scheduled for 1951, but not initiated until 1953.

13. The overall economic policy of the Soviet Union does not appear to be that of a country which is anticipating major increases in military outlay. The recent emphasis on increasing the availability of consumer goods, in effect, calls for an upward revision of the plan for these commodities. Although there is no evidence that military production has been reduced, implementation of the recent decrees would certainly reduce the facilities which might otherwise be available for increasing military production. Moreover, there is mounting evidence that such implementation is in progress.

Political

14. A review of the political evidence since the armistice agreement provides no indication of a Communist intent to renew hostilities. The limited evidence available suggests that the Communists are expecting a continuation of the status-quo for an extended period. The Soviet Union is continuing its stalling and delaying tactics.

Indications of Soviet Attitude Toward Korean Conference

15. There are no political or propaganda indications that the Communists are preparing to break the armistice by renewing hostilities in Korea. Soviet action both in the United Nations debate on the political conference and in North Korea itself points to the conclusion that the lines which now divide the peninsula are likely to remain firmly established.

16. The Communists' refusal to accept the UN recommendations on the composition of the Korean political conference suggests an intent to continue their delaying tactics. Their continued insistence on an enlarged round-table conference, including the USSR and other "neutral" Asian countries, indicates a belief that they have more to gain in the immediate future by exploiting the divergence of views between the United States and other UN members over procedural details than by negotiating on substantive issues.

17. Since the opening of the special General Assembly session in August, Communist spokesmen have attempted to demonstrate that they have a real desire for a political conference. They have tried to encourage the belief among non-Communist, particularly Asian, countries that they would be willing to modify their proposals to some extent if the United States would make similar concessions.

18. The Communists have been careful not to close the door to further procedural negotiations and have refrained from openly threatening to boycott the conference if their proposals are not adopted. After failing to induce the United Nations to reconsider its recommendations on conference composition, the Communists, through Chou En-lai, accepted the US proposal for talks

on time and place, but insisted that the "more essential" question of composition should also be discussed. The only definite modification that this statement made in Chou's previous position was the withdrawal of the demand that Chinese Communist and North Korean representatives be invited to conduct "joint negotiations" at the UN General Assembly.

19. Soviet propaganda attention to Korea has been at a low volume ever since the initial flurry of comment on the armistice itself. Moscow's output has carefully avoided providing Rhee with any pretexts for launching an attack. Comments on the US-ROK security pact have disappeared almost entirely. The predominant theme charges that the US is undermining the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and is obstructing and violating the armistice.