

K O R E A N   W A R

Communist POWs Mistreated by Allies: Peking demonstrates extreme sensitivity to charges of Communist mistreatment of Allied prisoners and makes explicit efforts to counter these accusations. Statements by returning Allied prisoners expressing gratitude for humanitarian treatment are repeatedly broadcast as are claims that the returned U.N. prisoners will be subject to close surveillance by "specially trained counter-intelligence agents" until they "cooperate" by repeating tales of prison camp atrocities. General Clark is accused of "slander" in claiming that the Communists have not accounted for many American prisoners, and the point is made that U.N. charges are designed to "obstruct the political conference, evade responsibility for recovering the more than 27,000 prisoners of war forcibly seized by Syngman Rhee, and put obstructions in the way of the peaceful settlement of the Korean question and Far East questions."

On the other hand, the Communist radio--for the first time since the April exchange of sick and wounded prisoners--revives charges of atrocities against Communist prisoners, reporting incidents alleged to have taken place repeatedly following the signing of the armistice. In these latest atrocity reports Peking avoids references to the role of the newly-authorized Red Cross inspection teams, but does make separate charges against allegedly "unreasonable restrictions" imposed on Korean and Chinese Red Cross personnel visiting POWs in South Korea. Specifically, the Reds charge that continuing U.N. efforts to force prisoners to refuse repatriation--abetted by South Korean and Chiang agents--have resulted in many casualties. U.N. mistreatment is alleged to have caused many cases of tuberculosis, arthritis and mental derangement. The Communists also counter U.N. charges of medical abuse of POWs with accusations of their own--e.g., that Red prisoners were subjected to injurious experimental operations, and that many sick and wounded should have been included in the April prisoner exchange.

U.N. Prisoners May Oppose Direct Repatriation: The first Communist reference to the possibility that some Allied prisoners will not choose to be repatriated directly appeared in a 6 August NCNA dispatch. The report stated that although up to this time no screening had been conducted among Allied prisoners in Communist hands, the agreement on POWs "has been made known" to all prisoners and the U.N. Command will be notified promptly "if any prisoners of war do not wish to be repatriated directly." However, Peking has thus far given no response to the official State Department note reminding the Communists that all prisoners not desiring direct repatriation, including those given prison sentences, must be turned over to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. Previous Communist comment has consistently underscored the desire of all prisoners--Communist and U.N. alike--to return home.

U.S.-South Korean Accord Is "Serious Threat" to Peace: Peking, which between 5 and 11 August had eliminated all comment on the Dulles visit to Korea, now sharply characterizes the outcome of the Dulles-Rhee talks as a "serious threat" to the armistice and the scheduled political conference. Pointed reference is made to the U.S.-South Korean mutual defense treaty, which is branded "a treaty to prepare for war." The comment alleges (a) that the United States has turned South Korea into a war base and a colony, (b) that after the treaty becomes effective the U.S. and South Korean troops will no longer be under U.N. authority and can operate