

~~TOP SECRET SUEDE~~

FAR EAST

6. Russian message suggests typhus epidemic in Korea: A Russian administrative message on a military net in north-western Korea reported that ". . . villages an epidemic of typhus has broken out. Please urgently send. . . assistance." (SUEDE 331, 6 Mar 52)

Comment: The very fragmentary condition of the message and the position of the missing words could make it misleading. If it describes actual epidemic conditions, it is the first to reveal an outbreak on such a scale in any North Korean area this winter. Louse-borne typhus occurred in epidemic proportions among Communist troops and civilians in eastern Korea during the winter of 1950-51.

The Peiping radio denied on 13 March that epidemic conditions prevailed in North Korea. Poor sanitary conditions, the generally low level of immunization among the civilian population, and the lack of an effective lousicide makes such an outbreak a constant possibility.

7. Campaign against BW continues unabated in North Korea: A considerable portion of Chinese and Korean communications still are concerned with reports of BW, with preventive measures, and with incidence of disease.

Two coastal security stations in northeastern Korea reported on 11 March that "the bacteria bomb classified as mosquito, fly and flea were dispersed" and "an enemy plane dropped ants, fleas, mosquitoes, flies and crickets."

A Chinese Communist unit commander in western Korea demonstrates his conviction that BW is being employed against him in his order to a subordinate unit who captured some UN soldiers. The subordinate unit is instructed to ask the prisoners what "type of immunization shots were administered recently. . . . in preparation for defense against what disease," and "what type of common literature (was) made available regarding disease immunization and prevention."

Two 12 March North Korean naval messages to units in Songjin and Chongjin, cities in coastal northeastern Korea, ordered the units to cooperate with city officials to "have a counterplan which includes injections, vaccinations and rat poison" and "to prevent an epidemic the rats. . . must be hunted."

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Two 13 March North Korean messages, one from north-eastern Korea, report deaths due to cholera. (SUEDE - Det 151 15th RSM, Korea, CM IN 20412, 12 Mar 52, 20791, 13 Mar 52, 21099, 14 Mar 52; 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, K-1395, 11 Mar 52)

Comment: The campaign against rats in Songjin and Chongjin is a sound preventive measure insofar as these animals are the primary vectors of bubonic plague. The reported incidence of cholera is surprising since this is normally considered a summer disease.

8. North Korean unit is stockpiling large quantities of food: An inventory of food stuffs submitted on 9 March by a North Korean supply battalion commander to his regimental headquarters lists approximately 8,000 metric tons of rice and 3,800 metric tons of wheat, in addition to large quantities of potatoes, meat and vegetables on hand.

A 10 March message -- perhaps a reply to the above intercept -- from a rear regiment commander to one of his subordinate battalions orders that the food situation be reported on a monthly basis, and that empty bags be sent to the myon organization. (SUEDE [] 2959, 9 Mar; [] 2960, 10 Mar 52)

Comment: Despite the serious food shortage among North Korean civilians, it appears that this unit has accumulated a considerable quantity of food for what, judged by the stockpile's size, is apparently a major North Korean command.

Mention of the myon organization, a low level Korean political subdivision, suggests that the North Korean armed forces are permitted to deal directly with local civilian components for food without having to channel requests through higher civilian authority.

9. Additional facts reported on North Korean operated GCI net: USAF analysis of communications traffic on the North Korean operated GCI net in northwestern Korea reveals that two airfields are associated with the system and three other fields may be similarly linked. One field is probably in Korea near Sunchon, a city 40 miles south of Sinuiju.

The analysis discloses that one of the Korean GCI stations is mobile and very likely in the Pyongyang area. The system is now comprised of at least six GCI stations.

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The Korean early warning system, however, seems to operate independently from the GCI net.

An 11 March North Korean air message mentioned a "transmitter lokkattor," possibly located at Sariwon, which may indicate a D/F installation. (SUEDE USAFSS, ADV SUMM RU-AIR-Weekly Digest 46, 8 Mar AF Roundup 52, 13 Mar 52)

Comment: The Korean-operated portion of the Communist air defense system in northwestern Korea continues to expand its facilities and to improve its operations. Korean radar installations are now identified at Sariwon and Pyongyang.

There are no known operational airfields in northwestern Korea, south of Sinuiju and Uiju along the Korean side of the Yalu river, except for a sod airfield at Pyongyang.

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