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8 MAY 1952

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BW AND THE KOREAN WAR

After a period of relaxation which reduced the volume of comment to the lowest point since the charges were introduced, Peking and Pyongyang's wide dissemination of the "confessions" of American airmen that they knowingly engaged in bacteriological warfare has given new impetus to the denunciatory campaign.

This new stimulus to the campaign was preceded by an apparently conscious failure to exploit themes lending themselves to effective exploitation. The virulence of the present denunciation suggests that this relaxation was intended to give greater impact to these new elements.

In contrast to Peking and Moscow, Pyongyang continues to emphasize the ever-present danger of epidemics. Military and civilian elements alike are accused of "relaxed vigilance," and there are pointed reminders that the threat of pestilence will increase as the weather grows warmer. Pyongyang has also charged the U.S. with large-scale use of poison gas.

After a minor increase in attention which reversed a trend noted since the third week of March, Soviet concentration on BW has reached a new low point.

China's adamant stand on the question of prisoner repatriation has now virtually eclipsed all other considerations in connection with the truce talks. There is repeated insistence that the Communists have made their last concession, that the talks are imperiled as never before, and specific warnings, noted for the first time in several months, that continued American unreasonableness will wreck the talks.

U.S. Fliers Confess BW Crimes: After a week of detente, during which attention to the germ warfare charges reached by far the lowest point in Chinese and North Korean development of the campaign, a tremendous new impetus has been given to the drive by widespread dissemination of the purported confessions of two American airmen detailing their conscious participation in biological warfare. The "confessions," as broadcast by Peking and Pyongyang in all transmissions, relate in minute detail the experiences of First Lieutenants Kenneth Enoch and John Quinn, who were captured by Chinese troops on 13 January 1952. The prisoners reported that they had been briefed on the use of bacteriological weapons, had been trained in methods of coping with possible dangers, and had been told to report the bombs as "duds" after they had been launched to prevent popular recognition of the fact that such weapons were being used. This further reference to the attempt to prevent general troop knowledge of the use of BW continues a technique that has prevailed since the campaign started and which seems intended to increase the credibility of the charges.

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The confessions, which reflect the consistent Communist line in decrying American spoliation of Korea, the murder of Korean civilians and the destruction of cities and towns, and in assailing the Wall Street "imperialists," "warmongers," "socialists," and "capitalists," also reveal that the prisoners were briefed on atomic warfare and were given to understand that atom bombs might be employed in Korea. The tremendous effort exerted to lend credence to the confessions through the use of exact detail on the fliers' rank, serial numbers, training, education and general background, and the precise reports on pre-flight briefings, specific references to others present, to dates and to areas where the bombs were dropped would seem to be nullified, at least insofar as non-Communist audiences are concerned, by thus ascribing to the prisoners the expression of all those cliches which constitute the staple of Communist propaganda.

Lull Preceded Introduction of Confessions: During the week immediately preceding the appearance of the confessions on 4 May, only five percent of all items in Peking's international service was devoted to BW, and the figure for the regional stations was just above one percent. This represented an especially sharp decline in the international service which for each of the previous two weeks had discussed BW in 16 percent of all items broadcast. The regionals also remained fairly static during those two weeks with 1.5 percent of all items devoted to BW. To a lesser extent this decrease was also apparent from Pyongyang, although Korean concern with specific sanitation problems related to the BW charges served to keep the number of references at a relatively higher level.

In what now appears to have been a purposeful relaxation, intended to place the new charges in great relief, the reduction in the number of references to germ warfare was accompanied by a consistent failure to exploit events which could well have been used to sustain the campaign. An appeal by Peking Health Minister and Red Cross President Li Te-chuan (widow of "Christian General" Feng Yu-hsiang) to all Red Cross groups throughout the world was given only meager dissemination and not subsequently developed, and similar cursory treatment was accorded the demand of China's Supreme Court chief Shen Chun-ju to the IADL council meeting in Vienna that the BW criminals be punished. A press interview granted a HUMANITE correspondent by Kuo Mo-jo and subsequently reprinted in PEOPLE'S CHINA received only moderate play although Kuo referred to new "evidence" that was to be released momentarily, and declared that China would welcome any truly impartial investigation of the charges.

Christian Swears U.S. Is Waging BW: In its campaign to increase the credibility of the charges by quoting medical, cultural and religious groups, Peking has now turned to the Christian church. In a typical statement, Wang Tzu-chung, who is described as a pastor of the Council of the North China Congregational Mission, has written to the World Council of Churches denouncing American germ warfare. Declaring that he had taken part in an exhaustive investigation of the charges, Wang said that "on my conscience as a Christian, I bear witness before our Lord Jesus Christ that the U.S. Government has carried out and is still carrying out bacteriological warfare."

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Brandweiner, Persecuted Today, May Try BW Criminals Tomorrow: Peking and Pyongyang join Moscow in violently assailing the Austrian Government for the dismissal of IADL investigatory commission chairman Brandweiner from his Graz University post. Groups of varied complexion vie in the virulence of their abuse and a Chinese jurist declares on 27 April that the "lawyer persecuted today by the American warmongers may be the judge to try the war criminals tomorrow."

Kim Il Sung Demands Maximum Vigilance Against Epidemics: While reiterating that "there are absolutely no epidemics in North Korea, but only germ-laden insects dropped by the American imperialist aggressors," Pyongyang continues to insist that maximum vigilance is necessary to prevent a deterioration in sanitary conditions. Kim Il Sung, in a statement broadcast by both Pyongyang and Peking but not by Moscow, says that the "enemy is becoming more vicious in the use of germ weapons." Pyongyang also reports that poison-gas shells were used on 33 occasions between 27 February and 9 April. Neither Moscow nor Peking has yet echoed this charge.

Parallel to such reports there are frequent lamentations that despite the danger that the increasingly mild weather may bring "vicious epidemics," both military and civilian elements have demonstrated an unthinking complacency and have relaxed their efforts to improve general sanitary conditions.

Moscow's Attention Reaches New Low After Minor Spurt: After a minor flurry during the week 20-26 April which increased the level of attention in Moscow broadcasts from five to seven percent of all commentaries, Soviet broadcast references to BW have now declined to approximately four percent, the lowest level since the campaign was initiated in late February. The number of news items for the Soviet domestic audience has also decreased to a new low. The protests of individual groups remain a primary component of this residual attention, and the Chinese Commission's report on its investigations in North Korea continues to be well played. Pertinently perhaps, references to BW have virtually disappeared from broadcasts directed to Asian audiences. The drop in BW references has been accompanied by a parallel decline in references to the war per se. Elements which dominated comment on the war prior to the BW campaign, especially American profiteering at the expense of American lives, have returned in some profusion, but the truce negotiations are not mentioned. Moscow's repetition of the official Korean communique remains the sole reference to the actual military operations.

Last Truce Concession Has Been Made: Peking's new truculence concerning the truce negotiations has in the past week been concentrated almost exclusively on the question of prisoner repatriation. Although there have been cursory references to the issue of airfield construction and the USSR's status as a neutral, there have been repeated statements recently that agreement on the prisoner exchange would make an armistice possible within a few days. Communist correspondents insist, in the meantime, that the Communists "have made their last concession on the prisoners issue," and that the Americans will have to make a "real contribution" to avoid disaster. London DAILY WORKER correspondent Alan Winnington declares that the talks have "entered a perilous new stage" and that a deadlock has been reached which threatens to wreck

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the talks. This is the first time in several months that the negotiations are said to be on the verge of a breakdown. Another comment declares that the Americans must "immediately give up their voluntary repatriation absurdity," otherwise, "the American side must bear full responsibility for stalling or even wrecking the talks." An equally ominous note is struck by CE SOIR correspondent Burchett, who declares without further elaboration that the Communists "have no intention of allowing the interminable deadlock on the talks to continue."

Communists Indicate Willingness to Accept 116,000 Prisoners: There are indications that the Communists foresaw a possible agreement on the POW question around the figure of 116,000 to be repatriated as a retreat from their former insistence on the return of all 132,000 reported by the U.N., and were very much piqued when the U.N. reported only 70,000 willing to return. There are frequent references to the Communists' 27 March agreement to the "readjustment" of the POW tabulations by both sides, to take into account deaths, escapes and other changing conditions, and to provide for the release without repatriation of all prisoners living in areas now held by the enemy, which would bring the repatriation figure somewhere between 116,000 and 132,000. This agreement was said to be a major concession and the last that could be made. In categorically rejecting the figure of 70,000 as a patent absurdity, the Communists have revived their insistence that 44,000 other prisoners now classified by the U.N. as civilians must be added to the U.N.'s admitted 132,000. The Communists had previously agreed that the fate of these 44,000 would be considered in the post-armistice period.

Chiang-ROK Gangsters Screen POW's: Continued sensitivity to the implications of the low number of prisoners evidencing a desire to return to Communist-held areas is indicated by the sustained assault on the screening operations allegedly carried out by South Korean and Kuomintang personnel. Peking intimates that the interrogators are distorting and falsifying the statements of the prisoners, and claims that there is only one Korean-American being used at present to ascertain the prisoners' feelings about repatriation.

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