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FAR EAST SURVEY
12 FEBRUARY 1953

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THE K O R E A N W A R

Although the imminence of aggressive enemy actions remains the focal point of virtually all comment on the war, Peking and Pyongyang have now followed Moscow's example in describing the anticipated offensive as the fruit of desperation engendered by American defeats and American weakness. Within this framework, the following elements constitute the argumentation at the present time:

1. Driven to desperation by their defeats in Korea and their basic weakness, the Americans are unwilling to discard their aggressive ambitions, but are contemplating new military adventures.
2. The Korean people must exercise maximum vigilance to thwart any attack, especially one that may come from the sea.
3. The Sino-Korean forces are strong enough to cope with any eventuality and have made all preparations to sustain a war of long duration.
4. The repeated violations of the truce zone, the curtailed immunity of the truce zone, and the attacks on China proper represent a deliberate attempt to make agreement impossible and prepare for additional pressure on the American satellites at the forthcoming U.N. Sessions.
5. The U.N.C. charges that the Communist truce negotiators masterminded the prison camp disorders are "fantastic nonsense" intended to cover up American bestiality and the fact that Syngman Rhee and Chiang Kai-shek agents have been infiltrated into the POW camps to terrorize and murder prisoners.

Americans Plan Offensive Despite Weakness: Attenuating somewhat its denunciation of the Eisenhower administration and its commitment to militant action to break the Korean deadlock, Peking and Pyongyang have tended increasingly to echo Moscow's contention that desperation engendered by military defeat lies behind the contemplated new offensive, and that the enemy though basically weak is driven by his uncontrollable aggressive ambitions into new military adventures. Peking's ascribes Van Fleet's replacement as a punishment for the failure of his much-vaunted campaign to apply military pressure, and notes the portent of extended operations provided by General Taylor's experience in amphibious warfare.

Vigilance Against Attack From the Sea: Real concern with the implications of Taylor's assignment to Korea seems indicated by the wide variety of exhortation to special vigilance to prevent an enemy landing on North Korean beaches. An Order of the Day issued by Premier Kim Il Sung on the fifth

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anniversary of the Korean People's Army urges the troops to turn their coastal fortifications into "defenses of steel," and the slogans issued by Pyongyang radio for the anniversary call on the people to prepare themselves to drive the enemy into the "western and eastern seas" when he attempts to land. In addition fishermen in North Korea are reported to have organized self-defense corps to assist shore defense units guarding the coasts. The clandestine Radio Free Japan makes the extravagant charge that American armed forces are planning a landing in North Korea after shore defenses have been neutralized by "twenty or thirty atomic bombs."

Communists Have Strength to Meet any Threat: Kim Il Sung and Chinese military commanders Chu Te and Peng Te-huai also allude specifically to the imminence of a U.N. military drive, but accompany these predictions by assurances that the Communists are strong enough to counter any threat. Chou En-lai makes his customary reference to the Communists' willingness to resume the truce talks "unconditionally," but calls for a full-scale revival of the Resist-America, Aid Korea movement and the strengthening of defenses within China itself. And Mao Tse-tung in his address to the sessions of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference voiced China's desire for peace, but expressed readiness to fight indefinitely to remove the threat of American aggression.

Other attempts to present a facade of strength are made in specific claims of increased military potential. Peking quotes Kim Il Sung as declaring that the numerical strength of the KPA has tripled since the beginning of the war, that the firepower of infantry regiments has increased by 160 percent over 1951, and that a stockpile of supplies for every branch of the service has been established sufficient for a war of long duration.

Truce Provocations Intended to Facilitate Aggression Through U.N.: Peking has revived the charge made following the rupture of truce negotiations in October 1952 that violations of the truce zone, the curtailment of the truce convoys' immunity and the violation of Chinese air space are intended to destroy the last chance for agreement and provided a fait accompli which will make it easier for the Americans to win satellite support for the extension of their aggression when the U.N. sessions resume later this month.

Atrocity propaganda has not loomed large in Peking's present documentation of American aggressive intentions, but in noting the American statement that the B-29 alleged lost over China was engaged in leaflet dissemination Peking vouchsafes that this admission "associates its mission with the plan to wage BW." This postulation of a basic relationship between leaflet dissemination and germ warfare supports previous reports that discarded leaflet containers provided part of the "evidence" of BW activity during last year's campaign.

UNC Charges Fantastic Nonsense: In its prompt and violent reaction to the UNC charges that the Communist negotiations had masterminded the prison-camp disorders, Peking avoids any reference to the claimed Soviet involvement. The charges are variously described as "fantastic nonsense," as a device intended to cover up American bestiality, and as a portent of new slanders to be offered the U.N. when the sessions resume. In an apparent effort to counter the charges, Peking claims that the American command has planted South Korean and Kuomintang agents in the camps to terrorize and murder POWS who resist screening and forcible detention.

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NORTH KOREA

Anniversary Comment Highlights Defensive Tactics: Pyongyang's voluminous comment on the fifth anniversary of the Korean People's Army consists largely of praise of the Army's improved fighting qualities and warnings of an imminent enemy attack. The army is said to be prepared to meet an enemy attack "no matter where or when," but in contrast to last year's anniversary comment, promises of victory in the war are almost completely avoided. Also in contrast to last year, Pyongyang gives no attention to exploits of the Communist air force, repeating only that Communist anti-aircraft defenses have taken a heavy toll of the enemy and forced them to abandon daylight and low-level raids.

The defensive tactics of the KPA in the face of the "technically superior enemy" are accorded special praise. Defense positions are said to be so constructed as to oppose both tank and aerial attacks, while "coastal defense lines are directly linked with ground battle lines." Comment also reports the activity of "self-defense corps" organized by North Korean fishermen to assist in patrol and defense of the coast line. Calls for vigilance on the part of the people to apprehend enemy agents are featured prominently.

The slogans issued on the occasion of the anniversary give an increased measure of credit to the participation of Chinese forces in the war. Praise is also given to the "Stalinist military science" which has been adapted by the Korean army to meet the existing battle situation.

Eisenhower Reveals Plan for Offensive: Pyongyang's preoccupation with the war plans of the Eisenhower administration continues, in part linked to the anniversary comment. President Eisenhower's State of the Union speech occasions the charge that his aggressive plans were further revealed by (1) the withdrawal of the Seventh Fleet which releases Chiang troops for participation in the coming "offensive" as well as for attacks on the China mainland, (2) the justification of the American rejection of the truce terms and praise for the Indian proposal "which openly aimed at continuing and extending the Korean war," and (3) the contemplated expansion of the South Korean army. Koreans are warned that American plans include amphibious and paratroop landings, frontal assaults, the bombing of Manchuria and blockade of the China coast.

Concentrated Effort Needed to Prevent Epidemics: North Korea has announced a new anti-epidemic drive to eliminate complacency and laxity in sanitation and anti-epidemic work. References are made to the threat raised by enemy use of BW, but a more realistic appraisal of the dangers is revealed in warnings of the coming thaw, and the problems of public health created by increased enemy bombing. This appeal for more vigilant attention to public health follows closely the anti-epidemic campaign vigorously waged during November 1952 and may be an indication of the deterioration of public health caused by American air raids.

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