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4. 12th Division is MIG-equipped and moving north: A message of 17 January from Peiping to Nanking asked about the "test flight of the 12th Division MIG-15's." Only a few transports and trainers have been associated with this division in previous intercepts, according to the reporting agency. (SUEDE Air Force Roundup 35, 2238Z, 18 Feb 52)

Comment: Subsequent messages scheduled the transfer on 19 February of two transports and eleven MIG-15's of the 12th Division from Shanghai to Tangshan in North China. Another 12th Division transport recently made a "test the route" flight to Takushan near the Korean border, possibly the ultimate destination of this unit.

5. CHINA/KOREA. Record number of jet sorties from Yalu River base: An estimated total of 439 MIG-15 sorties on 16 February was revealed in messages from the Korean border town of Tatungkou, Manchuria. This figure represents the highest recorded number of combat flights from that field. (SUEDE Air Force Roundup 35, 2238Z, 18 Feb 52)

Comment: During December and January, UN aircraft encountered about 200 enemy jet fighters a day.

Since only 100 Soviet and Chinese planes are estimated to be based at Tatungkou, this record number of sorties suggests that this field is a staging point for jet aircraft in Korean combat. This possibility is also suggested by UN observation during the past month.

6. KOREA. Soviet interceptor technique in Korean air war improves: A high degree of proficiency has been developed by Soviet personnel operating on the Soviet GCI net in northwestern Korea, according to a field analysis of intercepted voice traffic.

The ground controllers, tracking large UN air formations, now wait for elements of two or four UN aircraft to break off from the major group before ordering the Soviet-piloted MIG-15's to attack the smaller elements. (SUEDE Air Force Roundup 35, 2238Z, 18 Feb 52)

Comment: This improvement in tactics, in addition to demonstrating the good quality of Soviet radar equipment, indicates that the lessons of combat have proved valuable to Soviet radar operators as well as to Russian pilots.

7. North Korean GCI system has operational characteristics of Soviet nets: The North Korean adjunct of the tri-lingual GCI net operates in northwestern Korea but may have a station south of the 38th parallel, the US Air Force reports.

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[REDACTED] While aircraft active on the Korean net, to date, have been largely occupied with training, patrolling and observation, on two occasions contact with UN aircraft may have been made. (SUEDE USAFSS Brooks AFB, ODD 2-20473, 17 Feb 52)

Comment: It has been speculated that the appearances of a North Korean GCI net and a MIG-15 equipped fighter division indicated plans to leave an operational air force in North Korea at the time of any armistice. Most evidence to date, both in ground control and in fighter operations, continues to suggest a Soviet-organized and commanded air defense system.

8. North Korean IV Corps may have coastal defense assignment: The North Korean IV Corps commander on 16 February sent congratulations to an unidentified unit for the sinking of "six warships of various types." (SUEDE 330th Comm Recon Co Korea, ALT 256, 18 Feb 52)

Comment: This message suggests that the IV Corps occupies a similar position on the west coast to that of the VII Corps on the east coast. The relationship of these two corps to the two defense commands known to exist on both coasts is unknown.

9. Communists may have emergency airfield in Suiho reservoir area: A Soviet-piloted aircraft was instructed by the Soviet GCI net in northwestern Korea to cross the river and land in the region of "Sapog." The US Air Force believes that Sapog may be a cover-word for the Suiho reservoir on the Yalu river. (SUEDE Air Force Roundup 35, 2238Z, 18 Feb 52)

Comment: This is the first indication of an airfield in this mountainous terrain. While it is not known on which side of the river this airfield is located, the terrain on the Korean side seems slightly more suitable.

10. Evidence of Communist use of IFF in Korean air war reported: A 31 January message on the Soviet-operated GCI net in northwestern Korea mentioned that a "transponder" and spare parts should be sent to an unlocated destination. This type of equipment is used in IFF (Identification Friend or Foe, an electronic device). (SUEDE Air Force Roundup 35 2238Z, 18 Feb 52)

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Comment: This is the first suggestion that IFF is employed by enemy aircraft in the Korean air war. The Soviets are known to have possessed an IFF set of native design, ScH-3, since 1948.

11. Internal supply transportation strains POL supply: An unidentified regiment in western Korea near Pyongyang, reporting that it had two tons of "fuel oil" (gasoline), stated that if the movement of vegetables from north of Pyongyang, coal from south of Pyongyang and wood from west of Pyongyang were to be made, the POL would be exhausted. (SUEDE 501 Comm Recon Group Korea, SK-G-535, 19 Feb; 15 RSM/6490, 19 Feb 52)

Comment: The text suggests that this unit is located in Pyongyang and is engaged in moving supplies into Pyongyang for an unidentified superior unit or organization.

No serious shortage of fuel in the Communist armies has been indicated since the early days of the war.

12. North Korean battalion lists its food supply as of 17 February: The 3rd Battalion in a message to the 7th Railway Security Regiment reported the quantity of foodstuffs "on hand as of 17 February." Over 90,000 kilograms were listed, including 46,219 kilograms of cleaned rice and 15,342 kilograms of vegetables. (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Co Korea, SK-G-539, 18 Feb 52)

Comment: This unit is believed to be based between Wonsan and Hamhung on the east coast. The amount of supplies indicated would be sufficient to support the battalion for about three months. It is possible, however, that the unit is only serving a line of communications function and that these supplies are not intended for that unit's consumption.

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