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BW AND THE KOREAN WAR

Although Peking, Moscow and Pyongyang's treatment of biological warfare follows largely familiar lines, the following factors emerge as the dominant characteristics of the campaign's present development:

1. The propaganda of the three major Communist transmitters indicates that the denunciatory drive has passed its peak and is now on the decline. This is inferred from (a) the recent sharp drop in the number of references to BW in Chinese regional and Soviet international and home service media, the first such decline since the charges were introduced; (b) the failure of all three propaganda organs to make immediate large-scale and effective use of the World Peace Council resolution to give new and sustained impetus to the slackening drive; (c) Chinese and Soviet failure to provide new elements in the campaign; and (d) the increasing tendency for Soviet protest references to be directed towards Korean audiences, where reassurance seems to be the goal rather than a desire to make continued propaganda capital of the charges.
2. The continued heavy concentration of comment in Peking's international services, in contradistinction to the decline in regional references, seems largely a factor of continued lengthy and exhaustive documentation of American bestiality and guilt intended to formalize the indictment of American criminality and place it "on the record" for subsequent exploitation, rather than to serve immediate propaganda purposes.
3. Peking, Moscow and Pyongyang continue the general tendency to dissociate the BW charges from the truce negotiations and the war, and avoid intimations that American recourse to biological warfare threatens the success of the talks. This basic differentiation is highlighted by divergent and often contradictory treatment of themes presented in the BW and the Korean war contexts.
4. As divorced from their propaganda orientation to the germ warfare campaign, Peking, Moscow and Pyongyang differ in their interpretation of the objective situation in Korea. While Peking continues to insist that there are no epidemics in Korea, Pyongyang stresses the success in "cooping with epidemics" and continually underlines the need for more sanitary precautions, while Moscow talks about the "ability to control the epidemics."

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5. As Peking and Moscow have decreased the level of their attention to BW, new elements in the propaganda have appeared first in Pyongyang's transmissions. Although these charges are subsequently exploited by Moscow and Peking, this reversal in the usual pattern of development suggests that Peking and Moscow are consciously braking the campaign and that Pyongyang has a greater need to maintain the intensity of the campaign as a means of coping with an objective situation: the incidence of disease.
6. Denunciation of the World Health Organization has now been added to Peking's virulent attack on the International Red Cross. The fact that Moscow has thus far failed to echo this denunciation suggests Soviet sensitivity to the effect such denunciation might have upon fellow U.N. members. Or the USSR may feel that it can effectively prevent WHO intervention in Korea through its voice in the United Nations.

a. First Sharp Drop in Level of Attention to BW: For the first time since the campaign began on 22 February there has been a noticeable decline in the number of references to germ warfare in Chinese regional and Soviet international and domestic transmitters. Whereas four and three weeks ago, items concerned with BW constituted 23 and 18 percent, respectively, of the total number of Chinese regional items intercepted, in the past two weeks the incidence has dropped to 11 and 8 percent for the first and second weeks respectively. At the same time, Soviet commentary attention to BW has declined from 23 percent of all commentaries three weeks ago to 13 last week, and seven percent this week. The decline has also been reflected in the decrease in the number of Soviet domestic service news items devoted to BW. In the second week covered by this SURVEY there were only half the number of such references noted in the previous week. This is the first drop in a previously sustained rise.*

b. Meager Exploitation of WPC Resolution: A further indication that the campaign of vilification has passed its peak is provided by Moscow and Peking's failure to exploit the appeal of the World Peace Council Executive for world-wide condemnation of the Americans and the general use of bacteriological weapons. Although both Moscow and Peking gave wide circulation to the indictment presented to the council by Chinese delegate Kuo Mo-jo, and Pyongyang joined the other two in hailing the WPC's campaign to get world-wide support for its condemnation of the Americans, the original level of approbation has not been sustained, nor have details concerning the development of the signatures campaign been presented. Although the International Association of Democratic Lawyers' investigatory committee had asked the WPC to take "immediate effective

* For a more detailed analysis of Moscow's development of the BW campaign see FBIS SURVEY OF USSR BROADCASTS, 3 April 1952.

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measures to check the crimes of the American imperialists," that appeal has not been met by an effective propaganda response so far. Nor has there been any acquiescence to frequent Chinese demands that the WPC establish an international court to try the "responsible criminals." It is possible that more concrete measures may be decided upon when the Council meets in June.

c. Moscow Assures Koreans of World-wide Support: The failure of Chinese and Soviet propaganda organs to interject any major new element in the general BW campaign has been accompanied in Moscow's output by a concentration of protest items in broadcasts for Korean audiences. Of 30 commentaries which reported world-wide protests against the use of germ weapons during the second week of the SURVEY period, 19 were broadcast to Korea, and of the remaining 11, nine were addressed to Asiatic audiences. This atypical concentration of attention in the Asiatic beams seems intended to convince the Koreans primarily, and Asiatics secondarily, of world-wide support for their cause and to enhance Korean belief of the charges (the Koreans probably have the best reasons to be incredulous) by postulating international acceptance of their veracity. This pinpointing of the areas to which protests are reported, which contrasts with the widespread dissemination accorded such denunciations in the past, even when Asia was primarily involved, and which seems to serve purely practical purposes, lends further support to the conclusion that the BW campaign has passed through the phase of purely propagandistic exploitation.

d. Stress on American Criminality Dominates International Services: The slackening momentum of the campaign in Chinese regional broadcasts and in Moscow domestic and international services has not been accompanied by an equivalent decline in the volume of BW references in Peking's overseas broadcasts. During the week 9-15 March, 48 percent of all items were devoted to BW and in the following week 45 percent were so concerned. In the first of the two weeks covered by this SURVEY (23-29 March), 46 percent of all items were on BW, and in the second week (30 March-5 April) the figure had dropped only to 40 percent. The sustained high level of attention, however, seems to be largely a factor of Peking's continued stress upon documentary and eyewitness evidence designed to formalize the indictment of American criminality in waging germ warfare. This concept is buttressed by the detailed and exhaustive description of a wide variety of American atrocities in Korea which are now being accorded the same exhaustive treatment given the BW charges. Peking's tremendous investment of broadcast time (which contrasts to the decline in regional references) together with the fact that this time is devoted merely to presenting the evidence rather than to commenting on it seems incommensurate with the immediate propaganda benefits to be derived. This suggests that the Chinese want to present the world with air-tight, formal, documented delineation of American crimes as the basis for future demands for prosecution, and that Peking is not deceiving itself as to the immediate propaganda value of such a chapter-and-verse accounting of alleged American crimes.

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e. BW not Specifically Linked with Korean War: As has been the case in the past, the Communist transmitters maintain the tendency to dissociate the BW charges from the truce negotiations or the course of the war. There are some statements that the use of biological weapons constitutes a last-ditch attempt to "continue and extend the war in Korea" at a time when world public opinion is demanding a quick settlement, but this is countered by arguments that the Americans are using Korea as a place to test their latest weapons and that BW is being used now because the Americans "want to carry out this experiment before an armistice is signed." Peking relates this "experimental" use of BW to the Americans' previous employment of the atomic bomb at a time "when the Japanese were already defeated," suggesting again that an end to the war is near.

The truculence of some of that comment on the BW issue which insists the Americans do not want peace, that they are preparing to use BW against all the peoples of Asia and that no crime is too heinous in their quest for world domination is tempered by the fairly optimistic tone regarding the negotiations themselves. There are an increasing number of references to the fact that only minor areas of disagreement remain and that more "reasonableness" on the part of the Americans will ensure a quick truce.

A discrepancy in the treatment accorded somewhat similar themes within and without the BW context is demonstrated by Peking's newly virulent denunciation of the British as equally responsible with the Americans for BW crimes. This attack, which has not yet assumed comparable proportions in either Moscow or Pyongyang propaganda, charges that the British have aided and encouraged the Americans to wage germ warfare. The charges generally are keyed to London's support of recent American denials that BW is being waged in Korea and official British seconding of American suggestions that IRC and WHO representatives be sent into North Korea. This indignant castigation of the British comes at a time when major efforts are being made at the International Economic Conference in Moscow and in Soviet and Chinese propaganda to point out the advantages of Sino-British trade and to bring a halt to Britain's accelerated estrangement from the Chinese Communists.

f. Varying Approaches to "Epidemics" in Korea: Demonstrating continued sensitivity to Western suggestions that the BW charges may be intended to explain a growing incidence of disease in Korea, the Communist radios present their own interpretations of the objective situation. Peking is most adamant in denying that epidemics exist, and correspondents are explicit by declaring that the Koreans have successfully met every threat of a plague. Pyongyang refers to success in "coping with the epidemics," but whether the epidemics are potential or actual is not made too clear. It is sufficiently obvious, however, that a major sanitation problem exists and Koreans are insistently urged to devote all their energies to creating a "water-tight" anti-epidemic system that will save the nation from disaster. There are frequent allusions to the need for general cleanliness, the necessity of boiling all water and of avoiding

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contaminated food; wells are to be covered and nation-wide inoculation enforced. There are references to the cordoning-off of entire areas in which immunization is compulsory. The troops at the front are included in these thorough methods. Haircuts once a week are mandatory, and all clothing must be boiled frequently. Moscow generally avoids discussion of sanitary conditions but offers assurances that epidemics can be controlled.

g. Pyongyang Takes Initiative in Developing Campaign: Coincident with reduced attention to BW from Moscow and Peking, there appears to have been a shift in the order in which new themes are developed. No major new elements have been noted in Peking or Moscow propaganda, but two themes which originated with Pyongyang have been subsequently exploited by the other two. Pyongyang was first to report that American POW's had admitted the use of germ shells by American troops. This admission was quickly picked up by Moscow and a week later by Peking. Pyongyang later reported that poisoned food and infected toys were being dropped over Korea and this was subsequently relayed by Peking. Moscow does not seem to have developed this theme as yet.

Except for initiating the campaign in the first place with Foreign Minister Pak Hun Yong's charge, the general pattern in the past has been for Moscow or Peking to originate themes that were somewhat tardily exploited by Pyongyang. A reversal in the usual order strongly suggests that Pyongyang has a greater stake in maintaining the momentum of the campaign, and this may be the result of a need to maintain public consciousness of an objectively dangerous situation: the incidence of disease.

h. Peking Declares WHO is Tool of the Americans: The vehemence with which Peking denounced the American request that the International Red Cross be empowered to investigate health conditions in North Korea has now been equaled by the spate of invective which greeted a subsequent suggestion that this task be assigned to the World Health Organization. Following the pattern established in predicating the IRC's unacceptability as an "impartial observer," Peking declares that the WHO, behind the "façade of promoting the health of mankind" has in reality degenerated into an agency for gathering data "of questionable use on public health conditions and information on the manufacture of drugs and pharmaceuticals in various countries."

Its hostility towards China has been proved, Peking declares, by the fact that on four occasions WHO agents in Singapore have reported epidemics in China as a pretext for placing major Chinese ports under quarantine. Peking insists that the WHO has engaged in espionage activities under American aegis and that it has shown no capacity for objectivity. The violence with which this U.N. organization has been attacked following the equally virulent assault on the IRC strengthens indications that China will permit no really impartial assessment of sanitary conditions in North Korea, nor an investigation of the BW charges.

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i. Possibility of Quick Truce Still Exists: No major new elements have been presented in relation to the truce negotiations or the military aspects of the war. Moscow, in keeping with its usual aloofness from the war, does little more than repeat the official Pyongyang communiques which report defensive skirmishes with American troops and impressive successes in destroying American aircraft. Peking continues to insist that the major questions have been resolved and that only a return to reasonableness on the part of the Americans is needed to bring a quick truce. There has been no retreat from the contention that no further concessions can be made on the issues preventing agreement--the rehabilitation of airfields, the repatriation of war prisoners and acceptance of the USSR as a neutral nation--but these problems are not presented as incapable of resolution nor as threats to a continuation of the talks.

Peking has reported new American violations of the truce area and an attack against a Communist convoy, but these incidents have not been described as intended to obstruct agreement, and the flurry of indignation which followed the charge that the Americans had violated the secrecy of the executive sessions has now largely subsided. American insistence on the use of the word "Han Kuk" instead of "Chosen" for Korea in the Korean-language version of the truce documents is again assailed as an example of absurd stalling tactics, but neither Pyongyang nor Moscow has exploited this "insult" to the Korean people. Nor has Moscow, other than in passing reference to the statements of the Korean representative, mentioned the American objection to the USSR as a neutral. The Communist assurances that repatriated prisoners would not be punished or ostracized are mentioned but not given wide play.

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