

UN forces abandoned the key Korean strongholds of Osan and Wonju to the Chinese Communists on Monday, and continued their retreat toward the Pusan perimeter. Wonju is a highway hub 45 miles south of the 38th Parallel, and Osan is a city 27 miles south of Seoul. The retreat from Seoul had picked up speed over the weekend under pressure from a 200,000-man Red drive down the center of the peninsula which threatened to overrun the 8th Army's line of withdrawal. The Army had managed to keep ahead of the Communists. UN forces retreating along the east coast had also outdistanced their Communist pursuers. The UN had given up their last coastal positions north of the 38th Parallel, but four US destroyers and two Thai corvettes bombarded enemy columns moving southward along the coast. Fifth Air Force planes roared back into the sky in full strength as the weather cleared after two days of snow flurries and low clouds. One aerial armada reported that it slaughtered more than 1,000 enemy troops near the junction of the Han and Kukhan rivers 15 miles east of Seoul.

UN forces struck back in counterattacks against Red troops in the Wonju area after 8th Army rearguards had fought off Communist pursuers on the main highway south of Seoul. Heavy fighting continued to rage around Wonju as UN forces attempted to guard the eastern flank of the 8th Army's retreat south toward the Pusan beachhead. But by Wednesday, a wild charge of 10,000 Red infantrymen threw the UN troops out of the city. The US Second Division's tanks had driven into the southwest area, and UN infantry had also tried to drive a wedge into the southwestern sector, when the Reds struck. At midnight that day Communist forces were pouring out of Wonju in an attempt to annihilate the Allied forces. At the end of the week, though, the US Air Force had given the Communists a bloody nose at Wonju. The Reds broke and ran from a ridge two miles south of the city when American flyers burned and blasted 6 million square yards with 275 tons of bombs.

By Thursday, Red spearheads had reached 70 miles beyond the 38th Parallel in central Korea as Allied planes were blasting increasing Red war traffic south of the capital. The Communist central front slackened, however, in a continuing blizzard of sleet and snow. To the southeast a new Red column slashed within six miles of Tanyang, major road and rail hub 35 miles south of Wonju. Communist troops were now only 65 miles from the old Pusan line.

The US 8th Army imposed full wartime censorship on news coverage of the Korean War on Tuesday and threatened to court-martial newsmen who deliberately report any troop movements without authorization. Veteran war correspondents agreed the regulations were the most inclusive they had ever received from any Army headquarters. All dispatches filed to publications throughout the world would be screened for military information which might harm the work effort or morale of the troops.

President Truman submitted a 10-point program for building US defenses against the possibility of a "full-scale war." He said the nation must prepare for full wartime mobilization and the required buildup of plant capacity to turn our arms and supplies. He declared that the aggression in Korea was part of the attempt by the Russian Communist dictatorship to take over the world, step by step. He said "The threat of world conquest by Soviet Russia endangers our liberty and endangers the kind of world in which the free spirit of man can survive."

A federal sales tax was being considered which would bring \$15 billion [\$150 billion in 2020] to help fund the war effort, but the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee indicated that it would be a last resort. This would be separate from the \$6-10 billion of new taxes on individuals and corporations which it was believed President Roosevelt was considering. The sales tax was later rejected by the Administration. On Friday, the President called on Congress to increase taxes "much more" than the \$8 billion boost voted in 1950. "The new tax increases...must press harder upon every source of revenue," he said.

Britain acknowledged through its UN delegate that it may be necessary for the United Nations to break with Communist China, but pledged that if such a step is taken "we all leap together." It was unclear what that break might look like, but if China was declared as an aggressor nation, everything from diplomatic and economic

sanctions to military action would be possible. Late in the week, a last chance five-point program for peace in Korea was slated for overwhelming approval in the Main Political Committee.

Secretary of Defense Marshall asked Congress to enact a program which would require all 18-year-old men to enter the armed forces for 27 months. Earlier it was announced that the Defense Department would probably also ask Congress to raise the top draft age from 25 to 27. It had previously unveiled plans to ask that the lower draft age limit be cut to 18 from 19, and to extend the draft period. A compromise to 18-1/2 years was in the works, though. It was also disclosed that the armed forces had raised their goal to 3.46 million men and women in service by next 30 June.

(Photo courtesy newspapers.com, Carlisle Evening Sentinel)