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The Korean War, 70 Years Ago, The Inquirer, Philadelphia, PA

Korean War Weekly Front Pages

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The drive to the Yalu River, the border with China.



American troops captured the major North Korean port of Chinnampo early Sunday in the wake of a second parachute landing that placed nearly 6,000 paratroopers across the path of Communist-launched guerilla warfare. The trap around Reds in the Pyongyang area was tightened the morning before when an additional 1,800 men of the 11th Airborne Division dropped into the Sukchon-Sunchon area 26 miles north of Pyongyang to reinforce 4,000 dropped there Friday.

Korean republican forces drove within 50 miles of the Manchurian border, chasing Korean Red army remnants in a campaign that had become a rout. On the front to the north of the fallen capital of Pyongyang, an American headquarters spokesman said North Korean resistance had reached its lowest ebb since the Reds started the war by invading South Korea on 25 June. Late in the week, it was reported that the American Fifth Infantry Regiment had pushed up North Korea's west coast close to the Manchurian border; a US Army spokesman indicated it would go all the way to the frontier.

US Marines of the 50,000-man 10th Corps landed at Wonsan, a city on the east coast of North Korea. Their commander stated, "I'm going to the Manchurian border as soon as I get some troops in here. The landing by the Marines was delayed six days by the most extensive sea minefields in military history, which the North Koreans had sown at the port city 70 miles above the 38th parallel and directly across Korea from Pyongyang.

Amid the first bitter cold of winter, a South Korean spearhead had reached the Yalu River that separates Korea from China (Manchuria), and a South Korean general charged, "We are up against the Chinese Communist Army." Indeed it did seem likely that some 40,000 Chinese were now in North Korea. Patrols of one Republican division had stabbed to the Yalu River with minimal opposition, but behind it, other UN forces were engaged in heavy fighting.

The US Far East Air Force reported that its airmen had flown more than 50,000 individual combat missions since 26 June, the day after the North Korean invasion. More than half the flights were made by fighter planes. The Air Force said that more than 25,000 tons of bombs were dropped during the 117-day period. In addition, some 75,000 rockets were fired and 850,000 gallons of napalm were dropped.

Tank-led US First Cavalry Division troops raced northward from Pyongyang early in the week in an effort to rescue 150 American prisoners of war before their Communist captors had time to kill them. The prisoners, part of a half-starved, beaten, bedraggled group of 376 men who were forced to make a "death march" from Seoul to Pyongyang, were believed to be held in a train stalled in a tunnel about 40 miles north of the capital. The next day the news came that at least 68 of the American prisoners had been machine-gunned to death. The victims' bodies were found near the Sunchon railway tunnel about 10 miles north of that city. Reports initially indicated that 100 others had been freed, but later in the week, it was feared that 150 other Americans may have met the same fate as the 70 found earlier.

Controls being drafted by the National Production Authority would ban or curtail the use of aluminum in some civilian products such as bicycles, sports goods, and toys. The NPA was at work on orders governing both copper and aluminum, with the aim of spreading military contracts equitably through those industries.

The US was reported to have told the UN that Korean Relief and rehabilitation would cost about \$240 million a year [\$2.6 billion in 2020 dollars]. Some sources said that with the prospect that the relief might last three years, the US might have to assume most if not all of the responsibility and burden.

(Photo courtesy newspapers.com, Philadelphia Inquirer)