## Korean War, 70 Years Later, The Record, Wilkes-Barre, PA

Korean War Weekly Front Pages

3 December – 9 December 1950

The Record, Wilkes-Barre, PA

Retreat.



On Monday, the US Eighth Army began pulling out of Pyongyang. Its headquarters and UN troops of two corps started moving south. Front echelons of a 1,000,000-man Chinese army had not yet reached the former North Korean capital. Another Eighth Army corps had been crushed by the Reds 25 November at Tokchon. That started a UN retreat that had now exceeded 70 miles with the pullback from Pyongyang, which had been captured by the Allies on 20 October. The next day the Communists seized the airfield on the city's northeast outskirts as UN troops continued to pull out, leaving piles of burning material and setting off demolition charges on the way. By midweek, the UN retreat in the west had halted at new lines just south of Pyongyang.

There was a retreat, too, in northeastern Korea, but their Communist forces barred the way. US First Division Marines and elements of the Army's Seventh Division were at the south tip of the great Chosin Reservoir after bloodily breaking out of Red traps on both sides of the lake. B-26 light bombers had been ordered to blast the Reds all day on Monday; their mission was to cut a path down which the Americans could race out of danger. As the week progressed, drives to break out of the reservoir area continued through more traps in frigid weather. Some of the progress was made under the protecting guns of US warships. On Friday more than 20,000 trapped Marines and soldiers battled down a snow-swept, treacherous mountain road under attack from Chinese Reds crouching on overlooking ridges. They were pushing along a gauntlet toward the escape port of Hungnam on the east coast, where their US Navy rescuers waited.

Grave-faced Congressional leaders left a State Department conference on the Korean crisis on Monday, declaring the situation to be "very serious." The closed-door talks climaxed a day-long series of meetings begun by President Truman. The discussions coincided with similar discussions among members of the US mission to the UN, and with the arrival to Washington of the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, who was said to be "soberly optimistic" peace talks could succeed. Talks between the two allies included a discussion of what to do in case another Dunkirk-type evacuation would be necessary. On Thursday there was a joint announcement that US and British troops would not withdraw their forces willingly or voluntarily from Korea. The President and PM had apparently agreed to five steps their governments could take to curb Communist threats. A sixth, a naval blockade of the Communist Chinese coast, was still under consideration. At the end of the week came another joint announcement that the two nations may be willing to halt a rearmament drive if Russian and Red Chinese leaders would "modify their conduct" and make an acceptable peace.

The US alerted the UN General Assembly to be ready to deal with the intervention of Chinese Communists in Korea. India's delegate was preparing to meet with the delegate from Red China in an attempt to mediate a peaceful settlement. On 5 December thirteen Middle Eastern and Asian nations appealed to Communist China to refrain from crossing the 38th parallel in their power drive against UN forces, but the plea was rejected by the Soviet Union.

Congress found its hands suddenly filled with war-related work and prospects of early adjournment were virtually discarded. Leaders now expected the lame duck session to adjourn just before Christmas, or to grind away right up to 3 January when the new 82nd Congress was to take over.

The Commerce Department tightened its controls on exports to Red China again, amid angry demands by some lawmakers that the US and Britain impose absolute embargoes.

The invasion of Korea by Chinese Communist forces had thrown Korea's civilian population into turmoil. The UN estimated that 80 to 90 percent of the civilian population of North Korea – as many as 6.3 million people – were fleeing southward in advance of the Chinese. This contrasted with only 20 percent who had fled before UN forces moving north.

The Turman Administration presented Congress a \$3.1 billion [\$33.5 billion in 2020] program for building bomb shelters and otherwise mobilizing the nation's civil defense. The federal government proposed to match the expenditures of cities and states on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Nearly two-thirds would be spent on "communal" shelters.

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