

This Year Will Mark 16th Christmas U.S. Troops Have Spent in Korea

By SAMUEL KIM
United Press International
Along the Truce Line, Korea — (UPI) — It will be a lonely Christmas this year for most of the 50,000 American GIs stationed in Korea.

This will be the 16th Christmas U. S. troops have spent in Korea and the 11th since they arrived in combat force to repel Communist invaders. Some of the soldiers who spent Christmas of 1950 slogging across snow-covered mountains in the bloody war against the Communists are back again this year for another Christmas in Korea.

One of them is Spec. 5 Franklin R. Baum (West 704 Indiana st.), Spokane, Wash., who's now assigned to the U. S. 1st Corps at Uijongbu, north of Seoul and just south of the truce line.

Baum, now only 28, was a rifleman in the 24th Infantry Division deployed on the front line near Chunchon

when he spent his first Christmas in Korea.

"Christmas was just like another day then," he recalled. "There were no celebrations. I don't think I heard anybody say 'Merry Christmas' once. It was cold and miserable in the foxhole."

Baum, who returned to Korea only two months ago, added, "I was really young at that time and it was the very first Christmas I spent away from home."

But this year Christmas was a little lonelier, he said.

"This time I am married and it will be my first Christmas away from my wife and two children," he said. "Although I have no feeling of danger now as I did before, this Christmas is in no way better than the first one I spent here because I miss my family."

Sgt. Summer S. Wilson (1727 Bentler Manor) Detroit, another veteran of the Kore-

an fighting, felt the same way.

"I boarded an evacuation ship at Inchon on Christmas Eve, 1950, to retreat to Pusan and spent a quiet, homesick Christmas on the ship. It was most unusual, we were expecting a big attack from the Chinese and the people in Seoul all were fleeing south."

But that Christmas, the 49-

year-old Wilson said, was "not too bad" since he had spent three Christmases overseas in Europe during World War II.

"This coming Christmas probably will be the worst one for me as far as my personal feelings go," he said. "I will miss my little girl, Linda, who is 6 years old. But that's the way it has to be."

"I hope this will be the last Christmas away from home for me," he added.

One consolation

There's one consolation this time, however, Wilson said. "Living conditions here are much improved." The hot showers, running water, electric lighting, recreational facilities, permanent-type quar-

ters and other conveniences

"I never thought this would

happen." "Luckily," Wilbur said, "I will be off-duty for three days beginning Christmas Day."

The Army will go all out to provide the GIs the best Christmas it can, turkey dinner with all the trimmings, holiday programs at the chapels and special entertainment at service clubs. And mail rooms are working around the clock to try to get the Christmas packages to the soldiers before Dec. 25.

In the combat units manning the truce line most of the soldiers will get a few

days off from their rugged training.

And, as usual, the GIs will

share their Christmas gifts

and food with orphans. Al-

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The GIs will play Santa Claus

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International Unit Functions Well in Western Germany

By WELLINGTON LONG
United Press International

Heidelberg, Germany — (UPI) — An international battalion of the type that would have to be duplicated many times if NATO becomes the "fourth nuclear power" already is in being here.

Composed of a company each of American, French and West German soldiers, the battalion started forming last May, although it has been functioning effectively only since Oct. 1.

"This is not an experiment, but an active, functioning battalion," said Lt. Col. Robert M. Cooke, the 42-year-old Mississippi who commands it. "This offers lots of possibilities for combat because of the interchangeability."

The most immediate possibility that comes to mind is execution of the scheme generally attributed to Gen. Lauris Norstad, supreme allied commander in Europe, for making NATO a "fourth nuclear power."

Under this proposal, international NATO units would be formed under officers representing the nation which provided each unit's nuclear weapons. In practice, this would almost always be the United States.

Support Battalion

While the unit here is the support battalion for NATO's Central Army Group and as such has mainly communications and engineering duties, it has shown such international units are possible.

It is the first of its kind, and was formed at the time when French President Charles de Gaulle is pushing plans for an independent French nuclear force.

This scheme, many western leaders fear, would reverse such integration as has been achieved so far in NATO.

But the support battalion works blithely on as if the great debate in Paris wasn't happening.

Cooke has German and French deputy commanders.

The men eat in the same mess hall, live in the same buildings, are paid at the same time, do their off-duty drinking together, work together and study together.

The battalion military police platoon is a composite one, as is the motor pool.

"There are no problems, no conflicts," Cooke reported.

West German Capt. Walter Tank, a 44-year-old veteran of armored infantry, agreed.

In their barracks, all the soldiers of one nation live on one floor, and their own government supplies their turn-

ture, although for some reason not immediately apparent NATO supplies the pillow cases and mattress covers for all of them. Blankets and sheets are still considered a national responsibility.

In the long run, Cooke said, the aim will be to provide everyone in the battalion with whatever is the best provided by each nation.

Wine Offered

Wine, therefore, may be offered at the evening meal soon, because that is a French army custom, although neither the Americans nor Germans follow it.

The American furniture is spartan by comparison with that of the Germans, for instance. German squad rooms are much smaller and afford much more privacy than do those of the Americans.

All of the officers speak at least two of the three languages. The enlisted men, however, generally will have to learn a second language. The boys in the military police platoon decided they ought to learn it together, so German and English, for instance, are taught simultaneously to a mixed group, the Germans helping their American buddies with enunciation and vice versa.

Pay Difference

The difference in pay — the Americans earn the most with the Germans second and the French a poor third — so far at least has caused no significant difficulty.

"The first five days after payday," a German soldier said, "there's some trouble because the Americans always want to go to such expensive places. But after that, we're all broke anyway."

Moscow People Tiring Of Tourist Questions

Moscow, Maine — (UPI) — A lot of people in this Somerset county town of 600 inhabitants would like to change the name to something else — perhaps Wyman Dam.

When it was incorporated in 1816, the town was named in honor of the Russian capital. But times have changed. And local residents are tired of answering the query from joking tourists, "Where is Khrushchev's house?"

There has been some talk of changing the name to Wyman Dam, the local name for Moscow's post office. But no definite move to effect such a change has been made so far.



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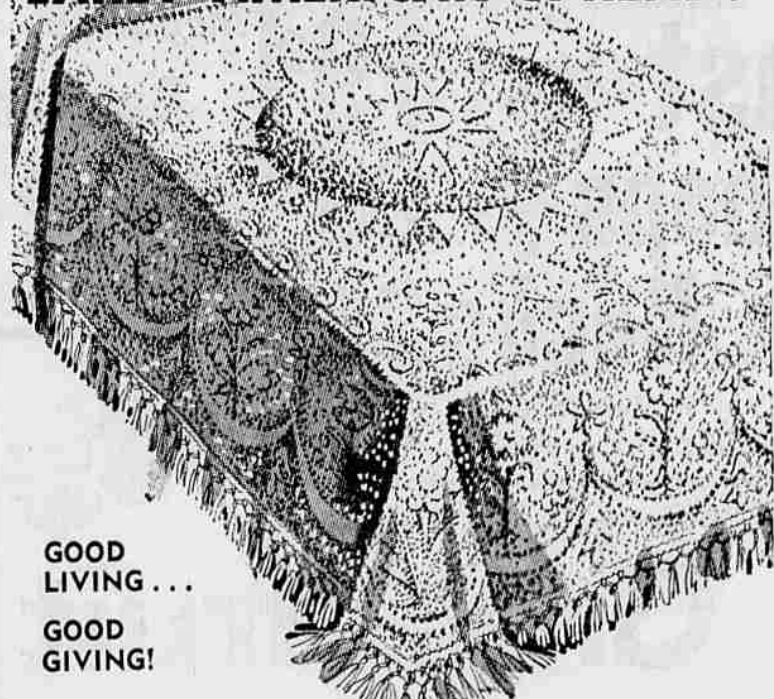
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