

Captured Doctors Wouldn't Agree Most Prisoners Died Of Old Social Diseases

Editor's Note—This is the last story by AP photographer Frank Noel on his 32 months as a Communist prisoner in North Korea.

By FRANK NOEL
As told to Olen Clements
TOKYO (AP)—After I received my camera in January 1952, the Chinese let me take pictures in four of the six camps where non-Korean war prisoners were held.

In my wandering around the camps I got a pretty fair idea of how many men were in each and I estimated there were between 4,000 and 5,000 men, mostly Americans, in the hands of the Reds. Another 3,000 died in the camps and are buried in the hills around Pyongyang and Chongchong, where

most of the camps were located. That would account for up to 8,000 of the 13,000 non-Korean troops estimated to be missing today.

The Chinese did not mark these camps for aerial identification during the first year of the war. When they did mark them they used the Chinese characters that I was told meant "peace" rather than a prisoner camp.

One day about three months ago I saw three wagon loads of TNT—about 60 boxes of it to the wagon—dug up and taken out of Camp where 1,300 Americans, British, Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, Turks, French and Greek POWs were held. If a bomb had struck that camp accidentally the whole bunch would have been killed.

The Reds tried to cover up the great number of deaths among the POWs—sometimes as many as 48 bodies in one day were seen being moved out of the camp—by trying to force Allied doctors to say the men died of syphilis contracted before they were captured. None of the doctors would go for it and a good many of them did time in the hole as a result.

We were held right near the border of Manchuria and a Chinese leader told me one day if the Allies ever tried to liberate the prisoners the Chinese would take those they wanted to keep across the border into China. Perhaps they have done so now.

When I was captured in November 1950 along with Marines, Army

and British troops at Koto, North Korea, they walked us to Camp 5—about 700 miles over the winding route they made us take. Camp 5 then held officers and enlisted men. That was about April 1951.

In the summer they herded about 600 men and officers into a Korean theater and made the rest listen to loudspeakers outside while a high Chinese gave a bitter harangue against the "capitalistic warmongers."

He told the enlisted men they should have turned their guns on their officers, who were "the real warmongers in America." The lecture didn't go over very well with either the enlisted men or officers. The Communists tried every way in the world to indoctrinate the prisoners. They succeeded in some cases but I would say the percentage was very small.

They used race against race and nationality against nationality in an effort to stir up animosity among the prisoners. On that score I was real proud to note 99 percent of our men, regardless of race or creed, stood pat. They knew what was going on and didn't buy it.

Later on the Reds opened up Camp 2 and moved all the officers up there. They insisted that I was a Marine captain and moved me there with the officers despite my protests that I was a civilian war correspondent.

In trying to make me admit I was a Marine captain they made

me stand at attention for hours at a time out in the raw cold. Other times they made me stand with my nose pressed against a bright light for hours on end in an effort to break me down or force me to write something favorable to them. I guess that is what is wrong with my eyes now.

Once, while they had me in the hole, they tried to force me to write letters down to my correspondent friends at Panmunjom, Amusan and Seoul, telling them they were being misled by the United Nations propaganda. They also asked me to write to the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, Baltimore Sun, Kansas City Star and the Los Angeles Times, and tell them "the people's peace movement" was right and just. I refused. They even forged some of our names to letters and published them. I know of several such cases.

Actually, I've talked with some of the Chinese soldiers from time to time and they have told me that half or more of the so-called volunteers

are anti-Communist and were conscripted.

One day in early 1951 some of the Turks, who were pretty staunch Allied troops, heard that the New York Herald Tribune's reporter, Maggie Higgins, had been captured. They told me about it. I had known Maggie in Berlin and again in Korea. None of us liked the idea of an American woman being in the hands of the Reds so we got together a few little things we could spare for her and about \$80 in American greenbacks and gave it to the Turks to get to her. We knew the Chinese were crazy for greenbacks and figured that small amount of money might help her out.

The Turks took the money and about four months later returned

everything to all the donors because they had learned through the grapevine that Miss Higgins had not been captured.

I sure liked those Turks. They were good soldiers and good men. The Chinese never were able to do much with them. The Turks just shrugged their shoulders and pretended they didn't understand. They even brought in a Turkish-speaking Russian who had once worked in the Russian Embassy at Ankara. He didn't have any luck either and may be in a Russian hole somewhere today for having failed.

The Reds told us one day that the United States government was holding up \$7,000 letters to POWs. I think it was the other way around.

I know people wrote me and

thanked me for making pictures of their prisoner kin. Americans do things like that. I got about 10 such letters in prison camp but I'll bet there were many more.

I had intended to write letters to those 10 or 12 people and thank them but the Communists took those letters away from me when I was freed on Aug. 9. Now I don't have the names or addresses. I was only permitted to write two letters a month while I was in prison and of course they went to

my wife. They took away from me every address I had in writing when I left.

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* Due to iron deficiency anemia



'Hot' Note On POWs Readied

PANMUNJOM (AP)—Seventy-five more Americans were liberated here today as the U.N. Command prepared to deliver a stern note to the Communists demanding return of all Allied captives.

The note, which one Allied officer described as "very hot," was to be handed the Reds at Wednesday's session of the Joint Committee for the Repatriation of Prisoners of War.

The largest group of Allied soldiers yet turned back in one day—456—rode into Panmunjom today in open trucks.

And 130 Americans liberated earlier anxiously awaited the journey home aboard the hospital ship Haven, scheduled to leave Inchon harbor for Japan Thursday. Only sick and wounded are aboard.

Another 400 able-bodied American repatriates start the voyage home Saturday. They will make the two-week trip from Inchon to San Francisco on the troopship Marine Adder.

The Communists said 450 Allied prisoners would be repatriated from North Korea Thursday.

The group will include 60 Americans, 90 British and 300 South Koreans.

In addition to the 75 Americans freed Wednesday, the Communists returned 75 British and 306 South Koreans, raising the total in 15 days to 6,083 of the 12,763 Allied soldiers the Reds said they held.

Moving back to life under Communist rule were 602 shouting flag-waving North Koreans, the smallest group of Reds yet delivered by the U.N. Command.

US Veto Over Nationalists Confirmed

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States is supplying substantial modern military equipment to Chinese Nationalist forces on Formosa but has reserved for itself a powerful voice over any possible major operations by them against Red China.

Officials who reported this said the American government is especially concerned about the possibility of attacks on the Communist mainland which could be expected to provoke Red retaliation and thereby involve the U. S. 7th Fleet. Information available here indicated that an agreement with the government of Chiang Kai-shek to assure the United States a voice in major strategic decisions did not affect the kind of harassing operations which Chiang's forces have long been carrying on against Communist units on islands near the mainland.

Under some conditions, it was clear that the U. S. right to share in decisions on operations could give this country a virtual veto. Such a veto presumably would be exercised on projected Nationalist military operations which would involve American forces in a manner or to a degree inconsistent with American interests.

Would-Be Holdup Man Settles For 3 Bottles of Pop

ALBUQUERQUE (AP)—A stubborn clerk late yesterday turned a would-be holdup man into a cash customer.

Frances Edwards, 22, said an aged man approached her park refreshment stand, displayed a gun and threatened to kill her if she didn't hand over the money in the cash drawer. She refused.

The elderly bandit ran around the stand shouting, "Let me in. Give me the money." Finally, he put up his gun, ordered three bottles of pop, paid for them hopped in his car and drove off.

Car Overturns; Piggy Bank Spills

TECUMSEH, Okla. (AP)—Mrs. Tedumseh Merle McCaulley, 22, of Norman, lost control of her car and overturned with three children in a ditch yesterday, but the only casualty was a piggy bank. It burst open and scattered silver dollars all over the highway. Highway Patrolman C. A. Morris said it took him two hours to retrieve the coins.

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