

Peking story (American prisoners in China) - correspondence, letters and ca...

HS L 179:81



Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Peking story - 1955

19-21 Jan.

- a.) U.S. Mission to the U.N. - Note to correspondents: - Statements by the State Dept. Press office.
- b.) Text of the Sec. of State, Mr. Dulles' letter.

UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

2 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

MURRAY HILL 3-6810

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

January 19, 1955

The following is the text of a statement by ~~Secretary of State Dulles, following his meeting today with United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold:~~

*The State Department
Press office!*

Secretary of State Dulles, Ambassador Lodge and Assistant Secretary Robertson met with the United Nations Secretary General Mr. Hammarskjold and the United Nations Under Secretary Mr. Bokhari. They conferred for about an hour and one half. Mr. Hammarskjold gave Secretary Dulles a detailed report of the conversations that he had had in Peiping in pursuance of his mandate from the United Nations to make continuing and unremitting efforts to effect the release of captured personnel of the United Nations Command detained by the Chinese Communist regime in violation of the terms of the Korean armistice.

The Secretary General gave a full account of the information and views that had been exchanged at Peiping on the question of the United Nations Command prisoners and expressed the hope that given restraint on all sides it will be possible to effect their release. In the meantime he had made inquiries and received assurances regarding the well being of the prisoners and he has transmitted this information to the Secretary of State. This will be transmitted in turn to the families by the United States Defense Department.

Secretary Dulles expressed on behalf of the President and himself their appreciation of the painstaking efforts which had been made and their hope that the United Nations would persist effectively in the course upon which it had embarked pursuant to the United Nations General Assembly resolution of last December. Secretary Dulles pointed out that there was in the United States a strong sentiment in favor of direct action but that it was the policy of the President for the time being to leave the handling of this matter insofar as it was covered by the United Nations resolution to the United Nations itself, and to abstain from direct intervention which might embarrass the activities and efforts of the United Nations itself. The Secretary did however point out that the United States Government and indeed the entire American people were strongly aroused by the unlawful imprisonment of United States citizens and that they awaited with eagerness and anxiety the further developments in this matter.

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TEXT OF DULLES' LETTER

"I want to express to you the deep personal sympathy and concern of your government in the cruel dilemma which the Chinese communists have forced upon you through the continued illegal imprisonment of your (husband, son, brother, etc...)

"Public opinion throughout the free world will judge the words and deeds of those who have it within their power to end promptly the tragic grief which they have visited upon you. Only by releasing those they hold can ~~the~~ the Chinese communists convincingly demonstrate concern for the human suffering they have caused.

"The increasingly belligerent attitude and actions of the Chinese communists in recent days have forced this government to the reluctant conclusion that it would be imprudent for the time being to issue passports valid for travel to communist China to any American citizens. ~~Therefore~~ This decision is made only after careful deliberation and in the belief that it is in the best ~~of~~ interests of our nation.

"In the interest of peace we do not think it prudent to afford the Chinese communists further opportunities to provoke our nation and strain its patience further.

"Knowing the anxiety to which you have been subjected, we ~~will~~ cherish the hope that the unremitting efforts to which the United Nations has ~~dedicated~~ dedicated itself will secure the release of the imprisoned United States military personnel. If the United Nations efforts should be unavailing, we shall renew our own efforts.

"With admiration for the fortitude which you have manifested, and with my warm personal sympathy,

"Sincerely yours,

"John Foster Dulles."

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NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

January 21, 1955

The following was issued by Department of State spokesman today, January 21, 1955:

The Secretary General of the United Nations was informed during his Peking discussions that the Chinese Communist authorities might permit relatives to visit those United States personnel who had been convicted and those whose cases were under investigation and that they would provide them the necessary entry visas. This morning the Chinese Communists made this announcement.

The United States Government cannot of course in good conscience encourage those who may wish to go into an area where the normal protections of an American passport cannot be offered.

World public opinion will judge the motives of those who, having it in their power and being under an obligation to end promptly the tragic grief they have caused, now visit upon the families of these imprisoned Americans a harrowing dilemma.

It is by releasing those they hold that the Chinese Communists can convincingly show concern for the human sufferings they have caused.

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