

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

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Peking story - 1955

20 Jan.

U.S. Press reactions to D.H. Mission
in China.

(DRAFT)

Jan. 20.

I have just seen the enclosed Associated Press story from Washington which very clearly shows that the Department of State has given publicity to parts of the report of my conversations with Mr. Chou En-lai that I gave to Mr. Dulles and yourself. While the story is quite accurate, I feel that this might have the effect of provoking Mr. Chou En-lai into giving publicity to his position on the points mentioned. I am sure you would agree that such a development would not be helpful, and I regret that there was no consultation with me before revealing part of a very private discussion to the press.

NX93

ADD 1ST LEAD PRISONERS WASHINGTON X X X A FAILURE."

DULLES SAID HAMMARSKJOLD AND AMBASSADOR HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., U.S. DELEGATE TO THE U.N., WOULD COME HERE TOMORROW MORNING FOR THE TALKS.

REMINDED THAT LODGE HAD SAID HE IS "CONFIDENT" THE AIRMEN WOULD BE RELEASED. DULLES SAID HE DOUBTED LODGE WOULD CONSIDER HAMMARSKJOLD'S MISSION A SUCCESS UNTIL THE AIRMEN ARE RELEASED.

TERMING THE IMPRISONMENT OF THE AIRMEN AS INDEFENSIBLE AND WRONGFUL, DULLES SAID HAMMARSKJOLD'S MISSION TO PEIPING WOULD NOT BE A SUCCESS UNTIL THE AIRMEN ARE BACK IN THE UNITED STATES.

DULLES SAID HE WANTED TO EXPLAIN TO HAMMARSKJOLD THAT THE GOVERNMENT FACES A PROBLEM IN THIS COUNTRY IN STANDING ASIDE WHILE LETTING THE UNITED NATIONS WORK ON THE CASE. HE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE UNITED STATES CAN LET THE U.N. EFFORTS GO ON FOREVER.

MOREAK1201P

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X95

ADD 1ST LEAD PRISONERS WASHINGTON XXX ON FOREVER.

IF THE U. N. FAILS TO FREE THE PRISONERS, DULLES SAID, THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE MATTER ITSELF.

DULLES ALSO SAID HE WANTED TO TALK TO HAMMARSKJOLD SO THAT HE COULD HAVE A DIRECT FIRST HAND REPORT FROM THE U. N. DIPLOMAT ON JUST WHAT TOOK PLACE DURING HIS TALKS IN PEIPING WITH RED CHINESE PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI.

HAMMARSKJOLD HAD REPORTED TO LODGE DIRECTLY AND THIS INFORMATION WAS SENT IMMEDIATELY TO DULLES AND PRESIDENT EISENHOWER.

DULLES SAID IT WAS ONLY RIGHT AND, IN FACT, HIS DUTY TO GET FIRST HAND INFORMATION TO INFORM THE FAMILIES OF THE IMPRISONED MAN ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR THEIR RELEASE.

MORER1203P

NX101

ADD 1ST LEAD PRISONERS WASHINGTON XXX THEIR RELEASE.

DULLES ANSWERED MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FLIERS. HE SPOKE QUIETLY, WITHOUT EMOTION. BUT HE DID GO A LITTLE OUT OF HIS WAY TO SHOW HIS OBJECTIONS TO THE RED REGIME DESPITE MR. EISENHOWER'S CAUTION LAST FRIDAY AGAINST "REPRISAL OR RETALIATION" THAT MIGHT UPSET CHANCES FOR FREEING THE FLIERS.

FOR EXAMPLE, DULLES WAS ASKED ABOUT A SPEECH MADE IN PHILADELPHIA LAST THURSDAY NIGHT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE WALTER ROBERTSON. ROBERTSON DENOUNCED THE REDS AS "ARROGANT...CONTEMPTUOUS...DEFIANT IMPOSTERS" AND ACCUSED THE REDS OF PLAYING A "GANGSTER ROLE" IN THEIR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

DULLES SAID HE REGARDED THE ROBERTSON SPEECH AS A REFLECTION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE RED CHINESE REGIME. HE NOTED THAT MUCH THAT HE HAD SAID EARLIER WAS MUCH OF WHAT ROBERTSON HAD SAID JUST THE OTHER NIGHT.

AT ANOTHER POINT DULLES WAS ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT THE COMMUNISTS WERE HOLDING THE AMERICANS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ENTRY INTO THE U. N. DULLES SAID HE DOUBTED THAT THE REDS WERE SO STUPID AS TO THINK THIS WAS A WAY TO GET INTO THE U. N. ON THE CONTRARY, HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE IMPRISONMENT OF THE AMERICANS WAS CREATING A FURTHER BARRIER TOWARD RED CHINA'S MEMBERSHIP.

MEANWHILE, KNOWLAND SAID HE SEES NO CONFLICT BETWEEN HIMSELF AND MR. EISENHOWER IN THEIR DIFFERING VIEWS ON HAMMARSKJOLD'S MISSION TO PEIPING.

(PICKUP 2ND PGH: KNOWLAND, SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER, ETC.)

R1218P

T

CM35 BULLETIN KNOWLAND

CHICAGO, JAN. 17--(INS)--SEN. WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND (R) OF CALIF., TODAY CALLED U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL DAG HAMMARSKJOLD'S MISSION TO RED CHINA FOR RELEASE OF 11 AMERICAN FLIERS A FAILURE.

KNOWLAND, IN A FIERY ADDRESS BEFORE 700 MEMBERS OF THE NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES ASSOCIATION CONVENTION IN CHICAGO, SAID:

"THE MISSION OF UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL HAMMARSKJOLD WAS NOT A SUCCESS. AND IN MY JUDGMENT NO SERVICE IS DONE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OR THOSE OF THE FREE WORLD BY PRETENDING THAT IT WAS."

AR

1208PFC

CM36 BULLETIN ADD ONE KNOWLAND CHICAGO XXX WAS."

KNOWLAND POINTED OUT THAT THE U.N. OFFICIAL FAILED TO SECURE THE RELEASE OR "ANY PROSPECTIVE" FUTURE RELEASE DATE OF THE AIRMEN HELD BY THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS.

THE SENATOR DENOUNCED THE POLICY OF PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AS "COMMUNIST PACIFIST PROPAGANDA" AND CRITICIZED U.N. MILITARY DECISIONS IN KOREA. KNOWLAND DECLARED:

"OUR POWER WAS SO DILUTED BY THE U.N. DURING THE KOREAN ACTION THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF OUR RESPONSIBLE MILITARY COMMANDERS WERE CONSTANTLY VETOED OR IGNORED AND OUR JOINT VENTURE PREVENTED THE WINNING OF THE KOREAN CONFLICT.

"WILL THE SAME JOINT VENTURE PREVENT US FROM SECURING THE RELEASE OF OUR OWN MEN IN THE UNIFORM OF THE AMERICAN ARMED FORCES WITHOUT PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE CHINESE COMMUNIST REGIME?"

"THE TIME IS COMING IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE WHEN THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE TO INSIST UPON A SECOND DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE!"

KNOWLAND LATER TOLD NEWSMEN THAT HE MEANT THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE TO DECLARE INDEPENDENCE FROM THE U.N. IF THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS ARE ADMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP.

KNOWLAND ASSERTED THERE ARE "REASONABLE GROUNDS" TO SUSPECT THE CHINESE REDS ARE HOLDING EVEN MORE AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL PRISONER. EXPRESSING IMPATIENCE WITH THE U.N., THE SENATOR ADDED:

"ARE THEY PREPARED TO APPLY AGAINST THE CHINESE COMMUNIST REGIME ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AS WELL AS MORAL CONDEMNATION BY RESOLUTION?"

"IF THESE ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL, ARE THEY PREPARED TO SUPPORT A TIGHT NAVAL AND AIR BLOCKADE UPON THE CHINA COAST?"

"IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, HOWEVER, NEITHER THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT NOR THE CONGRESS CAN ESCAPE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING WHATEVER EFFECTIVE STEPS ARE NECESSARY TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF THESE MEN WEARING THE UNIFORM OF THIS COUNTRY." 1225PFC-CP

ADD 7 PRISONERS

SEN. HOMER E. CAPEHART (R-IND.), A MEMBER OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, PROPOSED THAT THE COMMITTEE ASK HAMMARSKJOLD TO APPEAR FOR QUESTIONING ABOUT THE PRISONERS.

BUT CHAIRMAN GEORGE, ALSO TALKING WITH REPORTERS, PROMPTLY KNOCKED DOWN THE IDEA. GEORGE SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR HAMMARSKJOLD TO "COMMUNICATE WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND LET THEM REPORT TO US."

GEORGE SAID DULLES WILL BE ASKED TO GIVE THE COMMITTEE A FULL REPORT AS SOON AS CONVENIENT AFTER THE HAMMARSKJOLD TALKS.

CAPEHART SAID HE WAS NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE UNUSUAL "PRECEDENT" OF ASKING A U.N. OFFICIAL TO TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS. "THERE'S AN UNUSUAL PRECEDENT IN OUR 11 FLIERS BEING HELD," HE TOLD NEWSMEN.

SEN. ALEXANDER WILEY (R-WIS.), RANKING GOP MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE, ALSO SAID HE THOUGHT THE COMMITTEE HAS JURISDICTION. BUT HE DID NOT URGE TRYING TO CALL HAMMARSKJOLD.

1/18--JE114P

ADD 8 PRISONERS

DULLES' REQUEST THAT HAMMARSKJOLD COME TO WASHINGTON FOR A REPORT WAS GENERALLY CHEERED BY MEMBERS OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE.

GEORGE SAID THAT ON THE BASIS OF HIS TALKS WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT, HE HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT HAMMARSKJOLD IS "OPTIMISTIC."

GEORGE SAID "HIS ATTITUDE IS THAT HE IS OPTIMISTIC" AND THAT HAMMARSKJOLD SEEMS TO FEEL THAT "IF WE PERMIT (THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS) TO MAKE THE DECISION, THERE MIGHT BE A RELEASE OF THESE PRISONERS" SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE.

SENATE GOP LEADER KNOWLAND DID NOT AGREE WITH SUGGESTIONS THAT THE COMMITTEE SHOULD ASK THE UN OFFICIAL TO REPORT TO IT. "I THINK IT IS BETTER FOR HIM TO CONFER WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE," KNOWLAND SAID. !!

HE SAID THAT HAMMARSKJOLD COULD BE SWAMPED BY REQUESTS TO APPEAR BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF 60-ODD UN MEMBERS IF SUCH A PRECEDENT WERE SET.

SEN. HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (D-MINN.) SAID "IT WILL BE WELL TO HAVE A REPORT" FROM HAMMARSKJOLD TO DULLES AND "HAVE A REPORT ON THAT CONFERENCE TO THIS COMMITTEE."

HE SAID THAT IF HAMMARSKJOLD "COMES TO WASHINGTON, YOU CAN REST ASSURED THAT (DULLES) WILL BE ASKED TO REPORT ON THOSE DISCUSSIONS TO THE COMMITTEE."

MEANTIME, HUMPHREY TOOK ANOTHER POKE AT THE LACK OF UNITY IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENTS.

OBVIOUSLY REFERRING TO KNOWLAND'S ATTACK, HE SAID "THEY OUGHT TO HAVE ONE STORY. THERE OBVIOUSLY CAN'T BE TWO OR THREE WAYS OF INTERPRETING HAMMARSKJOLD'S MISSION."

HUMPHREY SAID "DULLES IS SECRETARY OF STATE; THERE ARE MANY MAYBE WHO'D LIKE TO BE BUT HE'S GOT THE APPOINTMENT."

1/18--JE142P

(RAID)

TAIPEH--RED CHINA TODAY INVADED AND CAPTURED NATIONALIST-HELD YIKIANGSHAN ISLAND, 20 MILES OFF THE CHINA MAINLAND IN THE TACHEN GROUP.

SUCCESS OF THE COMMUNIST AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS WAS REPORTED AT ONCE TO WASHINGTON BY U.S. MILITARY OBSERVERS IN THE FAR EAST.

IT WAS BELIEVED HERE AND IN TOKYO THAT THE COMMUNIST MOVE MIGHT BE THE FIRST STEP IN AN ATTEMPT BY RED CHINA TO SEIZE ALL THE STRATEGIC TACHEN ISLANDS GROUP--SOME 200 MILES NORTH OF FORMOSA.

OTHER, LESS PESSIMISTIC INTERPRETATIONS OF THE RED ACTION, SUGGESTED THAT THE COMMUNISTS MERELY WERE MAKING ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO FEEL OUT AMERICAN INTENTIONS TOWARD THE DEFENSE OF CHIANG'S OUTLYING DEFENSES.

OFFICIAL REPORTS RECEIVED HERE LATE TODAY CONFIRMED EARLIER COMMUNIST BROADCASTS BY PEIPING RADIO CLAIMING THAT THE ROCKY LITTLE ISLAND HAD FALLEN TO THE RED INVADERS.

THE COMMUNIST BROADCAST SAID THE NATIONAL DEFENDERS SURRENDERED AT 4 P.M. TUESDAY, TWO HOURS AFTER THE COMMUNIST INVASION FORCES HIT.

THE NATIONALIST MILITARY HIGH COMMAND MET IN A HURRIED, SECRET CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE RED INVASION THRUST.

THE RED CHINA VICTORY AT YIKIANGSHAN MARKED THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL CHINESE COMMUNIST INVASION OF ANY OF THE STRING OF NATIONALIST-HELD OFFSHORE ISLANDS WHICH FORM FORMOSA'S OUTER DEFENSE PERIMETER.

1/18--EG1230P

(PRISONERS)

SEN. WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND SAID HE SEES NO CONFLICT BETWEEN HIMSELF AND PRESIDENT EISENHOWER IN THEIR DIFFERING VIEWS ON DAG HAMMARSKJOLD'S FREE-THE-FLIERS MISSION TO RED CHINA.

THE CALIFORNIAN HAS CALLED THE EFFORTS TO FREE IMPRISONED AMERICAN FLIERS "A FAILURE." THE PRESIDENT URGES PATIENCE AND CAUTIONS AGAINST IMPETUOUS WORDS OR DEEDS AS LONG AS THERE IS ANY CHANCE OF SUCCESS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS' EFFORT.

AFTER KNOWLAND AND REPUBLICAN LEGISLATIVE LEADERS' MET WITH MR. EISENHOWER TODAY KNOWLAND WAS ASKED WHETHER HE BELIEVED THERE WAS ANY CONFLICT BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST AND HIS OWN REMARKS.

"I DO NOT," KNOWLAND SAID. "WE MAY LOOK AT THE SITUATION FROM A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT."

KNOWLAND SAID THE IMPRISONED FLIERS WERE NOT DISCUSSED AT THE WHITE HOUSE MEETING.

1/18--GE1046A

(FLEET)

THE CHINESE COMMUNIST INVASION OF TINY YIKIANGSHAN ISLAND APPEARS TO BE MORE OF A TEST OF THE U.S. 7TH FLEET'S ROLE IN THE DEFENSE OF FORMOSA THAN AN EFFORT BY PEIPING TO COLLECT ANY VALUABLE REAL ESTATE.

THE TINY ISLAND BARELY 20 MILES FROM THE MAINLAND IS BARREN AND ROCKY AND RISES STEEPLY OUT OF THE EAST CHINA SEA. LIKE THE OTHERS IN THE TACHEN ISLAND GROUP IT IS A MOUNTAIN PEAK, ALMOST UNINHABITABLE. IT ALSO IS WITHIN EASY ARTILLERY RANGE OF RED-HELD TOUMEN ISLAND.

ITS CHIEF VALUE IN THE PAST WAS ITS LIGHTHOUSE WARNING SHANGHAI-BOUND SHIPS AGAINST ROCKS. IN RECENT YEARS IT WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN EQUIPPED WITH RADAR TO KEEP CHECK ON SHIPPING AND AS AN AIR RAID WARNING STATION FOR FORMOSA.

AS A PIECE OF REAL ESTATE IT HAS NO GREAT VALUE. BUT IT HAS BEEN A VALUABLE LOOKOUT POST AND AS ONE OF A STRING OF ISLANDS FROM WHICH THE NATIONALISTS COULD INVADE THE MAINLAND OR SEND GUERILLA PARTIES ASHORE, IT HAS BEEN A THORN IN THE SIDE OF RED CHINA.

AS A TEST OF THE U. S. 7TH FLEET'S CURRENT ROLE IN THE DEFENSE OF FORMOSA THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS WOULD CONSIDER IT EVEN MORE VALUABLE. THE NEXT MOVE OF THE U. S. NAVY IS SOMETHING THAT HAS WORRIED PEIPING; WHAT IT WOULD DO IF SOME OF CHIANG'S OUTPOST ISLANDS WERE ATTACKED HAS WORRIED THEM MORE.

THEY MAY NOT GET THE ANSWER YET.

IN 1953 THE COMMUNISTS CLAIMED NEARLY A DOZEN ISLANDS CAPTURED FROM THE NATIONALISTS IN A STRING REACHING NORTH FROM HSIYANG ISLAND SOME 120 MILES NORTHWEST OF FORMOSA TO THE TACHENS NEARLY 200 MILES NORTH OF FORMOSA. THEY WERE LESS SUCCESSFUL LAST YEAR.

SINCE THEN THE UNITED STATES HAS STATED IT WOULD DEFEND FORMOSA AND THE PESSCADORES AGAINST COMMUNIST INVASION. THE PESSCADORES LIE BETWEEN FORMOSA AND THE MAINLAND, BUT ONLY SOME 40 MILES FROM FORMOSA AND MORE THAN TWICE THAT FROM THE MAINLAND.

WHETHER THE U. S. 7TH FLEET WOULD HELP THE NATIONALISTS DEFEND THE ISLANDS CLOSER TO THE MAINLAND IS SOMETHING PEIPING HAS BEEN TRYING TO FIND OUT FOR MONTHS.

AP adds on Knowland *from Chicago* -

Knowland added "that a massive propoganda buildup is taking place in the Un to silence those who would analyze the fact."

AP from Tokyo--Peiping radio intimates tie-up between release of airmen and question of admitting R^od China to United Nations.

"Peiping did not say so directly but it broadcast at some length comments in Indian newspapers on the recent talks between premier chou en-lai and Dag Hammerskjold, UN Secretary General)"