

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: 14-Jan-2010

KOREAN WAR: Moscow Marks Time

Soviet broadcasters, who have maintained an appearance of non-interference since the early days of the war, do not develop any new lines or make a propaganda commitment to any particular development in the Kaesong negotiations. They completely ignore the current jet battles, and they make a marked effort to persuade the Koreans concerning the strength of the Communist world; this attempted persuasion seems to be intended to establish a defensive position should the negotiations be re-opened, i. e. to prove that the Communists lead from strength not from weakness, and to reassure the suffering Koreans should open warfare resume.

In the first few days of the current two-week period there were occasional references to the correctness of the 38th Parallel as the demarcation line. In the last few days Moscow relayed Sino-Korean warnings of American plans for air attacks north of the Yalu. But neither issue has been developed into a leading topic.

Comment on the Korean war in Soviet Home Service broadcasts is characterized by an attempt to build up the strength of the Communist forces. Col. Tolchenov's 20 September military review reports that all U. N. offensives have been repulsed, but fails to identify the fighting front or to mention jet warfare. (These same omissions prevail in the military communiques.) In the first reference to rotation of American troops, Tolchenov claims that only the wounded are being returned home. This reference to increased American strength supports the thesis that the U. N. is using the period of negotiations to rebuild its strength and seems intended as a device to pin the blame on the West should hostilities be resumed.

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