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23 Jan 52

COMMUNIST GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN KOREA

Guerrilla activities have always figured importantly in Communist strategy vis-a-vis South Korea. Despite the current success of the UN anti-guerrilla campaign, the Communists are continuing to train irregulars and to attempt to infiltrate them behind UN lines. Guerrilla headquarters in North Korea is endeavoring to increase its radio communications facilities and may be reorganizing the partisan bands.

Before the war, the Communist guerrilla organization in South Korea was the operational arm of the North Korean Labor Party. Recruits were drawn primarily from political academies, and occasionally personnel was brought in from the North Korean People's Army. This well-organized guerrilla structure, containing many South Korean traitors, was a constant irritant to the Republic of Korea in 1949 and early 1950. In order to eliminate this growing threat, the Republic conducted an anti-guerrilla campaign in March and April of 1950, with a resultant thinning of the guerrilla ranks.

With the outbreak of hostilities and the ensuing disruption of the partisan bands caused by UN advances, the command structure and functions of the guerrillas underwent a change. Although the new emphasis was on military activity against UN lines of communications and rear area installations, guerrilla operations continued to reflect a strong political influence.

Prisoner of war reports, partially confirmed by communications intelligence, indicate that the partisans are under the control of the 526th Army Unit (often referred to as the "Guerrilla Guidance Bureau"), established in late 1950, which reports directly to the headquarters of the North Korean People's Army. The next lower echelon, the Eastern and Western Liaison Offices, set up in the Communist forward areas about mid-1951 to facilitate control by the 526th Army Unit, has the responsibility of training and dispatching guerrillas, radio operators, political officers and messengers into South Korea. Guerrilla messages tentatively suggest that the "Eastern Liaison office" is primarily concerned with military operations and supply, while the "Western Liaison office" engages in espionage and organization.

Operationally, the guerrilla forces in South Korea are divided into six units -- referred to in intercepted messages as "directions." (SEE MAP) These units have become semi-independent bodies because of the difficulty of maintaining communications with either the Eastern or the Western office in North Korea. Communications intelligence reveals that the guerrillas are faced with a dire shortage of radio equipment and

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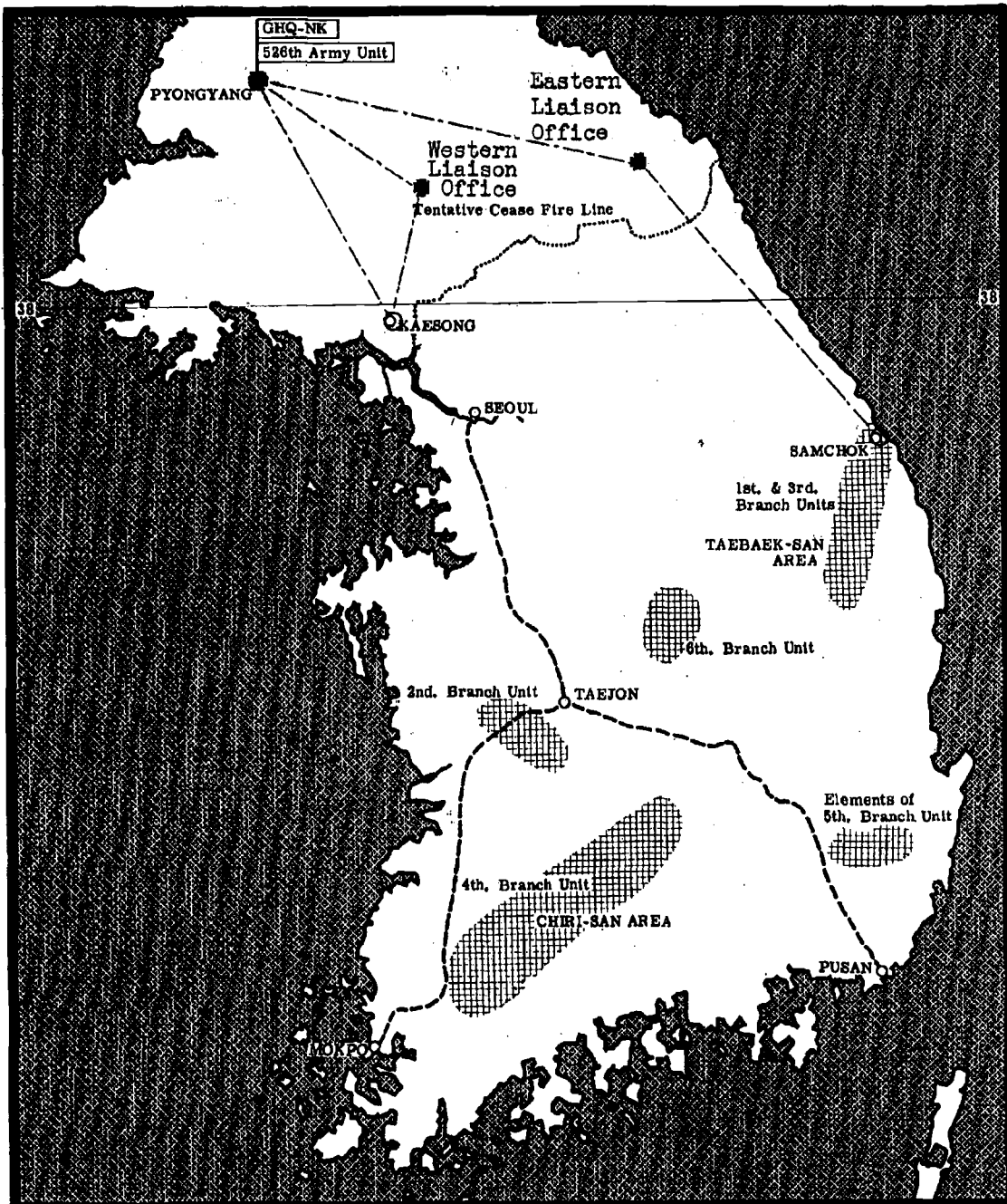
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COMMUNIST GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES IN KOREA

15 January 1952 0 50 100 Statute Miles

Area of Guerrilla Activities Main U. N. Supply Route Identified Guerrilla Radio Communications



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spare parts, and contact between the six units and North Korea depends to a great extent on agents and messengers who infiltrate, primarily by land, through UN lines. Recently, however, a small guerrilla radio station located at Samchok and other small unidentified outstations have appeared, indicating that some radio contact is being effected.

Of the units in South Korea, the 4th, numbering some 6,000 partisans in early November, is by far the largest and most active. Headquarters of this organization is in the Chiri-san area, although its activities encompass practically all of southwestern Korea. Terrorism and disruption of normal economic activity in South Korea's rice bowl area have been the forte of this particular group. The 3rd unit, with elements of the 1st, operates in the Taebaek-san area and is secondary in importance, with an estimated strength of some two hundred. There is evidence that the activities of the 2nd, 5th, and 6th units are even less significant.

A current increase in traffic plus the appearance of several outstations suggests that the North Korean guerrilla forces are planning an increased effort against UN installations and that the units are possibly undergoing reorganization following the recent large-scale UN anti-guerrilla campaign under ROK General Paik.

Task Force Paik has been successful in eliminating a large number of guerrillas, particularly in southwestern Korea, and in disrupting the guerrilla messenger communications. FECOM estimates that, as of 31 December, there remained 3,414 armed and 2,695 unarmed partisans, some 2,000 having been killed or captured since late November. The Far East Command states that the current anti-guerrilla offensive has "greatly weakened" the effectiveness of the Communists and their threat to the United Nations effort.

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