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HANDS OFF CHINA!
PRESERVE WORLD PEACE!**

**Now you've read the truth about 'Korea!
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DAILY WORKER**

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I saw the truth in Korea

BY ALAN WINNINGTON

Daily Worker Correspondent in Peking, just returned from the Korean Front

**Facts and photographs that will
shock Britain**

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“even though we're miles apart, a computer screen connects our hearts”

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Alan Winnington



was sent to China by the Daily Worker in the spring of 1948 to get the truth about the world-shaking events that were then unfolding.

As the only British correspondent first in Harbin and later in Peking, he sent exclusive despatches to the Daily Worker on the tremendous progress of the New Chinese People's Democratic Republic.

Soon after the-outbreak of war in Korea and the terrific barrage against the North Koreans that was churned out by radio and press (Daily Herald and Daily Mail alike!) he went to Korea to find out the truth for Daily Worker readers.

The truth that is so carefully hidden and distorted by the millionaire press was published only in the Daily Worker in Winnington's cables from Korea.

In mid-September the Daily Worker received a long radio despatch from Winnington on his return to Peking, giving a complete picture of what he actually saw there. The terrible facts revealed and the photographs he had taken

himself were regarded as so important that it was decided to print them in pamphlet form for sale to the widest possible public.

Here is the pamphlet. Read it carefully. Look at the photographs. Remember this. These facts, available to all, have been hidden from you by the other papers. Why? The dangers of a new world war make it important for everybody to know the truth about what is happening in Korea. You can start by reading this pamphlet. You can continue every day—by reading the

DAILY WORKER

You can order it from any newsagent in the country

Where is it all leading?

Where is it going to end? Are these "tokens" for divisions or armies? "Tokens" that Britain means to go the whole way now behind America's suicidal policy in the Far East? They are certainly tokens of Britain's submission to American orders.

The British people must make no mistake about the full implications of this war that is against so small a country and so far away.

It is impossible for any invader to defeat the Korean people. They may be bombed, strafed and shelled but they will not submit, cannot submit, because death is preferable to the sort of life they led under the Syngman Rhee clique.

New and massive forces have been set free by the war itself, forces that the Americans never reckoned with, and proof of it lies in the fact that for all their blanket of bombers, the Americans have not stopped a gun or a tank or a mortar from getting to the far south.

Korea is a beautiful country where you are almost never out of site of fifty or more mountain peaks. A beautiful country if you are a friend and a vast, continuous ambush if you are an enemy. And today every Korean is the enemy of every invader.

If the fighting intensifies in Korea, the longer the war lasts, the more heavily Britain becomes involved as America's accomplice in Korea, the more certainly does Britain become committed to every other mad-dog scheme which is being hatched in Washington, and the more deadly becomes the danger of world war.

Once more the British people hold the key to world peace. The key they threw away at Munich in 1939.

Now a few bellicose Herrenvolk are trying to bestride the earth with bombing planes, murder camps, and by turning, their youth into sadistic killers.

Korea cries out to all that is wholesome in the world as the new Guernica. Korea is the Spain in which the Nazis off Wall Street are testing their weapons and the capacity of the common people to prevent aggression.

The key is Britain and the time is now That is why the moguls of Wall Street have exerted such giant pressure to drag our people in the blood bath they prepared for five years in Korea, and that is why, no sooner had the lackey Attlee promised them their "token", than they sent their aircraft into to China spread the zone of the war.

It is America which has invaded Korea. To defend the interests of Morgan and Rockefeller, of Dupont and the steel barons, to restore the land to the feudal landlords, to drive the people back to penury, to maintain a war base against the peaceful Soviet Union.

Are British lads to be sacrificed to these ignoble aims? Is Britain to become the lackey of an America which aspires to Hitler's role—joint detonators of a new world war?

Britain's: trade unions, Labour Party branches, progressive organisations and people of every sort can and must give the answer quickly:

corruption and rottenness of the whole regime.

Like trained seals, the entirely illegal body which calls itself the United Nations Commission in Korea had sent to America that Sunday afternoon a document purporting to prove that the North Koreans had begun the attack. Their evidence consisted only of a statement made by the South Korean Government and Syngman Rhee.

By noon next day Truman was making a speech which must have been lying in his drawer for some days, sending American planes, naval vessels and troops to succour his broken marionette, intervening in Chinese affairs by blockading Taiwan (Formosa), issuing threats like handbills all round the Far East.

On the same afternoon the rump of the Security Council, hastily dragged together by the Americans and acting illegally in the absence of the Russians and the Chinese, endorsed the actions already taken by Truman and, without making any investigation into the facts, pinned the flag of the United Nations to the American imperialist army.

At the same time, Syngman Rhee fled from his capital, its citizens gathering in thousands with garlands and flags to welcome the advancing People's Army, and the Americans took over openly the war against the Koreans.

No 'push-button' war

It was a body blow to the basic American policy that they supply the military machines and their satellites do the fighting. I believe this is what is called "push-button" war. They push the button and other people fight. Now they are having to fight. But already they have succeeded in getting Attlee to send two battalions of British troops and, if the war goes on long enough, no doubt they will get more, British and otherwise, to try to pull Wall Street's chestnuts out of the fire. But the more Britons go to Korea, the more Britons will die or find their way into the prisoner-of-war camps there.

Korea has repudiated Syngman Rhee and the Americans. All the Korean people want Korea to be reunited and ruled by Koreans. No regime can exist that has been repudiated by the people and this war can only be won by the Koreans just as the war in China could only be won by the people. This is one of the iron facts of the twentieth century.

In China the pattern was the same; America supported the most corrupt and hated enemies of the people, led by Chiang Kai-shek, backed them with more than \$6 billion, sent them military aid and advisers—and produced their great fiasco. Britain kept her nose out of that.

Now the Americans are trying to recover their lost position. First by open intervention in Korea and now by trying to expand the area of the war with provocative air invasions of the Chinese mainland, following their invasion of Taiwan. Only now» they have succeeded in dragging two battalions of "token" British troops into their Korean adventure.

What I Saw in Korea

Peking, September 1950.

IN the mountains of Korea, the sons of British mothers lie rotting in the wind; a meal for the great vultures wheeling overhead. No words of mine are needed to stress the importance of finding out why they are there and what will be the outcome of this dangerous development in the Far East.

The Daily Worker sent me to Korea to get the facts at first hand and report them to the British public. And so I arrived in Korea on July 16 and stayed for five weeks.

Of course, before I went I knew that the Americans were bombing heavily and fighting badly. I knew that Syngman Rhee's troops only existed as scattered units and there was no longer a "South Korean Army"; that effectively this was a war between America and Korea. These facts were common knowledge in the world, but I admit I was mentally unprepared for all I found.

After all, five years ago we and the Russians were allies of the Americans in the war against the Nazis. Since then, Roosevelt and his colleagues have gone and atomic diplomacy has taken their place. But still, what I saw Americans doing in Korea shook me to my heels. I suppose all my life I've been listening to propaganda about America being a civilised nation and some of this must have sunk in. Somehow, I never quite thought of Americans doing exactly what the Nazis did until I saw it with my own eyes.

We still talk of Coventry as an example of malicious and futile bombing, but the Americans have gone far ahead of the Nazis in what they politely term "Saturation Bombing". The American style of waging war in Korea is on the same pattern as the Nazis but, bearing in mind the size of the country, even more savage and just as stupid.

Wonsan is a much smaller town than Coventry, not nearly as large as the London suburb; of Walthamstow. During its first heavy raid in July, B.29 Superfortresses flung 500 tons of high explosive bombs into the town—sixty tons more than Coventry got on that terrible night ten years ago. No targets were aimed at. MacArthur's communiqué admitted that there was "heavy cloud" which "prevented the evaluation of the effect of the raid". Actually, visibility was nil at the time, for it was raining hard. In Coventry there were 1,000 casualties that night. During the first raid on Wonsan there were 1,249 killed and the northern half of the town was wiped out. In August the raid was repeated, wiping out the other half. No other military objective was claimed than that this town was a rail centre. A thousand tons of bombs; a town obliterated; over 4,000 casualties in all; tens of thousands made homeless and bereaved—all to damage a rail-track. Does it make sense? This is bombing in the fashion that no British town ever met. I saw Coventry and I was in London all through the 'blitz and I saw Wonsan after these raids. It was far worse than the worst the Nazis ever did.

And the further south you go the more common becomes this type of total obliteration. Pyongyang, Chochiwon, Taejon no longer exist as towns. There are some bomb-shattered houses at the edge, then you can look clear across to the bomb-shattered houses at the opposite edge. The people have gone but still the Americans come most days and bomb the rubble

It is no secret that roads and rails run through these towns and it is equally no secret that this type of bombing is least effective of all in destroying such military objectives.

Much more can be told of their failure in military bombing and strafing when military security is not involved—but that will have to wait. Their ground strafing is in the same style. I have seen fighter bombers hesitate and circle for ten or fifteen minutes before trying to attack a military objective which was defended by light ack-ack, and then make a half-hearted run over the target—too high for effective dive-bombing—get rid of their load and then streak for home, doubtless to discuss the dangers of war. And I have seen them take run after run over a field or a stretch of road, firing all their machine-gun ammunition and even rockets from a height of no more than 300 feet when there was nothing about but civilians or a few cottages, and myself, lying in a ditch.

It takes pure Nazi mentality to kill a woman and child in cold blood, using for the purpose a few thousand horse-power and a fire-power of over 100 machine-gun bullets per second. I have seen this happen. She was the only person on that stretch of road because everyone else had dropped into ditches when the plane was heard. It was not a mistake by the pilot, because with good eyes, you can distinguish a woman from a mile away or more. Typically, this one was carrying a baby strapped to her back and a big bundle on her head, and was wearing a long billowing white skirt. The pilot knew he was blasting a woman and child but he just casually opened up his guns and went on.

People used to say, “But I know some Germans. Nice people. Where would they find people who would do the things the Nazis are supposed to do?” Think it over. I know some Americans. Nice people...

Going down to Taejon in South Korea, I kept hearing a report that a large number of “political prisoners” had been slaughtered near there. That is a larger number than were murdered in the towns between Seoul and that city. Some said 3,000. some said 4,000 e

As is often the case in Korea, the facts were worse than the rumour, for at that time most Koreans were not acclimatised to the diabolical ruthlessness of the Americans and their puppets.

cauterised in the flames of war—the brilliant examples of people’s democracy in the North could be extinguished and Korean goods could be replaced with Coca-Cola and deodorants.

Who started this war?

Make no mistake about who started this war!

North of the 38th Parallel at Chu Yang and Yongchuli I have seen the marks of the battles which raged when the puppet army, with its American officers, penetrated into North Korean territory before they were flung out. There are the shell holes, the scored-up earth, burnt houses and the eyewitness accounts of the local peasants who saw and heard the attack from the South. I have seen the captured military maps, printed in the U.S.A, with their markings for invasion tactics North of the Parallel. I have seen the counterfeit North Korean money stacked at various points along the frontier for the economic invasion that would follow the puppet army. Below the Parallel I have spoken to the villagers who tell of massive troop movements northward to the Parallel just before June 25.

Certainly the leaders in the North were not asleep. Rhee had been threatening to send a “Northern expedition” for a long time and it is the duty of the people’s leaders to be vigilant. When the South sowed the wind, they reaped a typhoon.

Had the issue been left to the Korean people, it would have been over quickly, in spite of the vast quantities of arms presented to the puppets by the U.S.

Listen this time to Major L. R. Dunham, of New Hampshire, formerly of the 24th Division, nine years in the U.S. Army: “The civilian population hate us and they are ready to go with the North. If we had let them alone it would have been over in ten days and probably a few people in America would have lost a lot of money. Win or lose, the American people have nothing to gain from this war. And this bombing must be making everyone in the East hate us.”

This is the view of an American who has just had his eyes opened by seeing the facts for the first time. A few American financiers would lose a lot of money, but most Americans have no interest in the Korean war. It is a war being conducted at the expense of the American and British taxpayers at the cost of thousands of Korean, American and British lives, to safeguard the investments of American business interests to act as 2; threat to the peoples of the Far East and to try to preserve in Korea, a Far Eastern American military base—a naked imperialist war.

Look at the facts divorced from the propaganda of the press lords, the unctuous voice of the lickspittle B.B.C. and ‘he bellicose Voice of America.

Less than a week before the war broke out, John Foster Dulles visited the 38th Parallel where six divisions of Syngman Rhee’s troops were concentrated.

At dawn, on Sunday, June 25, the South Korean Army—American trained, American equipped and with American officers as advisers right down to battalion level—crossed the Parallel at three points after a two-day artillery preparation.

By three o’clock in the afternoon, the North Korean People’s Army had pushed them back and was going over to the offensive. The American machine built up over five years by the Americans disintegrated under the blows of the People’s Army in a few days, a sure sign of the

People of North Korea are defending this freedom and this prosperity. Factory workers have raised their output since the war began, sometimes by a further 30 per cent, and in addition they volunteer for all-night work on civilian war service.

What was it like south of the Parallel?

The American occupation authorities banned the elected People's Committees which they found in the South on their arrival and set up the government of Syngman Rhee—the Korean Chiang Kai-shek—an American-trained yes-man.

From battalion level upwards, American officers (“advisers”) commanded the puppet army and still command what is left of it.

As you cross the border to the South, you can see that people are thinner and shabbier. Shops are empty of everything but very expensive farm produce and American goods, at prices out of reach of the majority of South Koreans.

Big American cars—now pressed into war service—are everywhere. Hoardings urge you to buy Coca-Cola—that inevitable sign of Marshallisation. Glamour girls warn of dangers of B.O. and urge on the still illiterate masses the delights of writing with this or that pen.

Crossing the Han River and turning right to Inchon, you drive along a road through an area that used to contain 70 per cent of the industry of South Korea. Every factory is closed—or rather, open—stripped of windows, roofs and machinery, though not one has been bombed. American goods, pumped into the country as part of the bargain for keeping the Syngman Rhee “government” shored up, have destroyed the industry of South Korea. One and half million workers have been made unemployed in less than five years.

This is why an American general could tell the foreign press on June 5, “in Korea, the American taxpayer has an army that is a fine watchdog over investments placed in this country”. For “taxpayers” read “monopolies”.

In the countryside of South Korea, peasants lived on a tiny fraction of the crop they grew and the rest went in rent and taxes.

A family renting half a hectare (1 ¼ acres) of land could grow a crop valued at twenty-four bags of rice in a good year. Of this an average of fourteen bags went in rent and at least three in taxes, leaving seven to live on. A bag of rice weighs about 150 pounds. A farm labourer would get four bags of rice yearly as wages.

No wonder the eyes of the people turned longingly to the North, where they knew life was getting better ever day! No wonder they responded to the call of the North for national unity, elections and an end of American occupation! No wonder that even in the police-run elections of last May, Rhee's party won only twenty-two seats out of the 209, although he had arrested twenty-two opposition candidates and filled his jails and concentration camps with people who showed signs of disagreement with the regime, people who have now been murdered.

It was because Rhee failed, because the whole rotten set-up was crumbling under him and the Americans that the American-directed puppet army was ordered to invade north of the 38th Parallel on June 25. The conquest of the North would solve many problems. Opposition could be

Rangwul Death Valley



[caption 1] One of the smaller pits is outlined by the figure. Note coil of rope left by the murderers. On the left is Choi Tai Lyong, my interpreter. Himself a political prisoner in Seoul—one of the few still alive- saved by the People's Army.

Try to imagine Rangwul valley, about five miles south-east of Taejon on the Yongdong road. Hills rise sharply from a level floor about 100 yards across and a quarter of a mile long. In the middle you can walk safely, though your shoes may roll on American cartridge cases, but at the sides you must be careful for the rest of the valley is a thin crust of earth covering corpses of more than 7,000 men and women. One of the party with me stepped through nearly to his hip in rotting human tissue. Every few feet there is a fissure in the topsoil through which you can see into a gradually sinking mass of flesh and bone. The smell is something tangible that seeps into your throat. For days after I could taste the smell. All along the great death pits, waxy dead hands and feet, knees, elbows, twisted faces and heads burst open by bullets, stick through the soil. When I read of Nazi murder camps at Belsen and Buchenwald I tried to imagine what they were like. Now I know I failed.

All six of the death pits are six feet deep and from six to twelve feet wide. The biggest is 200 yards long, two are 100 yards long and the smallest thirty yards long. Local peasants were forced at the rifle point to dig them, and it was from these that I got the facts.

On July 4, 5 and 6, all prisoners from the jails and concentration camps around Taejon were taken in trucks to the valley—after first being bound with wire, knocked unconscious and packed like sardines on top of each other. So truckloads were driven to the valley, shot and flung into the pits. Peasants were made to cover the filled sections of the pits with soil.

For the next ten days prisoners from other places were concentrated in the emptied jails and the peasants went on digging. On July 16, the People's Army smashed the American Kum River

defence line and at dawn on July 17 the slaughter of the remaining prisoners began.

On this day, thirty-seven truckloads of at least 100 each were killed—over 3,700, including numerous women.

American officers, with officers of the puppet army, went in jeeps on each day and supervised the butchery. Every witness agrees on this and I asked several separately to show me where the jeeps and the Americans stood. There were emptied packets of American cigarettes lying around. All of the thousand cartridge cases on the ground were made in America. I picked up a handful of M-1 and carbine cartridge cases which I have still. Every one was fired at a Korean patriot.

This was only one of the massacres carried out at American instructions. Every town, even every village has its murdered democrats to mourn. The lowest estimate puts the number of dead political prisoners at 200,000, since June 25, but the figure may be as high as 400,000. I had time to investigate only a few cases, but I can vouch for the accuracy of the following record:

Inchon: 1,800 murdered between June 29 and July 3. Suwon: about 1,200 massacred. These were prisoners in two branches of the notorious West Gate jail. When I was in Suwon, only 260 of the corpses had been found, hidden in caves around the town, and searches were still going on. I visited caves. Pyongtaek: a very small township, 130 murdered. Chochiwon: about the same size, 156 murdered.

In Suwon, which was the headquarters of the Americans and Syngman Rhee after Seoul fell, I met Hong Kung Un, a member of the Suwon People's Committee, who seized an abandoned rifle on the night the Americans retreated and rushed into the local police station. He was too late. The prisoners he was trying to save had been driven into one cell and machine-gunned. When Hong Kung Un got there, only three of the thirty-eight were still able to speak a little. Now only two are alive. I saw the cell, splintered timber, and encrusted blood. John J. Muccio, the American ambassador, and American advisers were in town when the order for this crime was given.

By this time everyone must have seen photographs of these horrors and read the captured "confidential" memorandum, whose original I saw, written eighteen months ago, when there was no war on, describing how United States officers directed the shooting of sixty-nine Korean patriots, each with a clip of service ammunition. At Rangwul they shot 7,000, and the bodies I saw had only one bullet each and went into the pit, dead or alive.

But on the battlefields, where the Koreans are not tied with wire or knocked unconscious, the American forces retreated until they could not retreat any further. I talked to scores of American prisoners and never met one who tried to defend the actions of the American Government, or one who knew what he was supposed to have been fighting for. On no occasion did an American soldier ask me if I had any right to ask him questions. The Korean guards gazed at them in bewilderment—almost pity—that adults could understand so little of the facts of life or show so little spirit.

More intelligent prisoners only needed to be in liberated Korea a few days to see the truth that had been hidden from them by the Armed Forces Radio and the comic strips.

Moreover, they know that every Korean civilian is their ally who will give them help and information while denying it to the foreign invader.

A forced twenty-five mile march over mountains, with battle at the end, is no special hardship to these hardy youngsters and skill in camouflage is regarded with fear and hatred by the Americans. Prisoners speak with awe of driving through "empty" valleys only to find that behind them, where there seemed almost no cover, hundreds of men start shooting and lobbing over mortar bombs time-fused with deadly accuracy. Their uniform is designed to blend perfectly with the green and brown countryside.

American apologists are wearing out their fingernails on the bottom of the barrel trying to find a passable reason—so long as it's not a real one—for the brilliant successes of this little, agricultural country against the armed forces of this highly industrialised power.

Synchronised pens write: "Miracle that cannot Last", "Unpreparedness", "Incredible", "Poor U.S. Equipment", "Let down by Koreans", and the rest.

North of the 38th Parallel

But there is no mystery about it. Come with me on a very quick survey of what has happened north and south of the 38th Parallel since the Soviet Army drove the Japanese out of Korea.

North of the 38th Parallel, under Soviet occupation, the people elected People's Committees and their own Government, headed by Kim Ir Sen, a former leader of the guerillas against the Japanese. After repeated unsuccessful attempts by the U.S.S.R. to bring about a simultaneous withdrawal of both American and Soviet occupation forces, Soviet troops alone were withdrawn in 1948.

Land reform was carried out and today rich soil belongs to those who work it. They pay no rent, only a single tax on their crops, varied according to the quality of the land.

All Japanese and quisling-owned industry was nationalised, new industries developed, prices stabilised, money reformed and wages raised. Productivity of labour in 1950 was three times as great as in 1946. The number of industrial workers rose by a quarter.

Workers in North Korea have the following benefits by right: equal pay for equal work for women; holidays with pay; purchase of essentials at prices lower than those on the free market; labour insurance and workers' control of safety measures; free medical treatment.

Shops are packed with cheap Korean-made goods, right down to good-quality beer and cosmetics.

Trade unions, political parties, women's and youths' organisations have full freedom to develop. The right of free speech and freedom of the press is guaranteed.

Schools have been established, new universities opened and nearly everyone can now read and write.

supporting, familiar with the terrain and determined to put an end to foreign occupation of their country.

The people defy the bombers

Aeroplanes are powerless to disrupt this mass of activity that is spread all over the country.

American air supremacy has been defied by the people. While Truman talks of democracy and bombs the people, the people are voting with their hands and feet and spades, down to the last man and woman, to have no more of the Americans. U.S. prisoners, moving north at night for safety from their own planes, have seen a little of this. That is why Kimball says: "We can only use roads. . . it is hopeless." It is why Major Barter said: "The further south the Korean People's Army goes, the more people they are going to get."

The impression that the whole people are behind the war effort is no false one, and this applies to south and north equally. In places where I checked the figures, I found that practically every available man and many of the women had taken part in one or other side of the Civilian War Service. Below the Parallel, in Koyang County near Seoul, in twelve days 54,085 men had volunteered out of a total population of only 180,000. During the advance of the People's Army in this area, the local People's Committee had mobilised 1,000 ox carts in a single night for a transport emergency. I personally never met a peasant—except old and infirm—who had not helped the army in some way. And in cities, every evening you can see the reconstruction workers gathering in their thousands with spades, crowbars and ropes. At least half of these are women, who refuse to be kept out of even the heaviest and most dangerous work of rescue and fire-fighting during the raids.

Koreans are no 'Coca-Cola soldiers'

Everything the Americans have done in this war seems to have had the reverse effect to that intended. Korea is not a heavily industrialised country and the saturation bombing has relatively little effect on production. But the ghastly destruction of homes and lives that has gone with it has made the whole nation furious. Even former apologists of America are now their bitter enemies.

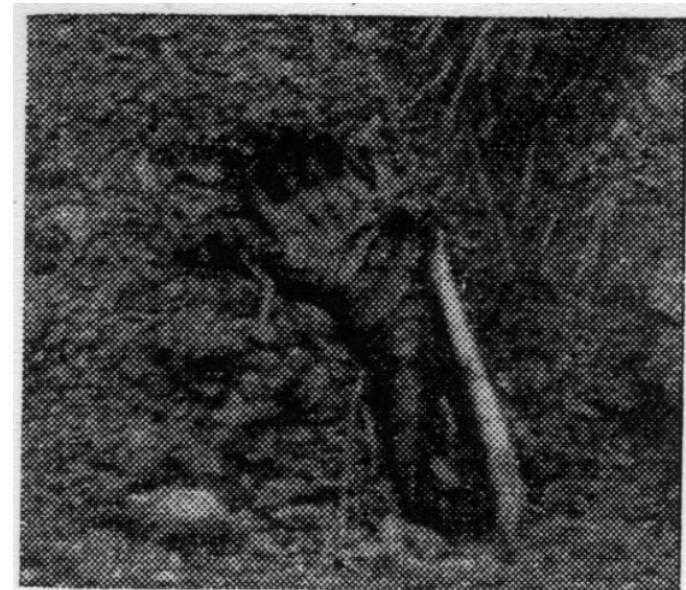
On roads you can meet men by the hundred who tell you: "My home was bombed in . . . so I sent my wife and children to relatives in the country and I'm off to volunteer." In Wonsan, the wife and children of a worker, Wan Wun Chu, were killed in a raid while he was at work. "They are dead and I cannot call them back," he said. "If I die it is little now. But I would give my last drop of blood to get revenge and drive those murdering dogs from our country. They tell me my place is in production and I will work my fingers to the bone to produce more for the army."

Every village I visited proudly told me not only how many men had gone into the army but also how many volunteers were waiting to be accepted. There is no lack of the finest quality fighting men; men who were bred in the countless thousands of mountains that cover Korea; volunteers who know why they want to win. There is not a single conscript in the People's Army at any level. Most of the officers got their training the hard way, fighting as guerillas against the Japanese before 1945. These are no Coca-Cola soldiers. They mean business and can "fight on a shoestring". as one rueful U.S. captive said to me. They are well equipped to fight in mountainous country and do not try to carry around chewing-gum, vitamin tablets, chocolate and changes of underwear as Americans do.

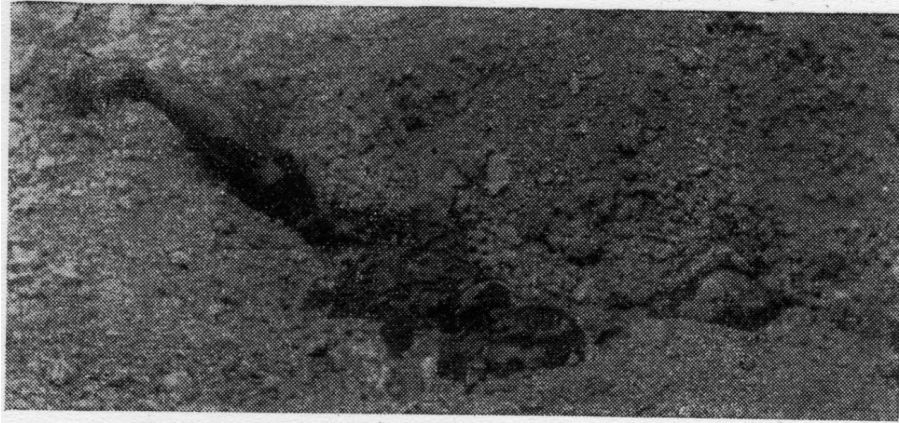
RANGWUL DEATH VALLEY



[caption 2] A foot pokes above the soil—typical sight in the valley.



[caption 3] An arm, and the bone of the other, tied together.



[caption 4] Victims exposed by sinking of the mass of bodies below.

Talks with American Prisoners

Here is Major Charles T. Barter, 63rd Field Artillery Battalion, of Mount Vernon, Indiana, with nineteen years service in the U.S. Army: "I made up my mind when I was captured not to listen to anything these people told me. But you do not need telling, you can see for yourself. I saw it all the way along and I am sick in my heart at what our people are doing. Southern Koreans want to go with the North and the further south the Korean People's Army goes the more people they are going to get. Not a man or woman supports Rhee."

Here is Private Reuben K. Kimball, Junior, of Baytown, Texas, talking of activities of what he described as "Uncle Sam's air force". "Have you seen what the lousy bastards are doing? Have you seen villages miles from anything like a military objective—flat as a field?"

"Have you seen them shooting peasants working in the fields and strafing little cottages not big enough to hold a cow?" Kimball was several times nearly killed by American strafing planes while marching up to Seoul under guard. He said, "A pilot told me back in the rear, their orders were 'Anything that is moving—stop it! Anything that's stopped—move it!' I thought he was fooling then. I don't think so now. Coming through, I saw nine peasants dead in one field where they were working on the rise, and three more in another. I guess the air force is just trigger happy. What sort of a war is this where you leave military targets alone and go around bombing a lot of villages and shooting up peasants?"

Here is Second-Lieutenant A. H. Brooks, of the 24th Division, in a broadcast speech: "If we had not interfered in the Korean Civil War it would now be all over and Korea would once again be united. That is what the majority of the people want. South Koreans have not supported Syngman Rhee's army at all."

They don't know why they're fighting

I asked every prisoner I met: "Why are you fighting in Korea?" Not one could give a clear answer. Most said: "I don't know." Some said: "It's something to do with the United Nations, they told us."

A few had heard of Rhee. None knew of Kim Ir Sen. With one or two exceptions, Privates—nearly all teen-agers—said they had joined the army to "see the world", "get out of the draft" or "save some money". Their general view of the Korean war was summed up by Edward Sorea, nineteen-year-old Private of San Bernardino, California. He said: "I just wanted to travel. It was peace-time. Who in hell thought there would be a war? One drops on you from out of a clear sky."

You cannot find one American soldier who is concerned whether America wins the war or not—rather you meet many who want the Koreans to win quickly so that they can "get back home". "Win or lose", they say, "American people have nothing to gain". Soldiers like that make bad fighters—just how bad can be seen by taking a trip down the main road from Kumchon, near the 38th Parallel, to Yongdong, near Taegu, in the South.

Count tanks, trucks, jeeps, guns and other military gear knocked out. All good stuff, all American made and, from Seoul southwards, mainly manned by Americans. Try to find one bit of gear facing the enemy. Everything points south—even tanks—with their guns swung round to fire north.

Kimball, the prisoner mentioned earlier, did not mince his words. "One thing we were always scared of was getting cut off", he said.

"Korea is nothing but mountains, so what chance do you stand on the roads? We were looking over our shoulders all the time, ready to make a dash for it if we heard firing behind us. These Koreans seem to jump out of the ground at the back of you." He was convinced that the Koreans would win the war. "Now we are back where we can't retreat", he said. "So suppose we stage a comeback. Every mile we gain we just add to our troubles. We can't use the mountains, only the roads. The Koreans can get across the mountains—with their gear—cut us off and carve us up. It's hopeless."

This unusually observant young American is right. I saw what American—and now British—troops are up against and "hopeless" is the word. All the bombing and strafing and all the equipment can no more conquer the Korean people than they could the Chinese.

Ever since the war began, Americans have bombarded, strafed, virtually at will. Look at a map of Korea and see how few routes there are shown to the south. Yet as I write, the Korean People's Army is unfolding a massive offensive with equipment and the terrific weight of artillery and mortar fire. All that stuff, apart from men, had to be got there—and was got there—by the help of the people.

Every evening, the countryside of Korea, especially in the South, boils with life. Hundreds of thousands of peasants and townfolk converge on roads and in a matter of hours have repaired the bomb damage of the previous day by the sheer weight of limitless, willing human labour. While that is going on, hundreds of thousands of others are resuming their trek south from where they stopped at dawn; managing countless oxcarts over remote by-ways; carrying loads of food and munitions on their backs. All these reconstruction and transport workers are volunteers, unpaid, providing their own food and materials, with their own militia to protect them from stray enemy troops, self-