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4. Chinese Communist division in Korea receives gas masks:  
A Chinese Communist 7th Artillery Division message on 22 March gives instructions on the issue of gas masks. The message refers to the receipt of 500 "American-type" gas masks and 500 tubes of anti-gas ointment. (SUEDE 501 Comm Recon Grp Korea, K-1716, 22 Mar 52)

Comment: This is the first observed reference in Communist communications in Korea to chemical warfare defense equipment. It is possible that the arrival of this equipment is linked with the recent expansion of Communist charges of American use of biological warfare in Korea to include use of chemical warfare.

Gas masks are not believed to be standard equipment in either the Chinese Communist or North Korean army. The small size of this issue in relation to the 7,000 to 8,000 men in the 7th Artillery Division may indicate an initial delivery.

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5. Urgency shown in North Korean transportation messages:  
A 26 March North Korean message from an unidentified supply officer requests a battalion commander in northeastern Korea to "quickly transport...commodities. The time limit expires in 30 days."

On the same day, another message in northwestern Korea orders vehicles dispatched "quickly...without fail" to major supply points. The vehicles are instructed to take "repair tools, engineer equipment, spare tires, and iron plates..."

FECOM, while stating that these may be ordinary priority shipments, notes the possibility that "deadlines have been established in preparation for future operations." (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp, Korea SK-H-1079 and SK-H-1087, 27 Mar; CINCFE SIB 470, 28 Mar 52)

Comment: Although it is possible that the enemy is preparing for ground operations on a greater scale than heretofore, the balance of evidence continues to indicate defensive or limited attack operations in the near future.

6. North Korean 10th "Mechanized" Division still in Chongchon River area: A North Korean message on 26 March notes that the "1st Battalion of the 1st Mechanized Infantry Regiment" and the "2nd Battalion of the 2nd Mechanized Infantry Regiment" are still in the Kaechon area near the Chongchon River in northwestern Korea. (SUEDE 330th Comm Recon Co Korea, ALT-112, 25 Mar; 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, 15RSM/9375, 27 Mar 52)

Comment: The 1st and 2nd Mechanized Infantry Regiments are believed subordinate to the newly mechanized 10th North Korean Division, located in northwestern Korea.

The continued presence of the three major North Korean armored units--the 10th, 17th, and 105th Divisions--in the same general area of northwestern Korea recalls frequently unconfirmed reports that the deactivated North Korean VIII Corps was undergoing reorganization in this general area. In late December, a North Korean prisoner reported hearing that an "VIII Mechanized Corps" was being formed.

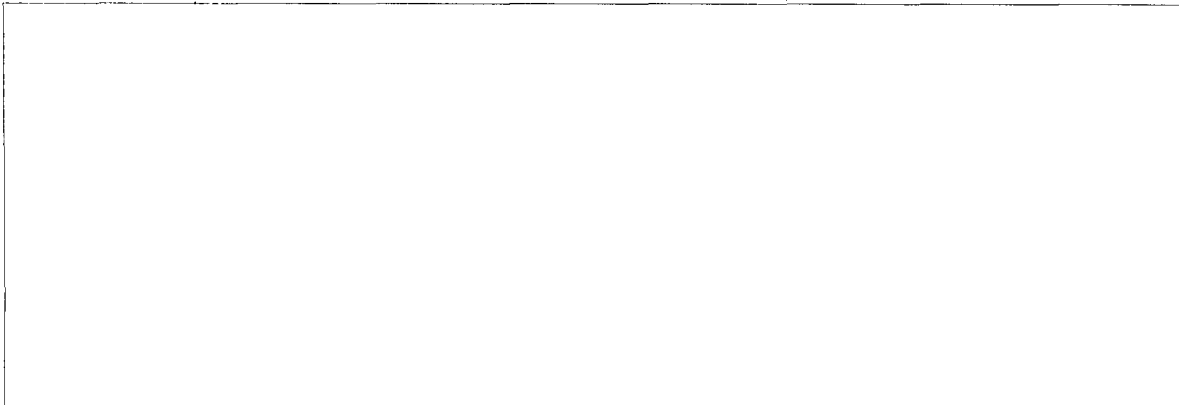
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7. Code numbers assigned to subordinate divisions by North Korean II Corps: In an 11 March message, the commander of the North Korean II Corps, currently in combat in eastern Korea, instructed his subordinate division commanders to carve india rubber numbered stamps to identify their documents. Code numbers assigned were: II Corps - 498; 2nd Division - 271; 13th Division - 741; 27th Division - 878. (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, SK-H-1074, 27 Mar 52)

Comment: All of these code designations are different from those previously assigned to these units.

8. North Korean units ordered to prepare for "national inspection": According to a 24 March message, an unidentified North Korean regimental chief of staff has ordered "each battalion commander" to make exhaustive preparations for the "national inspection...which will be made from next April 1st." The list includes: destruction of non-regulation documents, all activity to be conducted in a regulation manner, proper knowledge and use of the chain of command, clean uniforms, and rigid adherence to high-level training schedules. (SUEDE 501st Comm Recon Grp Korea, SK-H-1043, 26 Mar 52)

Comment: North Korean communications have previously mentioned this impending high-level inspection. The nature of the preparations, as revealed in this message, indicates an over-all inspection of all phases of the enemy's military establishment.



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