

***The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs***

***To the Soviet Union***

***Joint Commission Support Branch  
Research and Analysis Division  
DPMO***

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This study was prepared  
by

Mr. Peter G. Tsouras, DAC  
Major Werner Saemler Hindrichs, USAF  
Master Sergeant Danz Blasser, USAF

with the assistance  
of

Second Lieutenant Timothy R. Lewis, USAF  
Mr. Paul H. Vivian, DAC  
Staff Sergeant Linda R. H. Pierce, USA  
Sergeant Gregory N. Vukin, USA

## Executive Summary

U.S. Korean War POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union and never repatriated.

This transfer was a highly-secret MGB program approved by the inner circle of the Stalinist dictatorship.

The rationale for taking selected prisoners to the USSR was:

- o To exploit and counter U.S. aircraft technologies;
- o to use them for general intelligence purposes;
- o It is possible that Stalin, given his positive experience with Axis POWs, viewed U.S. POWs as potentially lucrative hostages.

The range of eyewitness testimony as to the presence of U.S. Korean War POWs in the GULAG is so broad and convincing that we cannot dismiss it.

The Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps which supported the North Korean and Chinese forces in the Korean War had an important intelligence collection mission that included the collection, selection, and interrogation of POWs.

A General Staff-based analytical group was assigned to the Far East Military District and conducted extensive interrogations of U.S. and other U.N. POWs in Khabarovsk. This was confirmed by a distinguished retired Soviet officer, Colonel Gavriil Korotkov, who participated in this operation. No prisoners were repatriated who related such an experience.

- o Prisoners were moved by various modes of transportation. Large shipments moved through Manchouli and Pos'yet.

- o Khabarovsk was the hub of a major interrogation operation directed against U.N. POWs from Korea. Khabarovsk was also a temporary holding and transshipment point for U.S. POWs. The MGB controlled these prisoners, but the GRU was allowed to interrogate them.

- o Irkutsk and Novosibirsk were transshipment points, but the Komi ASSR and Perm Oblast were the final destinations of many POWs. Other camps where Americans were held were in the Bashkir ASSR, the Kemerovo and Archangelsk Oblasts, and the Komi-Permyatskiy and Taymyrskiy National Okrugs.

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# The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union

## Introduction

The United States lists 8,140 casualties from the Korean War whose remains have not been repatriated. Some of that number are "truly unaccounted for" in that there is no evidence at all as to the circumstances of their loss or to their ultimate fate. One estimate is provided at Appendix A.<sup>1</sup> Since the Joint Commission was established, a mass of convincing evidence has accumulated that U.S. POWs were taken to the Soviet Union in a tightly controlled MGB operation and never repatriated.

We believe that the transfer of U.S. POWs to the Soviet Union involved two separate programs.

1. **Technological Exploitation.** This program was a pure intelligence collection program for the purpose of acquiring high-tech equipment and their operators technical exploitation. The F-86 Sabre Jet was the great prize. However, we believe that Soviet intelligence collection requirements were not limited to the F-86. There is growing evidence that other types of aircraft, including the B-29, were also the subject of intelligence collection.

2. **The Hostage Connection.** The other program was based on the collection of POWs as hostages and for general intelligence exploitation.

These programs are discussed in Parts I and II which present our assessment of the origins and operation of the transfers.

From the conduct of the transfer operation, we switch in Part III to the next stage in the issue: evidence of Americans actually within the Soviet concentration camp system. Here we discuss the mass of sightings by citizens of the former USSR of U.S. Korean War POWs.

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<sup>1</sup>The "truly unaccounted for" casualties of the Korean War include those who were killed on the battlefield and those who were taken prisoner where there were no witnesses or reporting by the enemy. All wars, especially those that involve rapid retreats and advances, heavy casualties, and fighting over rugged terrain such as the Korean War result in large, unexplained losses.

Note 1: Throughout this document references will be made by various quoted sources to the primary Soviet security organ as the NKVD, the MGB, or the KGB. All references are to the same organization and represent only an organizational name change. At the time of the Korean War, the organization was titled the MGB and will be referred to as such. Quotations will not be altered where the speaker is imprecise. The MGB (Ministerstvo Gosudarstvenoi Bezopasnosti) was formed in March 1946 by the merging of the NKVD and the MVD (Ministry of Internal Security). This new organization was broken back into its original two parts in March 1953 after Stalin's death. That part that had been the NKVD was renamed the KGB.

Note 2: Task Force Russia was organized under the auspices of the U.S. Army in June 1992 to support the U.S. side of the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs. There were two elements in the task force: (1) The Washington-based analytical, translation, and administrative element (TFR-H), and (2) the Moscow-based research, interview, and liaison group (TFR-M). In June 1993, Task Force Russia was subordinated to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs, and TFR-H was renamed the Joint Commission Support Branch (JCSB). The Moscow-based element will continue to be designated Task Force Russia - Moscow (TFR-M).

Note 3: Translations of documents provided by the Russian side of the Joint Commission were translated by TFR-H and are numbered as TFR documents, e.g., TFR-36, and are referred to as such in the narrative.



## Part I

### Technological Exploitation

**The First Modern Air War.** One of the worst-kept secrets of the Cold War was the head-to-head clash in Korea between the two former Allies of World War II, the Soviet Union and the United States. Although the ground war was fought essentially with the weaponry and tactics of the Second World War, the air war was the first major field test of the new air power technologies of the postwar world. The Korean War was the first modern air war and was characterized by an entirely new technology that was electronics intensive and depended not only on the keen wits and high mastery of the pilots flying the jet combat aircraft but on a host of advanced support activities such as air-intercept radar and airborne reconnaissance.

**The Technology Gap.** This was the backdrop for an even more insidious form of warfare. The Soviet Union cloaked its participation in the Korean War partly to conceal its urgent need to bridge the technological gap with the West which was widening geometrically even then. Based upon a precedent repeatedly acknowledged by senior Soviet officers, which began with the wholesale reverse engineering of the Massey-Ferguson tractor by the State Automobile Factory in the 1930s, the Willys Jeep in the 1940s, and a variety of propeller technology aircraft during World War II, the Soviets sought to avert the inevitable by systemized theft of design.

**The 64th Fighter Aviation Corps.** The Soviet Union initiated its battlefield testing in the Korean War with the activation of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps Headquarters in Antung (now Dandong), Manchuria, in November 1950, just as North Korea teetered on the edge of destruction. The Corps was charged with a threefold mission: (1) air defense of the area north of the 38th Parallel; (2) protection of the trans-Yalu bridges; and (3) training of North Korean and Chinese pilots. Analysis of documents provided by the Russian side, however, shows that the 64th had yet another mission: the management of the overt and covert Human Intelligence (HUMINT) effort targeted against the U.S. air forces. A review of the documents provided by the Russians reveals regular and intense coordination between Moscow, the senior advisors to the Korean General Staff, and the Commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps (General Georgii A. Lobov) on a variety of topics related to prisoner of war interrogation and control. The gaps in this documentation insinuate a direct role which the Russian side to date denies.

The air-focused Soviet priorities are perhaps best summed up by the comment of retired Colonel Aleksandr Semyonovich Orlov, a

veteran of the 64th, and the chief of intelligence for one of its divisions. He casually dismissed the significance of ground forces personnel with the comment that he knew more about the operations of the American infantry battalion than a U.S. Army captain would. Orlov, himself a captain at the time of the Korean War, then described in painstaking detail Soviet intelligence collection requirements which were focused on aircraft technical parameters.<sup>2</sup>

**The Soviet Interrogation Effort.** The Soviet interrogation effort was largely disguised. Soviet interrogators, when present for interviews, wore Korean and Chinese uniforms without visible rank, and in some cases were ethnic Koreans or other oriental Soviet nationalities. One such officer is Colonel Georgii Plotnikov, who called himself by the Korean translation of his name Kim-Mok-Su, which means carpenter in both languages.<sup>3</sup> Another Soviet officer was a Buryat Mongol.<sup>4</sup> Most Soviet involvement was probably concentrated on the preparation and translation of collection requirements to be filled by their North Korean and Chinese allies. Some, however, appears to have taken place without the Chinese and North Koreans. One such case is that of escaped POW Marine Corporal Nick A. Flores who was mistaken for an F-86 pilot when captured by Soviet anti-aircraft troops and sent directly to Soviet interrogation at a Soviet airbase in Antung. This case is developed in more depth at the end of this section. Additionally, General Lobov, Commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, has stated that at some point in the war, the Chinese and North Koreans became somewhat less cooperative in turning over captured U.S. POWs for interrogation. As a result, Lobov had 70 Soviet teams out looking for shot down U.S. pilots.<sup>5</sup>

According to one report, Stalin had singled out U.S. Air Force POWs to be held as hostages.<sup>6</sup> All USAF POWs already held in the

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<sup>2</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Colonel Aleksandr S. Orlov, 18 December 1991, Moscow.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview With Colonel Georgii Plotnikov, 17 December 1991, Moscow.

<sup>4</sup>Paul M. Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview With Colonel (ret) Viktor A. Bushuyev, 16 September 1992, Moscow. This Soviet Buryat Mongol was named Kolya Mankuev.

<sup>5</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with General Georgii A. Lobov, 18 December 1991, Moscow.

<sup>6</sup>Celestine Bohlen, "Advice of Stalin: Hold Korean War POWs," New York Times, 25 September 1992.

camp system were segregated from other POWs, held in separate camps under Chinese jurisdiction on North Korean territory, and subjected to interrogation by Chinese and Soviet personnel. One such POW was USAF Sergeant Daniel Oldwage who has stated that he and a number of other captured USAF NCOs were transported to Antung for interrogation by the Chinese and the Soviets. Oldwage stated that the Soviets were dressed in Chinese uniforms and appeared to be pilots based upon their thorough professional understanding of air operations against the B-29.<sup>7</sup>

### The Soviet Hunt for F-86 Pilots

According to U.S. Air Force data, 1,303 USAF personnel were declared missing for all reasons between 25 June 1950 and 27 July 1953. After reclassification, this figure had been reduced to 666 whose bodies were not recovered (BNR).<sup>8</sup> Of that number, the argument can be made from an analysis of their circumstances of loss, that several hundred survived their crashes and were potential candidates for transfer to the Soviet Union. There is almost blatant evidence that this was, indeed, the case for a number of technically proficient, well-educated, and highly-skilled pilots of the F-86 Sabre jet. Most captured American pilots who did not die in the prison camps did in fact return. However, there is one major statistical aberration: the F-86 pilots.

A total of 56 F-86 aircraft were downed in aerial combat or by anti-aircraft artillery. From these aircraft, 15 live pilots (Appendix C) and one set of remains were repatriated. Of the 40 remaining losses, for whom no pilots were repatriated, the circumstances of loss indicate a high probability of death for nine. Of the 31 remaining cases (Appendix B), conditions were such that survival was possible. The 55 percent missing in action rate is unusually high compared to missing rates for pilots flying other airframes.

In late Summer 1992, the Russian side provided two lists of U.S. POWs that they stated had been provided to them by the Chinese

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<sup>7</sup>Transcription by Task Force Russia of a videotape statement by Daniel Oldwage, 13 May 1993.

<sup>8</sup>USAF/AF Battle Casualties -- Korean War Summary, cumulative with adjustments through 6 October 1953. The reclassified 637 included: 370 declared dead, 44 returned to military control (REC), 220 declared POW, and 3 recovered before the end of the war.

and/or North Koreans.<sup>9</sup> One list had 59 names and the other 71 names. There were 42 names that appeared in both lists and in almost identical sequence. The list of 59 names purported to be of those POWs who had transited an interrogation point. On a number of documents provided by the Russian side (translated in TFR-76) were the names of Soviet officers who had had some role in interrogations or the reporting process. The most prominent of them was a Lieutenant General Razuvayev whose position was such that he could report on occasion directly to the Defense Minister and the Chief of the General Staff.<sup>10</sup> The names of these Soviet officers are at Appendix F.

At the request of the American side, the Russian side provided the interrogation files associated with these two lists. However, the Russians provided files for only 46 individuals. By reviewing the archival data handwritten on the files, Task Force Russia determined that 120 pages were missing. In those cases where interrogation material was missing, another 41 names can be correlated from the two lists.<sup>11</sup> Analysis of ancillary information and coordination with Air Force Casualty Affairs indicates that the 120 missing pages should contain data on eight identifiable MIAs. In addition to these eight, a ninth MIA was identified in the interrogation files whose name was not on either list. The nine MIAs are listed below:<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The first list with 59 names on it was entitled, "A List of Air Force personnel shot down in aerial combat or by anti-aircraft artillery during combat operations in Korea and who transited an interrogation point." The second list of 71 names was entitled, "A list of USAF aircrew members participating in combat operations in North Korea in 1950-1953 and about whom information is found in files of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps." Both documents have been translated in TFR-3.

<sup>10</sup>General Razuvayev appears to have been the liaison officer between Kim Il Sung and Stalin. He signed a letter discussing the captured American General Dean to the Minister of Defense and the Chief of the General Staff.

<sup>11</sup>Add the two lists: (59 + 71 = 130). Subtract the duplicated names (130 - 42 = 88) which provides 88 individuals. All but one of those names (Kharm) has been matched with a POW, thus 87 identified names. Add the number of names mentioned in Russian documents and the number we think should also be in the files (46 + 41 = 87), and we arrive at the number 87 again as the total number of identified POWs.

<sup>12</sup>Task Force Russia (POW/MIA), "Report to the U.S. Delegation, U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, 4 June 1993; and Task Force Russia (POW/MIA), "Report to the U.S.

Table 1. USAF Korean War POWs  
On Whom the Russian Archives Should Have Information

Name	Aircraft	Duty Position
1. Tenney, Albert Gilbert, CPT	F-86	Pilot
2. Wendling, George Vincent, MAJ	F-86	Pilot
3. Harker, Charles A., Jr., 1LT	F-84	Pilot
4. Niemann, Robert Frank, 1LT	F-86	Pilot
5. McDonough, Charles E., MAJ	RB-45C	Pilot
6. Unruh, Halbert Caloway, CPT	B-26	Pilot
7. Shewmaker, John W., CPT	F-80	Pilot
8. Reid, Elbert J. Jr., SSgt	B-29	Gunner
9. Bergmann, Louis H., SSgt	B-29	Radar Operator

Of the seven pilots in this group, three flew the F-86 and one the experimental RB-45C reconnaissance aircraft, types of aircraft in which the Soviets had high interest. In addition to the F-86s, the Soviets would have had an equally high interest in the RB-45C flown by Major Charles McDonough. The North American RB-45C was the first operational U.S. multi-engine jet bomber employed by the U.S. Air Force, and its reconnaissance configuration would have made it doubly interesting.<sup>13</sup> The Russians have even provided evidence of their interest in the B-45 series in a document dated 6 February 1951 in which intelligence collections requirements against U.S. forces in Korea were listed (TFR 34-46).<sup>14</sup> U.S. records also show that SSgt

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Delegation, U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, 18 June 1993.

<sup>13</sup>There were only three of the RB-45Cs in the Korean Theater of Operations (KTO); they arrived at Yakota on 29 September 1950. By November and December they were flying along the North Korean-Manchurian border on a daily basis. Although the RB-45C could outrun MiGs, it had little maneuverability at altitude. Soviet ground controllers could have prepositioned MiGs for intercept. As shown in the interrogation of Major McDonough provided by the Russians, the Soviets were interested in the B-47 as well.

<sup>14</sup>TFR 34-46 is a list of Soviet intelligence collection requirements in the Korean Theater of Operations (KTO) dated 6 February 1951 and includes the following items

7. Through interrogation of prisoner pilots, ascertain the morale of flight personnel, intensity of aircraft flights by type (heavy, medium bombers, fighters), personnel, deployment, turn-around time and the tactical

Bergmann, a radar operator on a B-29, was interrogated at least once by the Soviets.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, retired Soviet Colonel Viktor A. Bushuyev, Deputy Chief of Intelligence for the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps stated that they had attempted to interrogate an F-86 pilot named Neiman or Naiman that most likely was 1LT Robert F. Niemann, USAF, shot down on 12 April 1953.<sup>16</sup> Another pilot among the 31 missing was mentioned in an interview by Colonel Valentin Sozinov. He stated:

The name of Major Delit came up in my conversation with Lobov. I don't know what his position is. But he also ejected and was captured and then escorted somewhere. I think he was on the People's Republic of China territory.<sup>17</sup>

We believe this individual is Major Deltis H. Fincher, USANG, shot down on 22 August 1952.

#### The 15 F-86 Pilots That Came Home

Colonel Valentin Sozinov, an advisor to the Korean General Staff, admits to having interrogated one of the leading F-86 personalities, Colonel Walker 'Bud' Mahurin, a World War II ace and a wing commander in Korea who was eventually repatriated.<sup>18</sup> However, in a recent interview, Colonel Mahurin recently stated that he had no memory of being interrogated by Soviet personnel.<sup>19</sup>

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nature for the 6002nd, 6140th, 6131st, 6147th tactical support wings, quantity of B-45 jet-engined bombers and F-84 jet fighters, and to which units they are attached and deployed.

<sup>15</sup>Air Force Manual 200-25, Missing in Action -- Korea, 16 January 1961, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Colonel Bushuyev, 16 September 1992, Moscow.

<sup>17</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Col. Georgii Plotnikov and Col. Valentin Sozinov, 30 March 1992, Moscow.

<sup>18</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Col. Georgii Plotnikov (ret) and Col. Valentin Sozinov (ret), 30 March 1992, Moscow.

<sup>19</sup>Task Force Russia Interview with Colonel Bud Mahurin, November 1992; Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Col. Georgii Plotnikov and Col. Valentin Sozinov, 30 March 1992, Moscow.

We believe that there were four critical factors that could have led to Colonel Mahurin's eventual repatriation, as well as the return of the other 14 F-86 pilots who were repatriated (Appendix B): (1) In the case of Colonel Mahurin and the other 14 pilots, one critical factor may have been that they had been seen by too many people in the POW camp system. Having been formally enrolled in a prisoner of war camp, moving them to another country might have been considered too obvious. It is doubtful that there was any contact at all between the aviators who are still considered missing and those who were repatriated.<sup>20</sup> Whereas prisoner of war status may not have assured survival, it possibly assured accountability. (2) The second critical factor was the nature of the intelligence collection requirement for F-86 pilots. A collection requirement like this probably was specialized and probably changed over time. An example of this sort specialized collection requirement was the intensive interrogation over a short period of time of all B-29 crewmen in Camp #2, described in a U.S. report as being "prompted by an intelligence requirement."<sup>21</sup> Documents provided by the Russians

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<sup>20</sup>Air Force Manual 200-25, Missing In Action Korea, 16 January 1961. This document is the Air Force element of the so-called "389 List", developed after the Korean War, which is a list of 389 missing in action cases. The nature of the loss in each was such that the United States Government believed the Communist side should have knowledge of them. AFM 200-25 then represents an exhaustive review of all available information at the time on each of the Air Force's 187 losses. In each case, is included the testimony of U.S. personnel who had any information on the circumstances of loss. In none of these did a repatriated pilot report contact with the MIAs. The Joint Commission Support Branch is now interviewing repatriated F-86 pilots to recreate that data base and ascertain if any pertinent information was omitted.

<sup>21</sup>OSI Special Report (Office of Special Investigations), The Inspector General, Headquarters USAF, "USAF Prisoners of War in Korea," 1 July 1954, p. 13. The study states: "On one occasion all B-29 crew members were taken from camp and interrogated on all phases of their B-29 training, equipment, tactics, organization, etc. Thus it appeared that these interrogations were prompted by intelligence requirements which were sent down to the camps from higher Chinese headquarters." Since only the Soviet Union was capable of defense against the B-29 and was at that time intensely interested in defense against US strategic bombers, it is certain that this intelligence requirement was initiated by the Soviets. This intelligence requirement probably was behind the interrogations described by Sgt Oldewage.

A separate line of investigation into B-29 crewmen who may have been transferred to the Soviet Union is in preparation.

(TFR-76) of interrogations show a great interest in the advanced models of the F-86. In this case, there would have been no need to take all the F-86 pilots. (3) The third factor may have been a matter of quality. Initial interrogations of F-86 pilots may have indicated which would have been the most useful in meeting intelligence requirements. Repatriated pilots may not have been suitable. (4) Pilots shot down over China were eventually turned over to the Chinese. Of the fifteen F-86 repatriated pilots, three were retained by the Chinese and released with the Arnold B-29 crew in 1955. They were 1Lt Roland Parks, 1Lt Edwin Heller, 1Lt Harold E. Fischer. All three had all been shot down and captured in China.<sup>22</sup>

The fact that the Soviets did not transfer these fifteen pilots to the Soviet Union does not mean that the Soviets did not take an interest in them. Of the 15 repatriated F-86 pilots, the Russians have provided information showing that the following seven were interrogated.

- 1Lt Charles E. Stall
- 1Lt Daniel D. Peterson
- 1Lt Vernon D. Wright
- 1Lt Michael E. Dearmond
- 1Lt Vance R. Frick
- 1Lt Roland W. Parks
- Col Edwin L. Healer

One of these pilots, 1Lt Roland Parks, will have an interesting tale to tell later in this narrative.

Soviet pilots also had interesting stories of contact with U.S. POWs. Lieutenant Colonel (ret) Roshchin stated that an American pilot named Muller had also been shot down. Roshchin described Muller a "real master, the number one American pilot" who "shot down more than ten planes." Roshchin described a photo of the pilot standing next to the tail of his aircraft.<sup>23</sup> We believe he was describing Lt. Col. Harold E. Fischer, the only Korean War ace with ten kills to his credit, and the only ace among the missing. Fischer stated that the only contact he had with Soviets was right after his shoot down and capture in China. Two Soviets arrived and confiscated his only two possessions, his ID

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<sup>22</sup>Joint Commission Support Branch, Interview with Retired Colonel Edwin L. Heller, 23 August 1993. Heller stated that he had been badly wounded in the loss of his aircraft and spent his two years of captivity under Chinese hospitalization and underwent four major operations.

<sup>23</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Vladimir M. Roshchin, 18 February 1991, Moscow.



card and a photo of his crew chief standing next to his F-86. Subsequently, this very photo was produced by the Soviet ace who claimed to have shot Lt. Col. Fischer down.<sup>24</sup>

**A Chinese Link in the Chain of Evidence.** An interview with Shu Ping Wa, a former head of a division-level POW collection team (164th Division) in the so-called Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV) serving in Korea, showed that a policy existed to turn over pilots to the Soviets. As he testified in the video recording shown at the April 1993 Commission meeting in Moscow, he himself turned over three American pilots to the Soviets just north of the front lines some time in the Winter months between November 1951 and March 1952. He stated that his superior told him that the "Russians wanted the pilots."<sup>25</sup>

**A Special Air Force Unit.** According to Dr. Paul Cole's interview with General Lobov, a special Soviet Air Force unit was organized and deployed, under the command of General Blagoveshchenskii, with the mission to capture F-86 pilots. Its mission was to force down Sabre jets in order to capture the pilots alive. The unit was composed of flyers from units in Mary, in the Turkmen SSR, and from the Primorskii Krai along the Pacific coast. Nine expert pilots were assigned to this mission, each of whom was required to sign a secrecy statement.<sup>26</sup>

The mission was to cut a Sabre jet out of a dog fight, then force it to land intact. If the plan worked, the plane and the pilot could be captured simultaneously. In 1951 the mission was a failure. In the course of the operation the Soviets lost two of their own aircraft, perhaps because the Soviet pilots in this unit were forbidden to engage American aircraft in combat. The Soviets managed, however, to damage one Sabre jet which then made a forced landing. It is not known what happened to the pilot, though the Soviet pilots participating in the mission were told the American pilot managed to escape to the Yellow Sea where he was picked up by U.S. search and rescue forces. Some of the Soviet pilots doubted this version of events since they saw the American

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<sup>24</sup>Joint Commission Support Branch, Interview with Retired Colonel Harold E. Miller, 23 August 1993.

<sup>25</sup>Korean War POW Transfers to the Soviet Union: Eyewitnesses (RT: 18:35), prepared by Task Force Russia, April 1993.

<sup>26</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Major Valerii Amirov, 18 December 1991, Moscow.

land several kilometers from the sea.<sup>27</sup>

Senior Lieutenant Vladimir Roshchin, author of the Korean War memoirs cited by Major Amirov in the publication, Na Strazhe, distinctly recalls seeing documents in the office of his regimental commander about the capture of an American pilot named Carl Crone in conjunction with a special operation in 1951 to capture an F-86. One of the 31 missing F-86 aviators believed likely to have survived is Captain William Delbert Crone.<sup>28</sup>

Major Avraham Shifrin. The most specific comments by former Soviet officers concerning the transfer of F-86s and their pilots to the USSR were those made by former Major Avraham Shifrin, at that time a lawyer in the Ministry for Military Production. Shifrin discussed his relationship with renowned aircraft cannon designer A. Nudelmann and General (NFI) Dzhakhadze<sup>29</sup>, commander of Vasilii Stalin's support regiment at Bykova, near Moscow.<sup>30</sup> Shifrin recalls that Nudelmann expressed regular concern about the F-86, and about the recurring jamming problems with the cannon he designed for the MiG 15. He also recalled that Dzhakhadze related having to fly to Korea in his "Douglas, in order to pickup crash parts of MiGs and F-86s." Dzhakhadze had related to Shifrin that while he was in Korea on such a mission, the 'security organs' had asked him to transport a group of American F-86 pilots to Kansk in Western Siberia. The move had been done clandestinely, with the pilots travelling in civilian clothes under security escort.<sup>31</sup>

#### The Hunt for the F-86 Sabre Jet

Practically all Soviet officers interviewed about Human Intelligence collection in Korea have concentrated on the F-86 in more or less detail. A significant number of documents provided

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<sup>27</sup>Paul M. Cole, RAND Corporation, World War II, Korean War, and Early Cold War MIA-POW Issues (Draft) (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, April 1993) p. 593.

<sup>28</sup>Valerii Amirov, "A Front Far Away From the Motherland," Na Strazhe, Moscow, 30 June 1992.

<sup>29</sup>TFR-M requested the Russian side to find General Dzhakhadze. To date, the Russian side has been unable to do so.

<sup>30</sup>Task Force Russia-Moscow has been making strenuous efforts to locate General Dzhakhadze to date but to no avail.

<sup>31</sup>Task Force Russia interview with Avraham Shifrin, 23 March 1993, Jerusalem.

by the Russian side likewise focus on this airframe.

Two senior Soviet officers distinctly remember a specific mission to capture an F-86, preferably intact, for the purpose of technical exploitation. Several others have commented on knowing about such missions. In a December 1991 interview, Colonel Georgii Plotnikov stated "our troops were hunting for F-86."<sup>32</sup> On 30 March 1992, Colonel Valentin Sozinov recalled a specific order to capture an F-86. Even General Lobov has stated:

We wanted the F-86 gun sight at all costs. One F-86 crashed after it was hit. The aircraft lost fuel which prevented the pilot from ditching in the sea. The other F-86 landed in shallow water at low tide, the only problem was the gun sight had been damaged by gun fire by the crash. One F-86 was located off shore.<sup>33</sup>

Major Valerii Amirov, writing in Na Strazhe on 30 June 1992, again describes the arrival in North Korea in 1951 of the special detachment charged with the specific mission of taking an aircraft intact:

This was very difficult to do, even though the best pilots joined this newly formed unit. During a battle, nine planes tried to force a Sabre to the ground and to force the pilot to land. But it didn't work and our men took losses . . . During a routine raid by American aviation, a fragment of an anti-aircraft shell damaged the rudder of one of the engines and the pilot landed on the seashore . . . Around the downed Sabre, a lively aerial battle was declared right away. The Americans rushed in to destroy the plane with bombs, the Soviet pilots to protect it until the ground forces could access it. Finally, we succeeded in saving the Sabre; it was disassembled, and was shipped to the Soviet Union. The fate of the American pilot remained unknown.<sup>34</sup>

Sand in the Fuselage. In addition to officers of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps in Korea, other former Soviet officers had memories of the seashore landings. On 30 March 1993, Task Force Russia in Moscow (TFR-M) interviewed a retired KGB lieutenant colonel, Yuriy Lukianovich Klimovich, who had served in Korea and

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<sup>32</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Colonel Georgii Plotnikov, 17 December 1991, Moscow.

<sup>33</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with General Georgii A. Lobov, 18 December 1991, Moscow.

<sup>34</sup>Valerii Amirov, "A Front Far Away From the Motherland," Na Strazhe, Moscow, 30 June 1992.

recounted that there was an effort to capture intact F-86s.<sup>35</sup> He also stated that he knew of an F-86 that had been forced down on a beach and transported to the Sukhoi Design Bureau in Moscow for exploitation.

Klimovich had appeared on the Ostankino 1 TV New Magazine show "Chorta S Dva" and told of two F-86 "Sabre" fighters being brought to Moscow in 1951/52. Klimovich told TFR-M that a very close friend and confidant, now deceased, had confided to him that a U.S. F-86 and an American pilot had been brought to Moscow. His friend reportedly told Klimovich that one of the aircraft was in excellent condition and was disassembled at the Sukhoi Design Bureau in an attempt to copy it. Klimovich said that neither his friend nor he knew what happened to the alleged American pilot since he fell immediately into KGB hands.<sup>36</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Klimovich then escorted Task Force Russia interviewers to the Sukhoi Design Bureau where they met designers who clearly remembered that an F-86 had been brought to the bureau during the Korean War. These designers confirmed Klimovich's assertion that two F-86s had been brought to Moscow, one in good and the other in poor condition. They recounted that it had been stripped of markings and serial numbers. None of them had spoken to an American pilot but they concluded that a pilot would be invaluable in helping them discern operational characteristics during reverse engineering. They did, however, receive information from a member of the project that appeared to be from a pilot. One of the designers remembered that this individual had once told him he was participating in the interrogation of the aircraft's pilot. The designers also stated that the aircraft had been at the Mikoyan-Gurevich (MiG) Design Bureau.

The Task Force Russia interviewers then visited the Zhukovskii Central Aerohydrodynamics Institute (Tsentral'niy Aerogidrodinamicheskii institut imeni Professora N. Ye. Zhukovskogo-Tsagi) (formerly MiG Design Bureau) on 1 April 1993 escorted by Lieutenant Colonel Klimovich. There they spoke to Professor Yevgeniy I. Rushitskiy, Chief of the Institute's Information Division and Chairman of the History Section.

During the course of the interview, Professor Rushitskiy confirmed that an F-86 had been delivered to the institute

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<sup>35</sup>The Russian side of the Joint Commission had been informed of the scheduled interview but declined to participate.

<sup>36</sup>AmEmbassy Moscow Message, 1411521Z Apr 93, POW/MIA Team - Moscow: Weekly Activity Report 13/93, March 28 to April 3, 1993.

to be disassembled and copied. According to the professor, when they were finished, all parts from the F-86 were destroyed or recycled. He also stated that when the aircraft was delivered to them from the State Red Banner Scientific-Research Institute of the Air Force<sup>37</sup> at Chkalovskiy airfield north of Moscow, there were no longer markings or identification numbers of any kind on it.

One of designers distinctly remembered the study and disassembly of a sand-filled fuselage of an F-86 at the design bureau. This source also remembers an American pilot having been available at another location for follow-on questions. This story was repeated by other personnel from the Design Bureau.<sup>38</sup>

The remarkable central fact of this episode is that at least two and possibly three F-86 were captured and returned to Moscow for exploitation. At least one of the F-86s was captured by being forced down on a beach. This same information is provided by three separate sources: General Lobov, the retired KGB officer, and the designers from the Sukhoi and MiG Design Bureaus. The inescapable follow-on question deals with the presence of the pilots of the aircraft, held to assist in the exploitation of the aircraft. That presence is maintained by both the retired KGB officer and the designers. Who were the pilots? What became of them after they provided his information? Likely candidates are shown at Appendix B.

#### MGB and GRU: Who Did What?

In interviews with numerous former officers of the GRU (Military Intelligence) who served during in the Korean War, a distinct picture emerges of the specific roles of both the GRU and the MGB in the handling of POWs. The military intelligence officers uniformly describe a division of labor in which Army personnel capture POWs, GRU officers conduct tactical and operational interrogations, and then POWs are turned over for custody and final disposition to the MGB. This system operated from before World War II to the present. These officers repeatedly assert that if any POWs were taken to the Soviet Union, it would have been a closely controlled operation of the MGB at the time.

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<sup>37</sup>Gosudarstvennyi Krasno-Znamennyi Nauchino-Issledovatel'sky Institut V.V.S.

<sup>38</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 1411521Z Apr 93, POW/MIA Team - Moscow: Weekly Activity Report 12/93, March 28 to April 3, 1993; also debriefings of Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Poltoratsky, U.S. Army Reserve, who had been a member of the TFR-M team that visited the design bureaus.

Colonel Georgii Plotnikov was asked hypothetically if it would have been possible to effect such a transfer without GRU officers being aware of it. "Yes," he answered without hesitation. "It would have been a KGB [MGB] operation in cooperation with North Korean intelligence. The Soviet Army had no Gulag and was not prepared to deal with a stream of prisoners. The KGB [MGB] could do all of these things." The Soviets had the capability to move POWs, the Koreans would have permitted such an operation, and transport across the PRC would have been no problem, in Plotnikov's view. "At the time there was train service from Pyongyang to Moscow with a stop in China." The POWs, he stated, "would have been loaded into trucks with canvas drawn around them, then transferred to trains at night . . . The North Koreans hated Americans. They would have cooperated in such an operation if asked by the Soviets. The North Koreans could have not said no to a Soviet request." In Plotnikov's view, "specialized organs" in the Soviet Union would have made requests for particular types of Americans. "Design Bureaus might have made such requests," he said. The Deputy Chairman of the KGB [MGB] would be the lowest political level that could have approved such an operation that kept the GRU out of the picture.

Grabbing American POWs [would have been a] political decision in response to a request. Infantry was of no interest to Soviet intelligence. There would have been no regular transfer. American POWs would have been moved as specialists fell into the camps. They would be identified and moved. The interest would not have been in people who operated equipment as much as it would have focused on people who understood the principles of how things worked.<sup>39</sup>

Plotnikov's 'hypothesis' conforms to Avraham Shifrin's account of transfer of POWs by the "security organs" as well as the accounts of the exploitation of F-86s and at least one pilot by the Sukhoi and MiG Design Bureaus.

Further confirmation of the MGB role was provided by Major Valerii Amirov.

The intelligence center in Sarashogan (Sary Shagan) belonged to the KGB [MGB]. A task was [started] from 1949-1950. Soviet engineers started to design Soviet anti-aircraft and missile equipment and weaponry. In other words the SA-75 (SA-2 Guideline) complex that later provoked such noise in Vietnam. They had to create a radar system for that complex and secondly, a missile system. The American Air Force then

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<sup>39</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Trip Report of Moscow Visit December 15-22, 1991, pp. 10-11; and Interview with Colonel Plotnikov, 17 December 1991, Moscow.

was better than the Soviet one, by its flying characteristics. They were mostly interested in the Sabre planes, the F-84 [the Sabre was the F-86], it was also called "Cross". They were interested in weak points of the American planes. How to guide a missile in order to make Air Force actions more difficult. Second, they were interested in flying characteristics, materials used for building these planes and so on.

The source [of the requirement] was one of Beria's [Chief of the MGB] deputies, who was curator of that complex's construction. The construction of that rocket complex was a state task. In other words, it was like Komsomol [Young Communist League] construction. It was one of the most important directions of the engineers activities. Since Korea was a first encounter of the Soviet and US military equipment and technology, and the US Air Force was stronger then, there was a classified directive issued by the KGB . . . on collecting all the information concerning the US Air Force . . .

The First Directorate of the MGB was responsible for collecting information, and the other one, whose number I don't know was in charge of providing security. Discipline was very strict. Pilots could not cross certain parallels in order to fall on their own territory. In order to collect all the necessary data on the aircraft technology the first group was organized. They would collect planes' fragments and send them back through a window on the border. There was a window on the Soviet-[Chinese] border, Otpor station. This was the window for transporting planes, their fragments. They would transport everything including pieces of metal up to some navigation equipment, all documents they could find. They transported all this through Otpor<sup>40</sup> - Alma Ata - Sarashogan [Sary Shagan]. . .<sup>41</sup>

Major Amirov further stated that in January-February 1952, the MGB issued a secret directive through the Ministry of Defense to forces in the field in Korea to not only try to shoot down planes but to also capture pilots.<sup>42</sup>

So far in the work of the Commission, most of the information provided by the Russian side has been from former officers of the

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<sup>40</sup>Otpor was a czarist era name for Manchuria.

<sup>41</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, Interview with Major Amirov, 18 December 1991, Moscow.

<sup>42</sup>ibid.

GRU. There has been a traditional rivalry and animosity between the GRU and KGB that may have influenced the uniform finger pointing by the GRU officers interviewed by the U.S. side. Unfortunately, the Russian side has provided no former officers of the MGB/KGB as sources of information. The only former officers of the MGB/KGB that have provided information have been those discovered through the research efforts of TFR-M. One was Lieutenant Colonel Klimovich who led TFR-M team members to the design bureaus. The other was KGB Lieutenant Colonel Valerii Lavrentsov whom TFR-M team members met in their early December visit to the Khabarovsk Krai. He confirmed much of the information provided by the GRU officers.

Lavrentsov stated that during his research on Japanese and Korean POWs he ran across some interesting information that suggests that some Americans may have been held in Khabarovsk in "special houses" until they were able to recover from their wounds and were then sent on to Moscow and other places; however, there is no evidence in Khabarovsk who these people were.

Lavrentsov agreed with the TFR-M assertion that the MGB would have been the only organization with enough resources to accomplish that mission, even if only a few Americans were involved. Although he did not exclude GRU participation, he speculated that the Americans could have been moved by either train, ship or air to the USSR, and that when they were in Soviet custody, their names would most certainly have been changed to Slavic ones. Lavrentsov suggested that an entire false background would have been concocted for each prisoner.

Lavrentsov said that the Americans would have been mainly pilots, taken for their technical expertise . . . According to Lavrentsov the GRU would have been interested in the technical information, however, the security and movement of the POWs would have been handled by special MGB troops sent from Moscow . . . The reason he knows this occurred was because he was able to find records of "unknown" people ordering food, drinks for "special houses."<sup>4</sup>

From the American side of the war, Lieutenant Colonel J. Philip Corso (Chief, Special Projects Branch of the Intelligence Division, Far East Command) was able to put together a picture of the personalities who ran the POW operations for the Communist side. This picture is reflected in the following statement:

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<sup>4</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 311004Z Dec 92, Subject: POW/MIA: TFR-M Members Visit to Irkutsk and Khabarovsk.



The control system for POW camps in North Korea shows the extent of involvement of Soviet "Advisors." The Secretary General of the top secretariat was a Soviet officer named Takayaransky, Director General of the POW control bureau was a Colonel Andreyev, USSR; its Deputy Director, Lt. Col. Baksov, USSR; for the North Koreans, General Kim Ill, North Korean Army (alias Pak Dok San, USSR) and General Tu Fing, Chinese. The Chief of the Investigation Section (one of the three components of the bureau) was Colonel Faryayev, USSR).<sup>4</sup>

**Three Case Studies:  
Inadvertent Glimpses  
into the Soviet Handling of POWs**

The following three cases of Capt Albert G. Tenney, 1Lt Roland Parks, and Corporal Nick Flores are examples of special handling of U.S. POWs by the Soviets. Capt Tenney was never identified by the Communists during the Korean War as having been captured. 1Lt Parks and Cpl Flores were captured directly by the Soviets, interrogated, and, for unique reasons, turned over to the Chinese. We believe that save for these special circumstances, discussed below, both would have been likely candidates for transportation to the Soviet Union.

**The Case of Captain Albert G. Tenney, USAF.** Information on one of the pilots mentioned on Table 1, Capt Albert G. Tenney has recently come to light. This information indicates that he and his aircraft may well have been transferred to the Soviet Union.

Several months ago, a Task Force Russia-Moscow interview revealed that in the early 1950's, an F-86 was captured intact in North Korea. This plane was shipped intact to the Soviet Union for technical exploitation by the MiG and Sukhoi design bureaus in Moscow. The interviewee also stated that, at the time of delivery, the fuselage of the F-86 was filled with sand, indicating that the plane had made a forced landing on a beach. He also stated that the pilot of this aircraft accompanied the F-86 to Moscow, where he underwent debriefing.

The Joint Commission Support Branch recently interviewed former Korean era prisoner of war Brigadier General Michael Dearmond, USAF, ret. General Dearmond was an F-86 pilot who was shot down and subsequently interrogated by the Russians. He stated that he

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<sup>4</sup>Atrocities Speech -- Preliminary Synopsis, 12 November 1953, p. 6; attached to this document is a cover letter to the Central Intelligence Agency, signed by Charles R. Norberg, Chairman of the POW Working Group, 12 November 1953.

had never heard of pilots disappearing but recounted that one incident was mystifying to him. Dearmond's interrogator once brought an identification card and a "chitbook" (officer's club purchase coupon book) from an F-86 pilot and asked Dearmond to explain the "chitbook." Dearmond asked about the fate of the pilot and the Korean interrogator stated that the pilot had crashed into the Yalu River and died. Dearborn remembers that the pilot was a Lieutenant (Tenney was promoted to Captain while in MIA status). The mystery came in Dearmond's observation that given the fact that the pilot ostensibly died in the Yalu River, the "chitbook" was not, and appeared never to have been wet. Dearmond stated that he completely disbelieved the North Korean's account of the fate of the unidentified pilot.<sup>45</sup>

On 21 December 1992, 72 pages of Korean-era documents (TFR 76) were passed to Task Force Russia-Moscow by the Russian side of the Joint Commission. These documents dealt exclusively with the Korean War period. Among these documents were inventories of personal effects, documents, etc. taken from shot down pilots. Only one of these inventory lists (TFR 76-37) has an identification card and a "chitbook" (listed as: an Officer's club ticket with coupons for mess. Consisting of 7 pages in two booklets). This is the inventory list for the F-86 pilot Captain Albert G. Tenney.

Captain Tenney (see Appendix B for circumstances of loss) crashed in the water at the mouth of the Yalu River on 3 May 52. The circumstances of his crash lead analysts to believe that he could have survived the crash. If the Koreans had tried to salvage his plane, they most likely would have towed it to shore and onto the beach. Since the landing gear was up at the time of Captain Tenney's crash, the plane would have been dragged onto the beach nose first, accounting for the mass of sand in the fuselage.

One final piece of evidence is provided through material provided by the Russian side of the Joint Commission. Captain Tenney's name appears on the "List of 59" entitled "A List of United States Air Force Personnel Shot Down in Aerial Combat and by Anti-Aircraft Artillery During Military Operations in Korea, Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point."

**The Case of First Lieutenant Roland Parks, USAF.** The case of 1Lt Roland Parks, one of the repatriated F-86 pilots, is particularly interesting. In this instance, the Soviets directly interrogated an F-86 pilot, but because he had inadvertently violated Chinese airspace, eventually turned him over to the Chinese.

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<sup>45</sup>Joint Commission Support Branch Interview with Brigadier General (ret) Michael Dearmond, USAF, 18 August 1993.

In an operation over North Korea his aircraft compass gyros became inoperative and he became separated from his flight. He finally ejected over the Liaotung Peninsula when he ran out of fuel somewhere between the Soviet military zone around Port Arthur and the Chinese city of Dairen. He was captured by Chinese peasants and picked up by Soviet personnel. He was taken to a Soviet airfield and briefly interrogated. Then he was taken to Port Arthur and rigorously interrogated by:

relatively high-ranking Soviet military personnel. They went over the same questions, got the same answers but then extended the interrogation to a regular military intelligence interrogation. No question was raised as to the wrongfulness of his landing in Port Arthur. He recalled that the interpreter, whom he described as a wizened hunchback, had at one point said to him that 'we may tell the United States Government that you were killed in a crash.' No reason was given him for turning him over to the Chinese Communists.<sup>46</sup>

1Lt Parks' experience was recounted in his own words in U.S. News and World Report:

17 Sep 52. The Russians told me they were taking me to Moscow. I had told them I did not want to be turned over to the Chinese, and that's probably why they told me they were taking me to Russia. I thought they were taking me to the Siberian salt mines. I had made up my mind that if we kept going north toward Siberia I was going to go over the hill [escape] at all costs.

18 Sep 52. We . . . finally arrived in Antung about 3 p.m. Near Antung airfield we stopped. A Russian officer went away and came back in about an hour with some Chinese officers. Then I was blindfolded while we drove about 30 minutes more, stopping at what I learned later was a Chinese military base . . . The Russians took away from me everything Russian that they had given me, destroying any

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<sup>46</sup>Samuel Klaus, "Interview with Lt. Roland W. Parks," 15 July 1955. The interview further stated, "When the Chinese got him they told him that they did not know what they were going to do with him. He might, they said, be sent to Korea to a prisoner of war camp, but on the other hand his case was special because he had come down in China." The fact that the Soviets turned Parks over to the Chinese might have been a necessary bow to Chinese sovereignty, since he did bail out, albeit inadvertently, over Chinese territory.

evidence that I had been in Russian hands.<sup>47</sup>

In the absence of 1Lt Parks' official debriefings<sup>48</sup>, the JCSB reinterviewed him recently. He provided the following information:

About two weeks after Parks arrived at this compound [at the Port Arthur naval base], he was issued a full set of cold weather clothing: boots, overcoat, and shirts. Parks was told to put them on by the senior officer who questioned him. Parks was told, "We are leaving." Parks asked where he was being taken, and the Naval officer stated, "to Russia." Parks asked again, and the officer stated, "Siberia, where your situation can be properly resolved for you to return to the U.S." Parks stated that he did not want to go to Siberia because he had heard of the salt mines. The Naval officer stated that there were no salt mines in Siberia, and that he (the Naval officer) was certain because he was from Siberia. Parks asked why he was going to Siberia and was told, "because diplomats must resolve these cases, but you will go and be with other Americans like you." Parks was loaded onto a truck and never saw the Naval personnel again . . . . For reasons that were not explained to Parks, he was taken by vehicle along the coastal road to the POW collection point in Antung, and was turned over to Chinese custody. Parks believes that they "changed their minds" about sending him to the Soviet Union because of his youth and lack of significant information.<sup>49</sup>

In this case, we have first-hand evidence that the Soviets interrogated an F-86 pilot directly with no Chinese or North Korean participation. Not only did they taunt him with hiding his POW status behind the plausible story that he had crashed but

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<sup>47</sup>"Prison Diary of Lt. Parks," U.S. News and World Report, June 24, 1955, p: 34.

<sup>48</sup>One of the serious gaps in our knowledge is the absence of the USAF debriefings of its repatriated pilots. In a letter to Mr. Roger Warren, dated 13 May 1991, Colonel Elliott V. Converse, III, Commander, Headquarters United States Air Force Historical Research Center, Maxwell AFB, wrote that these debriefings were destroyed about fifteen years before. U.S. Navy and Marine Corps debriefings were discovered by the JCSB at the National Archives in Washington in the late Spring of 1993. The JCSB requested the Archives to begin declassification. The Army's debriefings are at Fort Meade, Maryland.

<sup>49</sup>Joint Commission Support Branch, Interview of Retired Colonel Roland Parks, 24 August 1993.

they also frankly stated that he would be transported to the Soviet Union. Only some unknown understanding with the Chinese resulted in his transfer to their custody. One can speculate that the Chinese would naturally be sensitive, as a matter of sovereignty, about the custody of a U.S. pilot who landed on their territory. Since 1Lt Parks figured in the subsequent major propaganda campaign built around the so-called 'Arnold B-29 Crew', the Chinese were probably eager to acquire U.S. pilots who could fill the bill of indictment that the U.S. had criminally violated Chinese sovereignty.

**The Case of Corporal Nick Flores, USMC.** Our most persuasive argument comes from the debriefing and recent personal account of former POW Corporal Nick A. Flores, USMC.<sup>50</sup> In Corporal Flores' case, we have a foot soldier who was interrogated by the Soviets at Antung because he was mistaken for an F-86 pilot.

Taken prisoner at Koto-ri in November 1950, Corporal Flores spent almost three years in a prisoner of war camp. Corporal Flores resisted his captors at every opportunity and attempted to escape three times. On the last occasion, he stayed at liberty for approximately ten days. His fellow prisoners outfitted him with uniform parts that would give him the best chance at survival: USAF boots, coveralls, and flight jacket, the latter with 'U.S. Air Force' written on the front. Corporal Flores led a dozen men out of Camp One at Chang Song on 22 July 1952. The majority of the men returned to the camp due to sickness, wounds or illness, or fear, but Corporal Flores and one other POW pressed on. On 28 July they agreed to split up in order to increase the chance that one would escape to UN lines. Corporal Flores pushed on westward toward the coast since he had heard the U.S. Navy was operating off shore near Sinuiju.

On the morning of 1 August, however, he blundered into a camouflaged anti-aircraft position overlooking Sinuiju. There he surprised a group of Caucasians wearing 'clean' uniforms and speaking Russian. Confronted by an apparent officer in English: "You are the American pilot," Flores was bound and blindfolded. Instead of being returned to his POW camp, he was bundled into a truck and taken across the twin bridges at Sinuiju to Antung in Manchuria. He was taken into a building where. His escort officer turned him over to someone else, saying again in English, "Here is the American F-86 pilot." He then met a translator and an interrogator who introduced himself as a Soviet colonel whose name he cannot remember. During the interrogation, he heard the

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<sup>50</sup>The following information was taken from Corporal Flores' debriefings after his repatriation and from extensive interviews with members of Joint Commission Support Branch, 3-10 August 1993.

noise of several other people who appeared to have been listening.

Over the ensuing four-hour interrogation, Corporal Flores continued to maintain that he was a Marine enlisted man and an escaped POW but realized that his U.S. Air Force uniform clearly identified him as an aviator. What he did not know was that, shortly before he had stumbled upon the anti-aircraft position, another American had been in that vicinity. At 0920 hours, Major Felix Asla, USAF, piloting his F-86 in the vicinity of Sinuiju's twin bridges, was jumped by MIGs and was last seen spinning toward the southeast. Major Asla was never seen again.

During the four hours of interrogation, Corporal Flores was repeatedly told to confess that he was an F-86 pilot and was asked the identity of his unit and the location of its operating base. The interrogator also pursued another line of questioning by asking repeatedly about his knowledge of germ warfare. Ominously, the interrogator said that "all the other pilots had confessed," so he should as well.

After approximately four hours, in which he was never physically mistreated or abused, another person came into the room and interrupted the interrogation with a message in Russian. The Soviet colonel was audibly distressed and upset with whatever information he had just received and broke off the interrogation. Corporal Flores was taken to another room and asked by someone identified as a nurse if he needed any medical help. She asked several questions posed as if he were a pilot but left when he maintained he was not. After about 18 hours he was loaded aboard a truck, still blindfolded. The blindfold was then removed, and he was able to see the earth-covered bunker where he had been. It was located on a major airfield with rows of MiGs parked nearby. He was then driven back under guard across the Yalu river and turned over to North Korean authorities who returned him to Camp One.

The significance of Corporal Flores' experience in Soviet hands is that it demonstrates that the Soviets had a special handling procedure for pilots, especially F-86 pilots. This special procedure involved taking the captured pilot directly to a Soviet interrogation site, completely bypassing the normal POW camp processing procedures. This procedure confirms statements of Shu Ping Wa who, described the direct transfer of American pilots from capture to Soviet custody. There were three key elements of this special handling procedure illustrated in the experience of Corporal Flores:

1. He was taken directly from capture to Soviet custody for interrogation.
2. He was believed to be the pilot of an F-86.

3. There was no mistreatment, in expectation of potential cooperation in the fulfillment of intelligence collection requirements.

### Conclusions

The Soviets had a program of the highest priority to capture F-86 aircraft and pilots for technical exploitation.

o The Soviet forces in North Korea had 70 teams whose mission was the recovery of U.S. pilots. The Chinese turned pilots over to Soviet officers as a matter of policy.

o Soviet policy was to establish a veil of deniability over the transfer of prisoners by taking them directly after capture to the Soviet Union. Such prisoners were never mixed with the general POW population in North Korean or Chinese hands.

o There is no record of repatriated U.S. POWs who were transported to the Soviet Union for technical exploitation and then repatriated.

o The Soviet forces in Korea devised and executed a plan to force down at least one F-86 intact.

o Intact F-86 aircraft and at least one pilot were delivered to the Sukhoi and Mikoyan Design Bureaus for exploitation.

o A number of POWs, notably including F-86 pilots, were transferred by air to the Soviet Union for exploitation of their technical knowledge.

o The evidence suggests that the Soviets had a special interest in the MIAs shown on Table 1 and specifically Capt Albert Tenney and 1Lt Robert Neimann. There is a good chance that Capt Tenney and his aircraft were transferred to the Soviet Union for exploitation.

## Part II

### The Hostage Connection

**POW Exploitation.** By the middle of 1950 when Stalin ordered the invasion of South Korea, the Soviet Union already had extensive experience with the transfer and incarceration of large numbers of prisoners. Tens of millions of its own citizens had been consigned to the GULAG as well as millions of German and Japanese POWs and POWs from other armies allied to the Axis. The Axis POWs, in particular, were specifically exploited as labor, much of it skilled, to rebuild the war-ravaged and labor-short Soviet Union. The labor camp system had become an industrial empire of Beria's NKVD within the Soviet Union, an empire constantly in need of fresh workers to replenish and expand the work force.

In 1950 the MVD produced a thousand-page study on the exploitation of foreign POWs. This Top Secret document was entitled, About Spies, Operative Work with POWs and Internees taken Prisoner During the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet People, 1941-1945. "This document summarizes and assesses the methods and results of programs used to exploit foreign POWs on Soviet territory."<sup>1</sup> As part of this exploitation program, Soviet security agencies heavily recruited agents among these POWs to be activated upon their eventual return to their homelands. Additionally, the Soviet Union used the possession of these POWs to exact important political and economic concessions from the new governments of Germany and Japan. Therefore, by the middle of 1950, the Soviet Union had at hand a vast, well-practiced, efficiently-operating, and profitable system for the collection, incarceration, and exploitation of POWs.

**The Stalin - Chou En-lai Meeting.** The exploitation of POWs as Soviet state policy was blatantly contained in the minutes of a 19 September 1952 meeting between Stalin and Chinese Foreign Minister Chou en-lai in which he recommended that the Communists keep back twenty percent of United Nations POWs as hostages.

Stalin. "Concerning the proposal that both sides temporarily withhold twenty percent of the prisoners of war and that they return all the remaining prisoners of war - the Soviet delegation will not touch this proposal, and it

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<sup>1</sup>Paul M. Cole, The Sharaskha System: The Link Between Specialized Soviet Prison Camps and American POW/MIAs in Korea? (Draft) (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corp., 1993) p. 14.



remains in reserve for Mao Tse-tung."<sup>52</sup>

This letter was provided by the Russian side of the Joint Commission. We believe that large numbers of United Nations POWs, the overwhelming number of whom were soldiers of the Republic of Korea Army (ROKA), were already being secreted away in camps throughout the Soviet Union, as will be shown by the statements of Lieutenant General Khan San Kho and Zygmunt Nagorski.

Lieutenant General Kan San Kho. The essence of the Stalin - Chou en-lai meeting was corroborated by a senior retired Soviet officer, Kahn San Kho, who had been seconded to the North Korean People's Army, promoted to the rank of lieutenant general, and who eventually served as the deputy chief of the North Korean MVD. He stated in November 1992 that he assisted in the transfer of thousands of South Korean POWs into 300 to 400 camps in the Soviet Union, most in the taiga but some in Central Asia as well. LTG Kahn testimony shows the POW element of the GULAG was operating efficiently at this time in absorbing large numbers of UN POWs. Although LTG Kahn admitted only to knowledge of Korean prisoners, his interview strongly suggests the possibility that other UN POWs, including Americans, could also have been condemned to the camp system.<sup>53</sup>

Colonel Gavril I. Korotkov. Another Soviet source is retired Soviet Army Colonel Gavril Ivanovich Korotkov, who served from July 1950 to mid-1954 as part of a general staff-based analytical group reporting to Marshal Rodion Malinovskiy, then commander-in-chief, Far East Military District, on developments in intelligence (tactical and technical) gained from the ongoing war in Korea. Specifically, Korotkov's political section was responsible for reporting on political information, the morale and psychological well-being of U.S. units engaged in Korea. This information was to be used in support of propaganda activities and possibly the refinement of operational/contingency plans. Colonel Korotkov provided the following information in an interview in August 1992:

Soviet military specialists had been given approval to interrogate U.S. POWs. There were two stages to this process:

Stage 1, Interrogations in North Korea. These were conducted at the front, immediately after POWs had been

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<sup>52</sup>"Minutes of the Meeting Between Comrade Stalin with Chou en-lai, 19 Sep 1952, translated in Draft TFR 37-11.

<sup>53</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 271140Z, Subject: POW/MIA: Interview with General Kahn San Kho.

transferred into the hands of the North Korea-based Soviet forces. Initial contact focused on gaining operational and tactical intelligence, such as order-of-battle, etc.

State 2, Transfer to the Soviet Union. Korotkov was not aware of exactly who selected which American POWs for transfer to the Soviet Union for further interrogation, or which criteria were used in the selection process, but the most likely characteristics were experience, i.e., seniority - field grade officers and above. Two separate groups handled these military interrogations, the GRU-subordinated intelligence group which was interested in detailed tactical and technical intelligence, and the main political directorate-subordinated group, which was interested in political intelligence.

Korotkov had only limited knowledge of the procedures for the movement of Americans to and through the USSR. He did not know where the processing facilities or camps were located in North Korea. On several occasions he had visited the Soviet naval base at Pos'yet which served as a transit point for the movement of American POWs north to Khabarovsk. Although there was an airfield nearby, he believed that the bulk of the Americans were transported from Pos'yet to Khabarovsk by rail. But most likely at least some of the POWs were moved from North Korea or China by air.

Korotkov stated that the American POWs were kept under the control of the MGB. Generally, military interrogators had only a few hours with the Americans, although they sometimes had up to a few days, depending on the nature and perceived value of the information or source. While the POWs were at Khabarovsk, the MGB controlled them when they were not being interrogated. Once the process was completed, the POWs were returned to the control of the MGB. Therefore, Korotkov stated, he had no direct knowledge of the fate of these personnel. Although Korotkov did not know the exact number, he felt that the number of Americans processed through Khabarovsk was in the hundreds. Despite the fact that his political group had access to only a portion of the total number of POWs interrogated by the analytical group, he felt confident in this high estimate. Following the rout of the 24th Infantry Division in July and August 1950, there were "tens of American POWs" as Colonel Korotkov put it, but the number climbed quickly through the first months of the war. Furthermore, he indicated that operational directives said that Americans caught behind North Korean lines should be taken alive, not killed. A number of American pilots were taken alive. Moreover, Korotkov indicated that the Koreans were quite willing to allow the Soviets direct access and eventual control over U.S. POWs. By contrast, the Chinese, according to Colonel Korotkov, were very reluctant to release control over Americans who came into their hands.

Colonel Korotkov further stated that he had personally interrogated two American POWs, one of whom was a LTC Black. He could not remember the names of any other of the American POWs who had been processed through Khabarovsk. All reports on U.S. POW interrogations from Colonel Korotkov's analytical group were forwarded to the Headquarters, Far East Military District. The political group's reports were also sent directly to the Soviet Army's Main Political Administration, 7th Directorate, and the technical group's reports were sent through GRU (Military Intelligence) channels to Moscow. An effort was made to gain the cooperation of POWs and turn their allegiance. Those prisoners who demonstrated a willingness to cooperate were separated from the majority and given favorable treatment. However, as he remembers it, the number of Americans who cooperated was very small, in contrast with the Soviet experience with German POWs in World War II, of whom a higher percentage was willing to cooperate. An overall report was compiled which assessed the morale of U.S. servicemen in Korea. Colonel Korotkov stated that he had seen a copy of this report in the GRU archives at Podol'sk.<sup>54</sup>

In his first interview, Colonel Korotkov stated that he had interviewed a U.S. officer, LTC Black. We believe that this may have been USAF LTC Vance Eugene Black who was reported by other POWs to have died of mistreatment and malnutrition in a North Korean POW camp.<sup>55</sup> Another retired Soviet officer, GRU Colonel Aleksandr Semyonovich Orlov, stated that he had arranged for an interview by a Pravda correspondent with LTC Vance Black.<sup>56</sup> In his subsequent interview with MG Loeffke, Colonel Korotkov denied having interrogated LTC Black, stating that he perhaps we had confused the name with a black POW. Task Force Russia interviewers, however, were adamant that he had been referring to

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<sup>54</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 241259Z Aug 92 Subject: POW/MIA Team Interview with Colonel Korotkov.

<sup>55</sup>Lieutenant Colonel Vance Eugene Black, assigned to the headquarters of the 19th Air Force, was on a B-29 of the 98th Bomb Group that was shot down by enemy flak on 2 May 1951 over Pyongyang, North Korea. He died in captivity on or about 1 November 1951. His death was witnessed by 1Lt Robert J. O'Shea, USMC. Lt. Col. Black died of mistreatment, and starvation at the infamous North Korean POW camp called "Pak's Palace".

<sup>56</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 151645Z Oct 92, Subject: POW/MIA: POW/MIA Team Interview With Colonel (Ret) Orlov. See also Pravda Special Correspondent, "The Way of Interventionists," Pravda, 14 August 1951, p. 4 (translated in TFR 31-1). Colonel Orlov stated that LTC Black was considered a suitable subject for interview because of his position as a staff officer.

the family name "Black" rather than to the black race. In this second interview, Colonel Korotkov remembered that the first officer he interviewed had been an Army first lieutenant, most likely from the 24th Infantry Division, but that he could remember nothing else. He had better recall about an Air Force pilot because he found much in common with him, such as color of hair (light), height (about 6'2"), rank (captain). He also said the pilot was about 28 to 30 years old. Colonel Korotkov also stated that while he was assigned to the project of interrogating Americans in the Far East during the Korean War, he also interrogated Japanese POWs, captured in World War II, and still held in Soviet custody. Here is an admission that foreign POWs were part of an overall system of exploitation.<sup>57</sup>

Colonel Korotkov changed his statement in a subsequent interview with Major General Bernard Loeffke, former Director of Task Force Russia (now Joint Commission Support Branch - JCSB), in September 1992 after being contacted by a member of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service. He then stated that the interrogations took place somewhere undefined, which he could not remember, in the Chinese-Korean-Soviet tri-border area. In MG Loeffke's words:

Since that encounter, the colonel changed his story as to the location where he interrogated U.S. POWs. Even after having been contacted by the KGB official, COL Korotkov agreed to answer questions on tape in front of Russian LTC Osipov, General Volkogonov's assistant. This interview took place on September 29. He said he and other Soviet officers in Soviet and at times Chinese uniforms had interrogated U.S. POWs over a 1-2 year period (1951-52) in an area near the borders of USSR, Korea and China. In this new version, Korotkov claims that he did not know, if that particular location was in Russia or not. The important point is that he would not say that it was not inside Russia. In all previous interviews he had specifically said that these interrogations took place in Khabarovsk. The colonel was obviously willing to oblige the security services by not saying that it took place in Khabarovsk; but he was not willing to say that it did not take place on Russian soil. The colonel's official statement on tape, and in front of a Russian officer assigned to the Joint POW/MIA Commission cannot easily be refuted. Korotkov is a respected military

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<sup>57</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 261132Z Oct 92, Subject: POW/MIA: Follow-Up Interview with Colonel Gavril Korotkov.

officer with prestigious academic credentials."<sup>8</sup>

What Colonel Korotkov did not do was to deny that Soviet military personnel, including himself, were directly involved in the interrogation of a "large" number of American POWs during the Korean War.<sup>9</sup> In a subsequent videotaped interview recorded by Mr. Ted Landreth, an Australian journalist, Colonel Korotkov clearly stated that American POWs had been taken "through Khabarovsk" into the camp system. Their ultimate destination he did not know.

Later in discussions with Colonel Stuart Herrington, during the December 1992 Joint Commission meeting in Moscow he restated that the prisoners were escorted by a female Soviet Border Guards Officer in Soviet uniform. He also stated that he conducted his interrogations in Soviet uniform. During the Korean War, as the Russian side has explained, the Soviets attempted to establish deniability of involvement by a policy of dressing its military personnel, who served in Korea, in Chinese or North Korean uniforms. U.S. intelligence reporting during the Korean War as well as the testimony of a number of POWs who had contact with Soviet personnel tends to confirm this policy. There are also some examples of the Soviets' failure to adhere to this policy, usually involving hasty interrogations conducted shortly after capture. However, these examples are in the minority. Specifically, there are no known examples of Soviet officers wearing Soviet uniforms participating in formal interrogations with the exceptions of the cases of 1Lt Parks and Cpl Flores, cited in Part I. For Soviet personnel to have worn their uniforms during the interrogation of U.S. POWs argues at a minimum that the POWs were in the Soviet Union and that the Soviet authorities may have considered the issue of deniability to be irrelevant for men who were never going home.

Lieutenant Colonel Philip J. Corso. Further evidence comes from contemporary U.S. intelligence sources. LTC Philip Corso, who served as Chief, Special Projects Branch of the Intelligence Division, Far East Command, under Generals Douglas MacArthur, Matthew Ridgeway and Mark Clark during the Korean War. One of his primary duties was to keep track of enemy POW camps in North Korea, their location, the conditions at these camps, the estimated number of U.S. and other UN POWs held at each camp, and their treatment at the hands of the enemy. He has stated

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<sup>8</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 021430Z Oct 92, Subject: POW/MIA: Maj Gen Loeffke's Personal Assessment of Moscow POW/MIA Team's Operations.

<sup>9</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 261132Z Oct 92, Subject: POW/MIA: Follow-Up Interview with Colonel Gavril Korotkov.

emphatically under oath before the U.S. Senate that U.S. POWs were taken to the Soviet Union. He stated that his information came from hundreds of intelligence reports from agents, defectors, North Korean and Chinese POWs, civilians, and repatriated U.S. POWs.<sup>60</sup> He also stated that at least two and possibly three trainloads of U.S. POWs were transferred from Chinese to Soviet custody at the rail transshipment point of Manchuoli on the Manchurian-Chita Oblast border of China and the Soviet Union. He estimated that each trainload could carry a maximum of 450 POWs. His information formed the basis of a major national policy decision by President Eisenhower in 1954. LTC Corso's professional determination of the situation was based on the concentrated application of the intelligence resources of the United States.<sup>61</sup>

LTC Corso stated during a videotaped interview with Task Force Russia in January 1993:

I secured this information from I'd say, hundreds of prisoner of war reports, from Chinese and North Korea, who actually saw these prisoners being transported and later I talked to a few high level Soviet defectors who confirmed it - that this transfer was going on . . . . And that they were being taken to the Soviet Union. We estimated they were taken there for intelligence purposes. The operation, as far as we were concerned, was a GRU/NKVD operation in those days. And it was mostly to elicit information from them, possibly take over their identities or use them as agents, or . . . to assume their identities. And we had information along this line that this was being done . . . . Also, we had information that once the information was taken from them, and they were used, how the Soviets saw fit to use them, they were eliminated, and they would never come back. Which actually happened - they never came back. They were killed, which was Soviet policy, also.

The source of this information, as I said, was hundreds of prisoner reports, North Korean and Chinese prisoners that we took, defectors and other intelligence that I can't describe for certain reasons. And, as I say, photographs, because we

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<sup>60</sup>The U.S. side of the Joint Commission has conducted an intensive search for the hundreds of intelligence reports that Lieutenant Colonel Corso has cited. No reports of that magnitude have been found.

<sup>61</sup>Statement of Lt. Col. Philip J. Corso, U.S. Army (ret.), Hearings of U.S. Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, Washington, D.C., November 10, 1992. Interview with Lt. Col. Corso by Task Force Russia, 11 November 1992.

photographed the camps, and so we saw movements, and the people on the ground, civilians, also would come through. This was the intelligence process, put together very, very carefully, for a long period of time, matching all information and putting them together to show a pattern in the picture.<sup>62</sup>

LTC Corso's single most dramatic source was North Korean Lieutenant General Pak San Yong. Pak was a Soviet colonel of Korean ethnicity who had been seconded to the North Korean People's Army and promoted to lieutenant general. He was also a member of the North Korean Communist Central Committee. Pak had been captured and disguised himself as a private but had been denounced by anti-Communist fellow prisoners. Under interrogation, he revealed that U.S. POWs had been sent to the Soviet Union and that they had been prioritized by specialty and that he had a list of those specialties. Pak had no information on the number of POWs sent to the Soviet Union.<sup>63</sup>

In response to a question on how closely the defector information paralleled the information from POWs, LTC Corso responded:

Very close, in fact. What I was seeking from the defectors was the KGB/GRU operation. Not so much that prisoners were being taken to the Soviet Union, because we already knew that. But I wanted to learn more of the method of the operation of the GRU/KGB on how they used these prisoners, because that was the intelligence aspect of this. We knew that some were being used for espionage and maybe some for sabotage and we wanted to know what we could find out. So, mostly, my information on numbers and the transfer of prisoners was not taken from defectors. I didn't need that from defectors - we had that information, but operations within the Soviet Union, and the way they treated and what they did with these prisoners - that was where we were lacking in a lot of our information. And that I tried to get - and I got it - from defectors.<sup>64</sup>

LTC Corso's concern that U.S. POWs were being recruited and trained for espionage missions was born out in June 1954 when the U.S. Army advised the Air Force that

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<sup>62</sup>Statement provided by LTC Corso to Task Force Russia, 23 February 1993, and video interview of LTC Corso conducted with Task Force Russia on the same date.

<sup>63</sup>Annex B to Task Force Russia Biweekly Report 13 November 1992, Subject: Interview with LTC (Retired) Philip Corso.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

evidence had been uncovered which concerned the assignment of Sabotage and Espionage missions to repatriated American prisoners of war during "Big and Little Switch," and that quite recently new cases of this type have been discovered.<sup>65</sup>

The memorandum further stated that "Army intelligence could not rule out the possibility that POWs had accepted 'sleeper' missions." The Army took this seriously enough to bar repatriated POWs from accepting overseas assignments for eighteen months after their return to the United States.<sup>66</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Delk Simpson. LTC Corso's determination and that of the Far East Command were corroborated in part by a more humble source in March 1954 when a former Soviet railway worker made an extensive statement to the U.S. Air Force Liaison Officer, LTC Delk Simpson, in Hong Kong. He also described his observation of the transfer of several trainloads of U.S. POWs from Chinese to Soviet custody at Manchuoli, his place of work, in 1951 and 1952. He first observed POWs in the railroad station the Spring of 1951. About three months later, he observed a second shipment and was impressed with the large number of blacks among the POWs. He was also able to identify OD outer clothing and the field jacket M1943, the very uniform item that the mass of U.S. POWs would be wearing. The railway worker further stated that he was told by a close Russian friend whose job was numbering railroad cars passing through Man-chu-li that numerous other POW trains passed through Man-chu-li. These shipments were reported often and when United Nations forces were on the offensive.<sup>67</sup>

John Foster Dulles. Based on the Hong Kong report and other information that the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, sent a message to Ambassador Boylan in Moscow on 19 April 1954 stating, "This report corroborates previous indications UNC POWs might have been shipped to Siberia during Korean hostilities." He then instructed Ambassador Boylan to approach the highest

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<sup>65</sup>Memorandum to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 Intelligence, Department of the Army (Secret) from Gilbert R. Levy, Chief, Counter Intelligence Division, Directorate of Special Investigations, The Inspector General, Department of the Air Force, June 14, 1954.

<sup>66</sup>Paul M. Cole, World War II, Korean War, and Early Cold War MIA-POW Issues (draft) (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, April 1993) p. 578.

<sup>67</sup>Foreign Service Dispatch, Amconggen, Hong Kong, Desp. No. 1716, March 23, 1954.



available level Foreign Ministry official with an Aide-Memoire.<sup>64</sup> On 5 May, the following message was delivered to the Soviet Foreign Ministry:

The United States Government has recently received reports which support earlier indications that American prisoners of war who had seen action in Korea have been transported to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and that they are now in Soviet custody. The United States desires to receive urgently all information available to the Soviet Government concerning these American personnel and to arrange for their repatriation at the earliest possible time.<sup>65</sup>

The Soviet Foreign Ministry responded with a dismissive note on 13 May 1954:

The assertions in the note of the United States Government that American prisoners of war, participants in military action in Korea, have been transferred to the Soviet Union and are at the present time maintained under Soviet guard are without any kind of basis and are clearly invented, as there are not and have not been any such persons in the Soviet Union.<sup>70</sup>

Captain Mel Giles. Echoing the claims of both LTC Corso and LTC Simpson, was the information provided by CAPT Mel Gile, Far East Command Liaison Group, during the Korean War. In interviews in 1990, CAPT Giles maintained that one of his agents had found that 63 U.S. POWs were being shipped by truck and rail from Pyongyang, North Korea to Chita, in the Soviet Union in January 1952. Gile insisted that the report was considered so credible that the U.S. command cancelled air strikes on the railway that would be carrying the POWs.<sup>71</sup>

CCRAK. An example of the reporting sources described by LTC Corso was an Army Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities

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<sup>64</sup>State Department Message from Secretary of State to U.S. Ambassador, Moscow, dated 19 April 1954.

<sup>65</sup>Aide Memoire (No. 947) from U.S. Embassy Moscow to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, May 5, 1954.

<sup>70</sup>Soviet Foreign Ministry Note, dated May 13, 1954.

<sup>71</sup>"Chronology of Policy and Intelligence Matters Concerning Unaccounted for U.S. Military personnel at the end of the Korean Conflict and During the Cold War," Prepared by the Office of Senator Bob Smith, Vice-Chairman, Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, November 10, 1992, p. 6.

Korea (CCRAK) memorandum of 24 February 1953 which reported:

The following information was received from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea Government. Report originated from the Nationalist Chinese Embassy --

According to reliable information, the Communist Chinese Force have transferred UN POWs to Russia in violation of the Geneva Conference. These POWs will be specially trained at Moscow for espionage work. POWs transferred to Moscow are grouped as follows: British 5, Americans 10, Canadians 3, and 50 more from various countries.

Russia has established a Higher Informant Training Team at Uran, Hodasong (phonetic) in Siberia in October 1952. 500 persons are receiving training, one third of them women. Japanese constitute the largest group and the others are Korean, Filipinos, Burmese, and American.

The date of this information is October - 22 December 1952. The U.S. Army Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea, comments in this memorandum:

This office has received sporadic reports of POWs being moved to the USSR since the very inception of the hostilities in Korea. These reports came in great volume through the earlier months of the war, and then tapered off to a standstill in early 1951, being revived by a report from January of this year (1953). It is definitely possible that such action is being taken as evidenced by past experience with Soviet authorities. All previous reports state POWs who are moved to the USSR are technical specialists who are employed in mines, factories, etc. This is the first report that are being used as espionage agents that is carried by this office.<sup>72</sup>

Zygmunt Nagorski. In addition to the Man-chu-li transit point, other routes for POW transfer to the Soviet Union have been identified. The journalist, Zygmunt Nagorski, obtained this information from two members of the MVD and an employee of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. This other POW transit point was through the North Korean-Soviet border at Pos'yet between November 1951 and April 1952 when ice closed the Pacific coast and the Tatar Straits. These POWs were taken from Pos'yet through Chita by rail to Molotov (now Perm). The dates of this

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<sup>72</sup>Memorandum, Headquarters, Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities Korea, 8242 Army Unit, CCRAK # M-101, 24 February 1953, Subject: CCF Military Conference concerning the Far East Situation.

operation coincide exactly with the dates for the transfer of POWs in the Hong Kong report, November 1951 to April 1952.<sup>73</sup>

Another route was by sea when the ice receded. POWs, apparently mostly South Koreans from the Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) and other South Korean political prisoners, were transported by sea to Soviet Far Eastern ports such as Magadan and Okhotsk from which they were moved to the infamous Kolyma complexes around Yakutsk and to Vankarem on the Chukotsk Sea and to Ust Maisk on the Aldan River. These prisoners apparently were selected because of their anti-communist attitudes. The POWs sent to the Yakutsk ASSR were forced to build and staff coal mines, earth works, and dams and were under the supervision of the Ministry of Coal Production and the Ministry of Forests. The camps were under the command of an MVD officer named Sorotchuk. The POWs sent to the Chukotsk Peninsula, apparently to the number of at least 12,000, were used to build roads, electric power plants, and airfields. A civilian party functionary, probably a member of the MGB, was in charge of political education and indoctrination. He appeared to have been an ethnic Korean Soviet named Chinbo. There was a high mortality rate among all these prisoners.<sup>74</sup>

From Pos'yet and possibly Man-chu-li about 300 U.S. and/or European POWs reportedly were transported by rail to Chita and from there to Molotov (now Perm) in February 1952 under heavy MVD guard. In the previous August and November of 1951, there had also been the movement of POWs from Chita. These latter POWs had been sent to Arkhangelsk Oblast to camps at Kotlas on the Northern Dvina and to Lalsk. In March of 1952, POWs passed through Khabarovsk and Chita to Molotov about every two weeks in small groups of up to 50 men. Chita appears to have been a concentration point for the POWs where they were incarcerated in the local MVD prisons, and when a sufficient number had been collected, then sent on to Molotov. The POWs may have been undergoing a selection process at this time. From December 1951 through the end of April 1952, trains of U.S. and European (probably British) POWs passed at intervals into the Komi-Permyk National District to Molotov, Gubakha, Kudymkar, and Chermoz. In April 1952, a number of U.S. officer POWs, referred to informally as the 'American General Staff', were kept under strict isolation in Molotov. In the town of Gubakha and in the industrial regions of Kudymkar and Chermoz, there were three isolated camps and one

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<sup>73</sup>Central Intelligence Agency, Information Report, 15 July 1952, Subject: Location of Certain Soviet Transit Camps for Prisoners of War from Korea. Zygmunt Nagorski, Jr., "Unreported G.I.'s in Siberia," Esquire, May 1953.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

interrogation prison for U.S. POWs. At a camp called Gaysk about 200 POWs were kept and forced to work in workshops assembling rails and doing various technical jobs. These camps were completely isolated. Political education and indoctrination was carried out by the local Party organization headed by a functionary named Edovin, a delegate from the Obkom of the Komi-Perm National District. All these camps were under the command of an officer named Kalypin. Every few days several of the POWs were removed from the camps and not returned.<sup>75</sup>

In 1990 Nagorski was quoted in the Los Angeles Times as stating that in the 1950s his foreign reporters had an extensive 'source network' of truck drivers and other working-class Soviets employed at or near prisons in Molotov, Khabarovsk, Chita, Omsk, Chermoz and elsewhere. Nagorski claimed his sources informed him that there were still up to 1,000 Americans POWs in Siberia from the Korean War when he last had contact with them in the late 1950s.<sup>76</sup>

**Other Foreign Sources.** Over the years reports of American POWs in Soviet custody were provided by a number of foreign sources which are described below:

**Turkish Traveler.** On 5 February 1954 a reliable, friendly foreign intelligence service reported to an agency of the U.S. information they had received from a Turkish source traveling in Central Asia. The source, who had been interrogated in Turkey, states that while at Mukden, Manchuria, he "saw several coaches full of Europeans who were also taken to the USSR. They were not Russians. Source passed the coaches several times and heard them talk in a language unknown to him." The source stated that one of the coaches was full of wounded Caucasians who were not speaking at all.<sup>77</sup>

### Conclusions

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>Senator Bob Smith citing the Los Angeles Times, 8 July 1990.

<sup>77</sup>Charity Interrogation Report No. 619 referenced in declassified cables dtd 23 march 1954 and cited in "Chronology of Policy and Intelligence Matters Concerning Unaccounted for U.S. Military Personnel at the End of the Korean Conflict and During the Cold War," Prepared by the Office of Senator Bob Smith, Vice-Chairman, Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, November 10, 1992.

The Soviets transferred several hundred U.S. Korean War POWs to the USSR and did not repatriate them. This transfer was mainly politically motivated with the intent of holding them as political hostages, subjects for intelligence exploitation, and skilled labor within the camp system.

- o There were at least two rail transshipment points for POWs:

- o Through the Manchurian rail transshipment point of Man-chu-li into the Soviet Union.

- o Through North Korea to the rail center at Pos'yet across the border in the Primorskiy Krai.

- o Large numbers of UNC POWs were transported by sea to a number of Soviet ports on the Sea of Japan and Sea of Okhotsk for rail transportation into the interior of the Soviet Union.

- o Large numbers of South Korean POWs were also taken as part of this program and made up the bulk of the transfer population.

- o A intense period of activity for the rail transportation of POWs was November 1951 through April 1952. Transportation by ship took place, for at least some of the prisoners, during the ice free months.

- o From Khabarovsk POWs were sent by rail to another collection point in Chita and then to a number of camps in the Komi-Perm National District.

### Part III

#### Evidence from Within the Soviet Union

Once the transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union was completed, the prisoners would have faced a long period of imprisonment. In that time, the opportunity increased for their whereabouts to become known to citizens of the USSR. Most of that knowledge appears logically to have come from other prisoners in the vast Soviet concentration camp system. Before 1992, occasional reports of contact with U.S. POWs in the Soviet camp system filtered out of the Soviet Union and were recorded by United States intelligence agencies. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a number of former Soviet citizens have come forward to report such contacts.

One of the difficulties in matching the names provided by these former Soviet citizens was the practice by Soviet prison authorities to often change the names of foreign prisoners and to forbid them to use their real names. This practice was confirmed by Lieutenant General (retired) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) Yuriy Filippovich Yezerskiy.

Yezerskiy stated that tracking down specific foreigner prisoners in the former Soviet prison system would be very difficult because the names of foreigners were routinely changed, usually to other foreign rather than to Russian names. He suggested that the best source for the real names of prisoners would likely be other prisoners who knew them. He suspected that records of name changes may exist, most likely somewhere in Moscow.<sup>78</sup>

In possible confirmation of Lieutenant General Yezerskiy's testimony, none of the persons named in the following sighting reports can be identified through U.S. casualty records of the Korean War.

#### Sightings in the Komi ASSR

**Sighting No. 1.** Lieutenant General Yezerskiy further stated that he had seen four to five Americans in Vorkuta, in the Komi ASSR, in 1954-1956. These individuals were at the time all in their early to mid-twenties. He said he thought they were all from the

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<sup>78</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 2711132Z May 93, Subject: POW/MIA Team - Moscow: Weekly Activity Report 19/93, May 9 to 15, 1993.

World War II period but that they could have been from the Korean War.

Sighting No. 2. The Case of Captain Mooradian. One of the most precise reports was made by Nikolai Dmitriyevich Kazersky to Task Force Russia-Moscow team members on 27 October 1992. Mr. Kazersky had been decorated twice in the Great Patriotic War but thereafter had been sentenced to twenty years in the camps. He served at a camp called Zimka in the Komi ASSR and was released in the general amnesty after Stalin's death. He stated that while in the camp, he met U.S. Korean War POW from California. According to the TFR-M report:

Kazersky was aware that there were Americans at Zimka from camp rumor, and, in the Fall of 1952 or the Spring of 1953, he had a single encounter with an American pilot who had been shot down in North Korea and forced to land in Soviet territory near Vladivostok. The pilot said his plane had a crew of three and his radioman had been in Zimka as well, but had possibly been moved to another camp called "Yaser" after a brief period. The pilot did not know what had happened to the third crew member.

The pilot remained at Zimka for three to six months, and was then transferred to an unknown location. He was about thirty years old, five feet seven inches tall, slender, dark-haired and dark-complected, and in good health. He did not smoke and had a small oval scar on one of his cheeks. Kazersky believes he was of southern European origin, perhaps Italian or Greek. The pilot, whose nickname was "The American" (Amerikanets) lived in barracks number six, and worked in the consumer goods (Shirpotreb) section making frames for greenhouses. Kazersky had direct contact with the American only once and communication was difficult. The pilot had been in isolation for a year or more, and had learned very little Russian. Kazersky knew very little English. He could not recall the pilot's name (prisoners were almost always addressed by nickname, but is still firmly convinced that he was an American pilot.<sup>79</sup>

At our request provided this information to Air Force Casualty Affairs which did a computer search of its MIAs using the military and biographical information stated by Mr. Kazersky. Air Force Casualty found a suprisingly close match in Capt Ara Mooradian, USAF, who was reported missing in action on 23 October 1951. Although not all information matched perfectly, there was agreement on the following points:

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<sup>79</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 301715Z Oct 92, Subject: POW/MIA: Interview with Nikolay Dmitriyevich Kazersky.

1. Mooradian's date of loss could have placed him in a camp at the time stated by Kazersky.

2. He was from Fresno, California, the state Kazersky remembered.

3. Mooradian fit the physical description and was dark-haired and complected. He was of Armenian origin and could have been confused in Kazersky's memory for a southern European.

4. Six members of Mooradian's B-29 were listed as missing in action, two bodies were recovered, and five were repatriated. The man Kazersky met could have been referring to the survivors of his crew that were in the camp, one of whom was the radar -- not radio -- operator.

5. Although there was nothing in Capt Mooradian's file that indicated he had a facial scar, an examination of his photo in Air Force Manual 200-25 showed a faint round scar on his right cheek.<sup>40</sup> This photo was enhanced by the National Photographic Interpretation Center whose analysts concluded that the mark was not a photographic anomaly but probably was indeed a scar.

The areas of disagreement with Kazersky's statement are:

1. Mooradian's aircraft was shot down over the Bay of Korea which was on the opposite side of the Korean Peninsula from Vladivostok.

2. He was the bombardier rather than the pilot of his B-29.

3. His aircraft had a crew of thirteen and not three.

4. Capt Mooradian was 6'1/2" tall instead of 5'8".

At a subsequent interview, Mr. Kazersky was shown a photo line-up of missing pilots and asked to identify the American he had met. He chose four photos as possibly being the one, one of which was that of Capt Mooradian.

Sighting No. 3. On 18 March 1993, TFR-M team members interviewed former prison guard Grigoriy Nikolayevich Minayev in St. Petersburg. Minayev claimed a guard from another battalion who worked at the maximum security prison in Mozindur (Mezhador), just south of Syktyvkar, Komi ASSR, told him in September 1983 of an American Korean War POW who was being kept there under maximum security (Osobiyy Rezhim). In addition, Minayev said that his

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<sup>40</sup>Air Force Manual 200-25, Missing in Action -- Korea, 16 January 1961, p. 95.



warrant officer training courses mentioned that foreign inmates were held in Syktyvkar during the fifties and sixties. While he was guard at the inter-oblast MVD/KGB hospital (ITK-12) in St. Petersburg, Minayev maintained that as recently as three years ago he saw foreign inmates brought there and secretly treated in a separate hospital wing in a ward for "imperialist intruders."<sup>11</sup>

Sighting No. 4. On 26 March 1993, in response to the advertisement placed in the Russian newspaper Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Aleksandra Yakovelevna Istogina called TFR-M to report that her husband, Leonid Sidko, had met an American POW in Minlag Camp, Inta, which is located south of Vorkuta in the Komi ASSR. She stated that Sidko had met and served with the American from 1953 to 1954, whose name he remembered as Alek Muller Zayolitz. According to Istogina, her husband had described him as approximately 30 years old, had dark hair, and spoke Russian well. She said her husband indicated that the American was transferred with several Germans to Moscow in 1954.<sup>12</sup>

Sighting No. 5. On 6 April 1993, TFR-M team members received a letter at the U.S. Embassy in Tallinn from Mr. Elmar Vesker. Mr. Vesker stated that after Stalin's death in March 1953, an American named Boris Holtzman, was taken to Schahto Kapitalnaya Camp 75/1 in Vorkuta. The American spoke some Estonian and fluent English and Russian. He was about 175-180 cm tall, stout, round-faced, curly-haired. Mr. Vesker stated that the American was sent to the Soviet Union from China and captured. He was first imprisoned in a special camp in Moscow after which he was taken to Vorkuta.<sup>13</sup>

Sighting No. 6. On 15 April 1993, TFR-M team members in Tallinn, Estonia, received a letter from Mrs. Lidia Hallemaa. Mrs. Hallemaa enclosed a photo, taken in 1955 in a prison camp in Vorkuta, where her brother Otto Adler had been imprisoned. Adler told his sister that three or four Americans were imprisoned in the same camp. Mr. Adler is now dead.

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<sup>11</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 281821Z Mar 93, Subject: POW/MIA: Interview With Former Prison Guard Grigoriy Minayev in St. Petersburg.

<sup>12</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 060913Z Apr 93, Subject: POW/MIA Team - Moscow: Weekly Activity Report 12/93, March 21 to 27, 1993.

<sup>13</sup>Amembassy Tallinn Message, 201028Z Apr 93, Subject: POW/MIA: Information from Residents of Estonia.

## Sightings in Khabarovsk

Sighting No. 7. Japanese POWs. A Japanese POW from World War II repatriated from POW Camp No. 21 at Khabarovsk, stated that (1) he had heard from a camp guard that two Americans had been brought to Khabarovsk prison and were being investigated as spies; (2) he had heard from Soviet guards, prisoners, and laborers in April and May 1953 that 12 or 13 Americans, crew members of a military plane shot down by the Soviets were in a Khabarovsk prison; (3) he heard from prisoners in 1951 or early 1952 that an American fisherman, captured in the Gulf of Alaska, was brought to the Magadan region; and (4) he heard from a guard on a Soviet prisoner train at No. 2 station, Khabarovsk, in about June 1952 that there was a prison camp in the USSR for Americans only. Another Japanese reported that he had heard from the chief of the POW camp at Debin in October 1953 that an American Air Force officer was in a military hospital 500 miles north of Magadan (location unlocatable due to phonetic rendering). He reported that the officer had been sentenced to 25 years in prison in 1925 as a suspected spy.<sup>44</sup>

Sighting No. 8. On 4 August 1992, Task Force Russia-Moscow team members interviewed Vladimir Yakovlevich Voronin, a prisoner in Semipalatinsk, who claimed to have met three Americans while serving an earlier sentence from 1951 to 1953 at the 5th Lagpunkt in Khabarovsk.

To the best of Voronin's recollection, the three Americans arrived at the camp in October 1952, and departed two months later. Voronin mainly observed the Americans at a distance, over a period of only a few weeks. The three Americans left the camp together with the Vlasov contingent (anti-communist Russians who had served under General Vlasov with the Germans in World War II) of about 20. A camp orderly, Volodya Khrustalev, told Voronin that the American had left with the "traitors". Khrustalev told Voronin that the Vlasov troopers were shot, but he did not know the fate of the Americans . . . . No one really knew who these Americans were, Voronin asserted. They were rumored to be U.S. military flyers, but none spoke Russian.<sup>45</sup>

Voronin further related that he had contact with one American for an hour on a woodcutting detail. The American was notably thin, well over six feet (the tallest man in the camp), appeared to be

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<sup>44</sup>Information Report, 29 December 1953, Subject: American Prisoners-of-War Held in the USSR.

<sup>45</sup>Amembassy Message, 050135Z Aug 92, Subject: Interview in Semipalatinsk with Individual Who Saw Americans in Khabarovsk.

about 30, had light hair and fair complexion. The other Americans appeared to be of darker complexion and were about 5'10". All three Americans stood together at camp roll calls.<sup>46</sup>

Sighting No. 9. On 22 March 1993, TFR-M received from the Central Russian Military Museum copies of a secret telegram and a top secret report from the files of the convoy troops which show the transfer in September 1953 of a Cecil August Stoner (NFI) from Khabarovsk to Moscow.<sup>47</sup>

Sighting No. 10. On 7 April 1993, TFR-M received a letter from Artur Roopalu in Estonia. Mr. Roopalu stated that in 1951, he spent two days in a Vladivostok transit camp with two Americans. They had arrived there earlier and stayed after he left. These Americans did not have contact with other prisoners. One of them was about 185 cm tall, well-built, dark, and the other was 180 cm tall. Mr. Roopalu heard in this camp that many Americans were taken from Khabarovsk to Magadan and from there to Kalama [Kolyma] or Puhtavanina.

#### Sightings in Irkutsk

Sighting No. 11. In August 1956, a recently returned Austrian prisoner of war, Mr. Albert Skala, reported to the U.S. Embassy in Vienna that he had known a U.S. Army officer, named Lieutenant Racek, with whom he had been imprisoned in the Soviet Union. Mr. Skala stated that the American was an officer of armored forces in Korea. Skala stated that he first met Racek in 1951 in Prison #2 in Irkutsk and that the two were cellmates there and subsequently in Lubyanka Prison in Moscow until the time of Skala's release in 1955.<sup>48</sup>

Sighting No. 12. On 11 December 1992, a TFR-M team representative interviewed Romas Kausevicius near Vilnius, Lithuania. Mr. Kausevicius consistently repeated his story of meeting an American pilot named Robert in an Irkutsk KGB prison

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 060913Z Apr 93, Subject: POW/MIA Team - Moscow: Weekly Activity Report 12/93, March 21 to 27, 1993.

<sup>48</sup>Amembassy Vienna, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 169, August 21, 1956, Subject: American Citizen Detained in USSR.

cell in June 1950.<sup>89</sup>

Sighting No. 13. From 6-12 December 1992, TFR-M team members traveled to Irkutsk and Khabarovsk to investigate the claim made by Mr. Romas Kaluskevicius that he had met an American POW in transit prison Camp #7 in Irkutsk in the late Summer of 1950. TFR-M confirmed that Mr. Kaluskevicius was, indeed, imprisoned in Irkutsk in that period, ending on 3 August 1950.<sup>90</sup>

#### Sighting in Taishet

Sighting No. 14. On 6 April 1993, TFR-M received a letter from Enn Kivilo in Estonia. Mr. Kivilo stated that he was imprisoned in prison camp L/P 011 (50 km from Bratsk in the direction of Taishet) in 1952 and served with an American POW named Jimmy Braiton or Baker. The American was about 180 cm tall, had dark eyes, played chess very well.<sup>91</sup>

#### Sightings in Mordova

Sighting No. 15. On 2 August 1993, TFR-M team members interviewed Mr. Boris Uibo in Estonia. Mr. Uibo stated that in 1952 he served with an American Korean War POW in Camp #18, a close-hold camp for foreign prisoners, near Potma in Mordova (Mordvin ASSR). This American's name was Gary or Harry and, according to Uibo, definitely an American shot down in the Korean War. The American and Uibo worked together making wooden chess pieces. Uibo described Gary as no older than 25. Uibo stated that there was a concerted effort by the Soviets to hide the fact that they were holding foreign prisoners. Sometime late in 1953, Uibo was transferred to a hospital in Camp #9 and lost track of Gary. Uibo said that Soviet citizen prisoners were permitted to write two letters per year in Russian so they could easily be censored, but foreign prisoners, including Gary, were not permitted this privilege even though they could have gotten someone to translate their letters into Russian. He said no Soviet would take the risk of sending a letter on behalf of, or

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<sup>89</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 311510 Dec 92, Subject: POW/MIA Team - Moscow: Weekly Activity Report 22/92, December 6 to 26, 1992.

<sup>90</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 311004 Dec 92, Subject: TFR-M Trip to Irkutsk and Khabarovsk.

<sup>91</sup>Amembassy Tallinn, 201028Z Apr 93, Subject: POW/MIA: Information from Residents of Estonia.

mentioning, a foreign prisoner."<sup>2</sup>

Sighting No. 16. Sometime in the Winter of early 1954 after his release from Camp #9, Mr. Uibo was transferred to Camp #5 where he was assigned to work in the power station. It was at this camp that he met a black American pilot whom he described as 180 cm tall, slim, and athletic. He worked in a woodworking shop where furniture was made for the Kremlin. He believes that the American was still in the camp when he was released on 30 March 1955."<sup>3</sup>

#### Sighting in Novosibirsk

Sighting No. 17. On 22 June 1993, a TFR-M team representative interviewed Mr. Bronius Skardzius near Utena, Lithuania. Mr. Skardzius told of his encounter with Americans at a Novosibirsk transit prison about June, 1952. He stated that there were two American pilots in the group of prisoners brought into his small room. The other prisoners were Germans. The Americans told him they had been shot down in Korea. They were dressed in khaki shirts and trousers with no belts or shoelaces (the authorities did not allow these to be kept). The first American told him that he was a captain in the Air Force."<sup>4</sup>

#### Sighting in the Bashkir ASSR

Sighting No. 18. On 13 April 1993, TFR-M team members in Tallin, Estonia, received a letter from Felix Pullerits. Mr. Pullerits stated that from 1953 to 1955 he was imprisoned along with an American pilot named Lieberman, in a prison camp of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), Building No. 18, near Salavati in the Ishinbai district of Bashkiria (Bashkir ASSR)."<sup>5</sup>

#### Sightings in Norilsk

Sighting No. 19. During the week of 19-26 April 1993, TFR-M team members interviewed Mr. Apollinaris Klivecka in Vilnius,

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<sup>2</sup>Amembassy Moscow Message, 161156 Aug 93, Subject: POW/MIA Interviews in Estonia.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Amembassy Vilnius Message, 191431Z Apr 93, Subject: Reports of Contact with POW/MIAs.

<sup>5</sup>Amembassy Tallinn Message, 201028Z Apr 93, Subject: Information from Residents of Estonia.

Lithuania. Mr. Klivecka stated that while imprisoned in the Kairakam (Death Field) he worked in the infirmary at the camp near Norilsk. In 1953 shortly after Stalin's death (March), he was ordered to inspect twenty prisoners who were waiting at the guard gate. He stated that two of them were so emaciated and exhausted that he recommended they be placed in the infirmary. One of them was a Japanese officer from the Kwangtung Army captured at the end of World War II. The other was an American pilot, named Robertson. The American spoke fluent Korean and also used a Korean name, Kim Sung Chung. He spent three months recuperating and regaining his strength. Since the infirmary was shorthanded, he was trained as a nurse's aid. Mr. Klivecka stated that Robertson and he lived in the same barracks until his release in January 1955. The American explained that he had been shot down over North Korea but had not been captured immediately. Since he spoke Korean, he turned himself in claiming that he was fleeing South Korea and that his mother was Korean, his father European. Korean officials sentenced him to a work camp where American POWs were imprisoned, especially pilots. When one of them recognized him, his Korean captors interrogated and tortured him. After he revealed his identity, he was turned over to the Soviets. Since he used two names, he was accused of espionage and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. After Stalin's death, all the prisoners received Red Cross packages except the American.<sup>96</sup>

Sighting No. 20. The weeks of 3-14 May 1993, TFR-M received a letter from Mr. Valentinas Piekys, Vilnius, Lithuania who wrote that he had been a political prisoner in the Kapchikan Komsomolsky Camp near Norilsk. He stated that in 1949-1950 two Americans in military uniform were brought to the camp. They were in the camp for three months and then sent to some other place.<sup>97</sup>

#### Sightings in Kemerovo

Sighting No. 21. During the week of 19-26 April 1993 in Vilnius, Lithuania, TFR-M team members received a letter from Mr. Povilas Markevicius. Mr. Markevicius wrote that in the Spring of 1952 he met two American prisoners while imprisoned in Kemerovo Oblast. The Americans said they had been sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. He described the one he had conversations with in poor Russian as about 170-173 cm, of swarthy completion, and with

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<sup>96</sup>Amembassy Vilnius Message, 261531Z Apr 93, Subject: Report of Contact with POW/MIAs.

<sup>97</sup>Amembassy Vilnius Message, 170936Z May 93, Subject: POW/MIA Report of Contacts.

dark hair. The other American was taller and with auburn hair. The main topic of conversation was always escape. One rainy and windy night in the Spring the Americans actually did escape. Usually when escaped prisoners were caught, their dead bodies were put in the middle of the square to threaten others. However, he did not see any dead bodies after this incident.<sup>98</sup>

#### Sightings in Kazakhstan

Sighting No. 22. In April 1993, TFR-M team members in Vilnius, Lithuania, received a letter from Mr. Jokubas Bruzdeilinas who was imprisoned in a camp for political criminals at the Dzezhkazgan Mines, Karaganda Oblast, Kazakh SSR. Mr. Bruzdeilinas wrote that he served with an American pilot of the rank of major named Joseph shot down in either Korea or Vietnam. His date of birth was approximately 1920. This argues for an officer in the Korean War. Mr. Bruzdeilinas also wrote that the pilot was a Lithuanian American which was why he was put in a camp for Lithuanian prisoners.<sup>99</sup>

Sighting No. 23. During the week of 3-14 May 1993, TFR-M received a letter from Mr. Jonas Zilaitis who wrote that he had served in the Kengyro Camp, Dzezhkagan Oblast, in the Kazakh SSR. He claimed to have met a black American pilot there approximately at the time of a prisoner rebellion in May-June 1954.<sup>100</sup>

#### Sighting in Archangelsk.

Sighting No. 24. On 12 January 1993, a retired Ukrainian military veteran telephoned the U.S. Embassy in Kiev that he saw an American citizen in a prison camp in Russia's Archangelsk Oblast in 1969 or 1970. He did not meet the man personally but heard him speak English. The veteran identified himself only as "Viktor" said he had been assigned to the labor camp (Vypravno-Trudova Kolonia) in the Archangelsk provincial center of Yerstevo as a driver. Viktor characterized the American prisoner as robust and taller than average. Viktor was never told his name and heard no more about him. Viktor put his age at late 50s to

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<sup>98</sup>Amembassy Vilnius Message, 261531Z Apr 93, Subject: Report of Contacts With POW/MIAs.

<sup>99</sup>Amembassy Vilnius Message, 1914312Z Apr 93, Subject: Reports of Contact With POW/MIA's.

<sup>100</sup>Amembassy Vilnius Message, 170936Z May 93, Subject: POW/MIA Report of Contacts.

early 60s.<sup>101</sup>

### Patterns Among the Sightings

Out of twenty-two sightings, six are in the Komi ASSR. The Komi ASSR was home to the infamous Vorkuta concentration camp complex. We know that there were Americans in this particular area because five of the most well-known U.S. citizens imprisoned in the Soviet Union (John Noble, William Marchuk, Homer Cox, Leland Towers, and Wilford Cumish) all served their sentences in just this area. John Noble has stated that, although he did not see any American POWs in his camps at Vorkuta, he did hear rumors that they were in the complex.<sup>102</sup> The Komi ASSR also on a direct rail line from the Komi-Permskaya National District and the Perm Oblast, the areas Mr. Nagorski identified as the end of the line for Americans POWs.<sup>103</sup> Apparently the end of the line was a little further north than Mr. Nagorski was able to detect.

Another four sightings were in prison camps in and around the city of Khabarovsk. Each of these sightings is described in terms of the transit of prisoners. Khabarovsk was a transit point for U.S. POWs as also described by Mr. Nagorski. This association was confirmed by Colonel Korotkov's statements that tens if not hundreds of POWs were interrogated there and his later statement that they transited Khabarovsk to unknown locations within the camp system. Three of the sightings were in Irkutsk, also a transit point in the movement of prisoners.

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<sup>101</sup>Ambassador Kiev Message, 141707Z Jan 93, Subject: Additional POW/MIA Information.

<sup>102</sup>John Noble, Interview with Task Force Russia, 1992. Mr. Noble stated further that he did see former Soviet soldiers in the camps as prisoners, sentenced for having been captured in Korea by the Americans who repatriated them.

<sup>103</sup>Central Intelligence Agency, Information Report, 15 July 1952, Subject: Location of Certain Soviet Transit Camps for Prisoners of War from Korea; Zygmunt Nagorski, Jr., "Unreported G.I.'s in Siberia," Esquire, May 1953.



## Summary

The Soviet and American sources and documentation already discussed present a consistent and mutually reinforcing description of Soviet operations to transport U.S. Korean War POWs to the USSR. These sources, where they frequently overlap, agree in the following basic elements of this operation:

1. The Soviet Union transported U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union and never repatriated them. The transfer program had two elements:
  - o The first element was an in execution of an intelligence collection requirement and resulted in the transfer of a limited number of POWs with specialized skills, mostly F-86 pilots and other personnel for the purpose of technical exploitation.
  - o The second element was politically motivated and resulted in the transfer of several hundred POWs with the intent of holding them as political hostages, for intelligence exploitation, and for use as skilled labor within the camp system.
2. The transfer operation was conducted and carefully controlled by the MGB.
3. Khabarovsk was a center for POW control operations in the Soviet Far East. Interrogation operations were based there. It also served as a temporary internment site for POWs. The Komi-Permskaya National District, the Perm Oblast, and the Komi ASSR appear to be the locations where many of these POWs were kept.
4. Other prisoners, mostly F-86 pilots, were exploited to support the work of Soviet aircraft design bureaus.

## Postscript

After the death of Stalin in March 1953 and the subsequent execution of Beria, the possession of U.S. POWs as hostages may have been seen as a liability by the succeeding Soviet leadership. With the deepening of ideological animosity between the United States and the Soviet Union, acknowledgement of the taking of POWs to the Soviet Union, could only have further worsened that already deadly relationship. According to COL Corso, President Eisenhower did not press the POW issue to the

hilt because he feared that it could have precipitated general war. Eisenhower feared 8,000,000 American dead if war occurred at this time. From the other side of the dark glass, the new Soviet leadership might well have had the same fears and consigned the POWs in their hands to oblivion.

## Appendix A

### How Many Men are Truly Unaccounted for from the Korean War?

One of the more difficult problems we face in arriving at an estimate of how many Korean War POWs that may have been taken to the Soviet Union centers on a determination of how many men are truly missing in action from that conflict. Any POWs transferred to the Soviet Union would come from this group. Presented on the next three pages is one estimate of "truly unaccounted for", prepared by Dr. Paul M. Cole, RAND Corporation, in close consultation with the U.S. Army Central Investigation Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI)

Dr. Cole's calculations yield a total of 2,195 who are truly missing. By eliminating cases where the death was witnessed or documented, he has arrived at the total of 2,195 individuals whose fate is unknown. Unfortunately, this method does not yield a list of the 2,195 by name.

At this time, CILHI is reviewing each of its 8,140 casualty (BNR) files and entering the information into a new database. This project will be not completed in less than year. Upon completion, the database will be able to provide a by-name list of those who are "truly unaccounted for".

**BNR Cases That Could Not Have Been Transported  
to the USSR<sup>104</sup>**

As of February 1993 the number of American BNR (Body Not Recovered) cases from the Korean War stood at 8,140. This figure is used as the baseline for the following derivation of how many BNR cases were confirmed as deaths by eye witnesses. The purpose of this exercise is to determine the number of U.S. BNR cases whose death was not witnessed or otherwise documented. Those whose deaths were witnessed or documented are not candidates for transport to the USSR.

The subset of BNR cases that could have been transported to the territory of the USSR may be estimated by subtracting from the 8,140 figure the sum individuals whose death was witnessed or otherwise documented. Among the BNR cases that could not have been transferred to the territory of the USSR are the following:

(1) BNRs whose death was witnessed by repatriated POWs and others and reported to UNC and U.S. officials.

(2) BNRs lost outside of Korea (Japan, for example) and after the Armistice. Korean War casualty data include a number of deaths that occurred beyond the geographic limits of the KWZ (Korean War Zone) and after the end of the Korean War. These cases were included in Korean War data at the time of the incidents under the Graves Registration Service concurrent death policy.

(3) BNRs located in UN cemeteries in North Korea.

(4) BNRs whose isolated burial locations were recorded by the GRS. These locations are usually specific to name and always include geographic location.

As shown in the following table, the deaths of at least 73 percent of all BNR cases were witnessed by repatriates or otherwise documented.

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<sup>104</sup>Paul Cole, RAND Corporation, World War II, Korean War, and Early Cold War POW/MIA Issues, Volume I: The Korean War (draft) (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, Aug 1993) pp. 163-164.

Table 2. BNR Cases Where Death was Witnessed  
by Repatriates Or Otherwise Documented

1. Missing at action at sea:	293
2. Confirmed POW (BNR) deaths:	2,119
3. Total U.S. graves on North Korean Territory:	2,096
4. U.S. Burials linked to aircraft crash sites:	412
5. BNR cases occurring outside Korea:	53
6. BNR (died during death marches):	959
7. Post-war BNR cases grouped with war data:	13
<b>Total confirmed or Documented BNR Deaths</b>	<b>5,945</b>

Notes:

1. This figure derives from CILHI data as of February 1993.

2. The total number of witnessed POW camp deaths is 2,730. The 2,119 number represents current POW (BNR) cases, thus 611 remains were recovered and identified since the 2,730 figure was derived.

3. UNC temporary cemeteries, 1,520; Total isolated burials, 576 (Army 217; Air Force 4; Branch and nationality unknown, 108; Memorial Division, QM data on unidentified American isolated burials, 247). This figure does not include POW camp graves since (a) These were the subject of Operation Glory repatriations and, (b) The total number of POW deaths (buried and unburied) is counted in category two.

4. Headquarters Korean Communications Zone (KCOMZ) consolidated lists of air crashes into one master list that shows 322 crash sites and 412 casualties listed by KCOMZ as "number of remains" and "burial" number. There is no indication that these remains are any other than American personnel.

5. Figure derived from CILHI data. This includes BNR cases that occurred in Japan or between or between Japan and Korea, for example.

6. This number derives from evaluated reports of deaths on marches obtained following Operation Big Switch. The number of evaluated cases was reduced from 1,367 based on Little Switch debriefings or repatriates to 959 following evaluation of Big Switch repatriate reports.

7. Data from CILHI records.

**Maximum 2,195 BNR Cases.** Of the 2,195 BNR Cases with no direct evidence of death (8,140 - 5,945 = 2,195), a large percentage were combat fatalities who were disintegrated by explosives or simply lost on the battlefield. Given the nature of the and duration of combat in Korea, the estimate of battlefield casualties that resulted in BNR cases<sup>105</sup> ranges as high as 3,070. There is no way to be precise about this figure, but it must be greater than zero in calculation.

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<sup>105</sup>Col. Harry Summers, Korean War Almanac (New York: Facts on File, 1987) p, 165. Summers estimates that the majority of MIA cases were due to combat conditions that did not permit the recovery of the body.

## Appendix B

### 31 Missing USAF F-86 Pilots Whose Loss Indicates Possible Capture

Name	Date of Casualty
1. Cpt William D. Crone	18 Jun 51
2. Cpt Robert H. Laier	19 Jun 51
3. 1LT Laurence C. Layton	2 Sep 51
4. 1LT Carl G. Barnett, Jr.	26 Sep 51
5. Cpt Charles W. Pratt	8 Nov 51
6. 1LT Charles D. Hogue	13 Dec 51
7. 1LT Lester F. Page	6 Jan 52
8. 1LT Thiel M. Reeves	11 Jan 52
9. 1LT Charles W. Rhinehart	29 Jan 52
10. 1LT Thomas C. Lafferty	31 Jan 52
11. CPT Charles R. Spath	3 Feb 52
12. CPT Jack C. Langston	10 Mar 52
13. 1LT James D. Carey	24 Mar 52
14. Maj George V. Wendling	13 Apr 52
15. CPT Albert G. Tenney	3 May 52
16. CPT John F. Lane	20 May 52
17. Maj Felix Asla, Jr.	1 Aug 52
18. Maj Deltis H. Fincher	22 Aug 52
19. Cpt Troy G. Cope	16 Sep 52
20. 2LT Jack H. Turberville	18 Nov 52
21. 1LT Donald R. Reitsma	22 Dec 52
22. 2LT Bill J. Stauffer	26 Jan 53
23. 1LT Paul J. Jacobson	12 Feb 53
24. 1LT Richard M. Cowden	9 Mar 53
25. 1LT Robert R. Neimann	12 Apr 53
26. Cpt Frank E. Miller, Jr.	27 May 53
27. 1LT John E. Southerland	6 Jun 53
28. 1LT Allan K. Rudolph	19 Jun 53
29. Cpt Charles E. Gunther	19 Jun 53
30. 1LT Jimmy L. Escalé	19 Jun 53
31. 2LT Gerald W. Knott	20 Jul 53

Source: USAF Casualty Affairs

1. Pilot: Captain William D. Crone, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 18 June 1951  
Status: MIA

Captain Crone was participating in a four ship combat mission in the Sinuiju area. Approximately 30 kilometers southeast of Sinuiju, the formation was attacked by eight enemy aircraft at 25,000 feet. Captain Crone was last seen in a 360 degree tight right turn. Circumstances of his loss could not be ascertained and an aerial search revealed no clues as to his fate.

2. Pilot: Captain Robert H. Laier, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 19 June 1951  
Status: MIA

Captain Laier was participating in a four ship fighter sweep in the area of Sinuiju when he came under attack from enemy aircraft. When last seen, his aircraft was seriously damaged, trailing smoke, and in a steep dive at approximately 10,000 feet, 30 kilometers southeast of Sinuiju. An aerial search for his aircraft wreckage was unsuccessful. A subsequent, unofficial Chinese propaganda broadcast supports a belief that he survived the shutdown and was captured. Additional information: Captain Laier had some engineering training at the University of Nebraska.

3. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Laurence C. Layton, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 2 September 1951  
Status: MIA

Minutes after arriving in the target area, the flight engaged in combat with a number of enemy fighters. During the action, Lieutenant Layton's plane was hit. He radioed that he was going to try to reach the northwest coast of Korea and bail out. Another member of the flight accompanied Lt Layton and observed him parachute from the damaged F-86 near the mouth of the Chongchon-Gang River, roughly six miles off the coast. Subsequent information reveals that Lt Layton is believed to have been rescued by persons aboard a large power boat operated by the enemy.

4. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Carl G. Barnett, Jr., USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 26 September 1951  
Status: MIA

Lieutenant Barnett was on patrol just north of the Sinanju River at 26,000 feet when his element engaged in aerial combat with



Four MIGS. Both F-86s of his element turned into a tight right turn. After about 160 degrees of the turn, the element leader still had visual contact with Lieutenant Barnett. One or two of the MIGs were firing at what was estimated as a 70 degree deflection angle and well out of range. Upon completion of the turn, the flight leader looked for Lieutenant Barnett but was unable to establish visual contact. When last seen, Lieutenant Barnett appeared to be in no trouble and in the opinion of the flight leader, if he was hit, it was an extremely lucky shot. An F-51 pilot in the area at the time reported seeing an F-86 trailing smoke at 8,000 feet and in a 30 degree dive. Other than the smoke the aircraft appeared to be under positive control. Subsequently, this F-86 crashed and when the F-51 pilot investigated, saw no signs of life near the wreckage.

5. Pilot: Captain Charles W. Pratt, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 8 November 1951  
Status: MIA

Captain Pratt engaged a twelve ship enemy in the Pyongyang area. Seconds later, he radioed that his F-86 had been hit and that he was going to bail out. When last observed, his aircraft was at an altitude of 15,000 feet, heading toward the coast west of Pyongyang in a forty-five degree dive. A subsequent aerial search was unsuccessful. Additional information: Captain Pratt had engineering training and had attended the USAF Institute of Technology in Dayton, Ohio.

6. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Charles D. Hogue, USANG  
Date of Casualty: 13 December 1951  
Status: MIA

Twenty miles northeast of Sinanju, a flight of enemy fighter aircraft was encountered and during the ensuing action, Lieutenant Hogue radioed that he believed he had been hit. During the remainder of the engagement, which continued for about four minutes, visual and radio contact was lost with Lieutenant Hogue's F-86. However, a subsequent radio message received by the element leader indicated that the missing pilot was apparently south of Chinnampo and in no difficulty. The F-86 failed to return to base and all efforts to locate it and the fate of the pilot were unsuccessful.

7. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Lester F. Page, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 6 January 1952  
Status: MIA

After attacking a flight of four MIGs, Lieutenant Page radioed that he thought he had been hit during the encounter. His flight

leader inspect his aircraft from the rear and observed no visible damage. Lieutenant Page then turned south toward Chodo Island and when last seen by his flight leader was at approximately 30,000 feet. An extensive aerial search revealed no information as to the fate of Lieutenant Page or his F-86.

8. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Thiel M. Reeves, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 11 January 1952  
Status: MIA

Upon reaching Sinanju, the flight encountered and engaged eight enemy fighters in battle. During the ensuing action, Lieutenant Reeves radioed that his F-86 had been hit and that he might have to bail out. He headed toward the west coast of Korea at an altitude of 34,000 feet followed by his wingman who subsequently lost sight of him near the island of Chodo. An aerial search along the west coast of Korea was unsuccessful.

9. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Charles W. Rhinehart, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 29 January 1952  
Status: MIA

During a combat mission over North Korea, Lieutenant Rhinehart's F-86 experienced a flameout and all attempts to restart were unsuccessful. At an altitude of 4,000 feet, he was seen to successfully parachute from the plane and to land in water off the mainland amid an area of numerous sand and mudflats, some 25 miles south of Chongju, North Korea. A subsequent aerial search of the area failed to locate any trace of Lt Rhinehart. Additional information: Lieutenant Rhinehart had studied aeronautical engineering at Iowa State College, had gone through USAF All-Weather Interceptor Aircrew Training, and had gone through conversion training on the F-86-4 fighter, the newest variant of the F-86 at that time.

10. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Thomas C. Lafferty, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 31 January 1952  
Status: MIA

No circumstances of loss known.

11. Pilot: Captain Charles R. Spath, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 3 February 1952  
Status: MIA

Captain Spath was forced to bail out due to damage sustained by his aircraft. Last radio contact indicated he was at 16,000 feet

and was 40 miles from Wonsan. An intelligence report of 11 Jul 52 reveals that during the latter part of May 1952, unsuccessful attempts were made to rescue a downed F-86 pilot in the area 40 miles northwest of Wonsan who had been shot down on 2 September 1952. Rescue efforts were discontinued when it appeared that the pilot had been captured and that numerous, armed enemy personnel were in the area. This intelligence report was associated to Captain Spath as he was the only F-86 pilot shot down in the Wonsan area during the first three days of February 1952. Additional information: Captain Spath was an Honors graduate in Mathematics at Miami University of Ohio.

12. Pilot: Captain Jack C. Langston, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 10 March 1952  
Status: MIA

No circumstances of loss known.

13. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant James D. Carey, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 24 March 1952  
Status: MIA

While in an encounter with three enemy MIGs over Lieutenant Carey was last seen inverted at 24,000 feet in a dive. All attempts to establish radio and visual contact were unsuccessful.

14. Pilot: Major George V. Wendling, USAFR  
Casualty: 24 March 1952  
Status: MIA

In the vicinity of the Sui Ho Reservoir, Major Wendling's flight engaged several enemy fighters in aerial combat. During the ensuing fight, Major Wendling radioed that his plane had been hit. The damaged plane went into a spin and when last seen was heading southeast toward the Yellow Sea. Minutes after his last radio message, the pilot of a friendly aircraft observed a huge splash in the waters of the Yellow Sea, followed by an oil slick, approximately 70 miles south of the target area. Whether this splash was caused by Major Wendling's plane could not be ascertained and a subsequent search of the reported crash area failed to reveal any trace of the missing officer or his F-86. A subsequent enemy propaganda broadcast from Peking, China on 25 April 1952 alleged that Major Wendling was killed when his plane was shot down near Ch'angtienhok'ou, Liaotung Province, China.

NOTE: Major Wendling is a good candidate for having been taken to the former Soviet Union. The discrepancy between his last reported action, possible crash in the Yellow Sea, and the Chinese propaganda report on his death in a plane crash are too vast for plausibility. In addition, Major Wendling's name appears on the "List of 59" entitled "A List of United States Air

Force Personnel Shot Down in Aerial Combat and by Anti-Aircraft Artillery During Military Operations in Korea, Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point." Additionally, The Joint Commission Support Branch believes that further information on Major Wendling exists in the Russian archives as concluded in its "Preliminary Analysis of Korean War Interrogation Material" report dated June 1993.

15. Pilot: Captain Albert G. Tenney, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 3 May 1952  
Status: MIA

While making a high speed descent over North Korea, Captain Tenney's flight was attacked by enemy aircraft. During the engagement, Captain Tenney's aircraft was seen to dive away from an enemy MIG and execute evasive maneuvers at an extremely low altitude. He was informed of his low altitude and was instructed to pull up. Immediately thereafter, he leveled the wings of his F-86 which then struck the surface of the water in a low-angle high speed glide approximately 3 miles off shore near the mouth of the Yalu River. Enemy aircraft forced the leader to leave the area and prior to his departure, he did not see Captain Tenney abandon the F-86 or the aircraft sink beneath the water. Later in the day, search aircraft returned to the scene of the crash landing. North Korean surface craft were observed in the vicinity, but no trace of Captain Tenney or his aircraft were found. Captain Tenney's F-86 was not seen to disintegrate or sink and a the possibility exists that favorable conditions prevailed whereby Captain Tenney survived and was rescued by North Korean surface craft seen in the area.

NOTE: Captain Tenney's name appears on the "List of 59" entitled "A List of United States Air Force Personnel Shot Down in Aerial Combat and by Anti-Aircraft Artillery During Military Operations in Korea, Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point." Additionally, The Joint Commission Support Branch believes that further information on Captain Tenney exists in the Russian archives as concluded in its "Preliminary Analysis of Korean War Interrogation Material" report dated June 1993.

16. Pilot: Captain John F. Lane, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 20 May 1952  
Status: MIA

After completing a combat escort mission, Captain Lane and his leader left the target area and headed south at an altitude of 30,000 feet. Soon after departure, they were attacked by two enemy aircraft approximately 40 miles northeast of Sinuiju. Following the first burst of enemy fire, Captain Lane radioed that his aircraft had been hit. Shortly thereafter, the leader saw the F-86 spinning earthward but was unable to maintain

observation. Captain Lane was not heard from again and an intensive aerial search was unsuccessful.

17. Pilot: Major Felix Asla, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 1 Aug 1952  
Status: MIA

Major Asla was engaged in aerial combat when he became separated from his wingman. He twice radioed for information as to whether visual contact could be established with his aircraft. The messages did not indicate that he was experiencing any difficulty at the time, although it appears that he failed to receive replies from the other pilot, who repeatedly advised that he did not have visual contact and was leaving the area. Subsequently, a report was received from a member of another flight in the area who witnessed an enemy fighter attack on Major Asla's F-86 and that his plane had lost the left wing. The aircraft was last seen spinning downward from an altitude of 23,000 feet at a point 15 miles southeast of Sakchu, North Korea. A subsequent aerial search failed to reveal any trace of the missing aircraft or pilot.

18. Pilot: Major Deltis H. Fincher, USANG  
Date of Casualty: 22 August 1952  
Status: MIA

While patrolling the assigned area at an altitude of more than 37,000 feet, enemy fighters were encountered and engaged in battle. During the ensuing action, one of the enemy planes attacked Major Fincher's F-86 and he began violent evasive maneuvers. His plane did not appear to be damaged at this time and he subsequently inquired as to whether he was still being pursued by the MIG. His wingman had lost visual contact during the battle and received no response to his radio call advising Major Fincher of this fact. No further messages were received from Major Fincher and his F-86 was not observed again. An extensive aerial search failed to reveal any trace of the missing aircraft or pilot.

19. Pilot: Captain Troy G. Cope, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 16 September 1952  
Status: MIA

After several encounters with enemy fighter aircraft while participating in a fighter sweep operations along the Yalu, Captain Cope radioed that his ammunition was exhausted. Accompanied by another flight member he headed downstream on a course south of the Manchurian border and parallel to the Yalu. Approximately 10 miles south of Antung, two flights of MIGs were

sighted and, while maneuvering to attack, the accompanying pilot noticed three other enemy aircraft in the area. He promptly radioed this information to Captain Cope who acknowledged the message. Because of the prevailing conditions, the two F-86s became separated. Efforts to re-establish visual or radio contact with Captain Cope were unsuccessful. An extensive aerial search revealed no traces of Captain Cope or his aircraft.

20. Pilot: 2nd Lieutenant Jack H. Turberville, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 18 November 1952  
Status: MIA

After completing a combat patrol mission over the Chong Chong River, North Korea, the two F-86s in his flight began the return flight to base at approximately 40,000 feet. Upon reaching a point near the Han River, Lieutenant Turberville radioed that he was having difficulty with his oxygen. The message was somewhat garbled and appeared to end abruptly. His plane was then observed to nose down sharply and to disappear into an overcast at an altitude of about 36,000 feet. The flight leader followed Lieutenant Turberville into the overcast and emerged at 25,000 feet, but sighted no trace of the missing aircraft. An extensive aerial search revealed no traces of Lieutenant Turberville or his aircraft.

21. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Donald R. Reitsma, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 22 December 1952  
Status: MIA

While patrolling along the Yalu River, Lieutenant Reitsma and his element leader encountered and engaged eight enemy fighters in combat. During the ensuing action, Lieutenant Reitsma radioed that his engine was out and that he was heading south toward Chodo Island of the western coast of Korea. He subsequently transmitted a message which revealed that he was twenty miles south of Long Dong, a North Korean peninsula approximately 85 miles north of Chodo. He further advised that his radio receiver was not operating. Lieutenant Reitsma was not heard again and an extensive aerial search revealed no traces of Lieutenant Reitsma or his aircraft.

22. Pilot: 2nd Lieutenant Bill J. Stauffer, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 26 January 1953  
Status: MIA

Lieutenant Stauffer was on a combat air patrol over North Korea when six MIGs were intercepted. During the battle, his aircraft was observed to have crashed into a small hill in an inverted position. Lieutenant Stauffer was not observed to have bailed

out.

23. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Paul J. Jacobson, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 12 February 1953  
Status: MIA

Over the town of Sinuiju, Lieutenant Jacobson's flight encountered and engaged in battle six enemy aircraft. Lieutenant Jacobson was last seen at an altitude of approximately 36,000 feet and was apparently experiencing no difficulty at the time. Following the battle, he failed to rejoin the flight and air search of the area failed to reveal any trace of him. An intelligence report from an interrogation of a captured Chinese soldier revealed that at 1000 hours on 16 February 1953, a UN pilot was shot down over the Sinuiju, North Korea. The pilot was captured and taken to Antung where he was placed on exhibition in the marketplace and labeled a "crook of the air" by a Communist officer. A brief description of the pilot was given and to a degree the information appears to conform to the official data of record concerning Lieutenant Jacobson. Although the date of 16 February is at variance with the date his F-86 was lost, it has been established that no other UN plane became missing in the Sinuiju area during the period in question.

24. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Richard M. Cowden, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 9 March 1953  
Status: MIA

No circumstances of loss known.

25. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Robert R. Niemann, USAF  
Date of Casualty: 12 April 1953  
Status: MIA

Lieutenant Niemann and his wingman were on patrol in the Sui Ho reservoir area. Enemy aircraft were encountered by Lieutenant Niemann and his wingman and during the ensuing action he was heard to say "Here he comes again." No further transmission was received from Lieutenant Niemann whose F-86 was last seen at an altitude of 15,000 feet. Repeated attempts to contact him by radio were unsuccessful and an air search of the area revealed no trace of him or his plane.

NOTE: Lieutenant Niemann's name appears on the "List of 59" entitled "A List of United States Air Force Personnel Shot Down in Aerial Combat and by Anti-Aircraft Artillery During Military Operations in Korea, Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point." Additionally, The Joint Commission Support Branch believes that further information on Lieutenant Neimann exists in

the Ru  
Korean archives as concluded in its "Preliminary Analysis of Interrogation Material" report dated June 1993.

26. Pilot: Captain Frank E. Miller, Jr., USAF  
Date of Casualty: 27 May 1953  
Status: MIA

No circumstances of loss known.

27. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant John E. Southerland,  
USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 6 Jun 1953  
Status: MIA

As Lieutenant Southerland's flight was preparing to attack an enemy target, he radioed that his F-86 was experiencing engine trouble and he requested to remain at high altitude until the bombing attack was completed. Immediately after this transmission, flames were observed coming from the fuselage of his aircraft and seconds later the F-86 rolled violently to the left and started downward. Lieutenant Southerland was seen to bail out of his airplane at an altitude of 12,000 feet. Enemy fire appeared to be concentrated on his parachute as he descended but he was not observed to be injured. Lieutenant Southerland landed in the Kumsong area, several miles behind enemy lines, and his parachute was seen on the ground for several minutes before it disappeared from view. Efforts to establish visual or radio contact were unavailing and the search was suspended after three hours due to intense enemy ground fire and poor visibility.

28. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Allan K. Rudolph, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 19 June 1953  
Status: MIA

Upon arriving in the Yalu River area, Lieutenant Rudolph reported that his F-86 had developed engine trouble. The decision was made to abort the mission and as Lieutenant Rudolph's flight turned to the south, a ball of flame was observed coming from the tail pipe of his aircraft. He reported that the engine was no longer operative and he was advised to head for water where his rescue could be more easily effected. Lieutenant Rudolph was observed to pull up slowly into the overcast at an altitude of approximately 16,000 feet. Lieutenant Rudolph's wingman followed him into the overcast, but upon breaking into the clear saw no trace of Lieutenant Rudolph or his aircraft. A report from a radar controller revealed that the missing officer had turned south as per instructions and his course was tracked by radar until he reached a point four miles northeast of Nemsidong, at which time the F-86 faded from radar. An aerial search of the



route taken by Lieutenant Rudolph proved unavailing.

29. Pilot: Captain Charles E. Gunther, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 19 June 1953  
Status: MIA

No circumstances of loss known.

30. Pilot: 1st Lieutenant Jimmy L. Escalle, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 19 June 1953  
Status: MIA

While performing a low-level reconnaissance of roads in North Korea, Lieutenant Escalle and his wingman sighted several camouflaged trucks and began a strafing attack. After breaking off the target, Lieutenant Escalle radioed that he was making another attack since he had sighted more vehicles in the area. No further transmissions were received from him and efforts to re-establish radio contact proved unavailing. A subsequent aerial search of the area where Lieutenant Escalle was last seen revealed the wreckage of an aircraft but no trace of the pilot was found.

31. Pilot: 2nd Lieutenant Gerald W. Knott, USAFR  
Date of Casualty: 20 July 1953  
Status: MIA

Lieutenant Knott was flying a rescue cap mission over a downed pilot. The downed pilot was spotted in a boat that was paddled by Koreans or Chinese. The flight leader and Lieutenant Knott went down to take a look. As they went down, Lieutenant Knott seemed to drift toward and under his leader. He went straight in and crashed. Joint Commission Support Branch has documents (TFR 138-321 to 138-324) which were turned over by the Russian Side of the Joint Commission on 13 April 1993. These documents are after action reports of Soviet AAA batteries stationed in North Korea. They attest that a battery of Field Post Number 83554 shot down an F-86, which crashed on the shore of the bay, at 1612 hours. The report states that a search group of FPN 83554 located wreckage with a tail number of 12756 and that the pilot of this aircraft successfully ejected and was captured by the Chinese Volunteers. Lieutenant Knott was flying F-86-E number 51-2756.

Sources: USAF Casualty Affairs and U.S. Army Central Investigation Laboratory Hawaii.