



# Full Spectrum: FEAF's Humanitarian Bombing Campaign in Korea

by Charles H. Briscoe

The Far East Air Forces Command (FEAF) conducted and was praised for its “humanitarian bombing campaign in Korea.”<sup>1</sup> The Air Force Secretary publicly announced that key North Korean industrial, military, and infrastructure sites were bombed only after the civilian populace had been forewarned by airdropped leaflets and radio broadcasts. UN humanitarian bomb raid warnings allowed the expansion of the Psywar leaflet and radio themes beyond the threat of artillery and naval gunfire barrages. While the art staff worked on leaflet designs, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reproduction Company, operating in the FECOM Publication Center facilities in Motosumiyoshi (between Yokohama and Tokyo), made the lithographic plates and mass printed leaflets on Webendorfer Offset and Harris LTV Stream-Fed presses.<sup>2</sup> Then, they were packaged in door bundles for C-47 *Skytrain* delivery in Korea or loaded as rolls into M129E1/E2 500 lb. leaflet bombs for B-29 squadrons stationed in Japan and B-26 *Invader* elements on the peninsula. Teletype messages to the 4<sup>th</sup> Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (MRBC) stations in Korea contained dates, times, and sites of the FEAF bombing targets. In conjunction with this the U.S. Army radio officers at each *KBS* station were responsible for writing and then broadcasting humanitarian bomb warnings an hour before the air attacks were scheduled. ▲

To keep track of what specific leaflets were delivered to FEAF bombing squadrons, a copy was pasted on the casing of each M129E1/E2 500 lb. leaflet bomb with the Target Group (TGTGRP) chalk-marked on the nose. This one was Target Group “A.”



Leaflet #1069 was designed to dissuade North Korean civilians from repairing military airfields. The three panels show the bombing, repair, and return attacks by United Nations bombers.



Leaflet #1101 is a two-sided anti-morale flyer targeted towards NKA and North Korean civilians. The back side is printed with the message: "I believed that the war would end soon, that I would be able to return home safely."



Leaflet #1100 emphasizes the Communist intent to divide the country on the 38th Parallel.

# 1st RB&L Artillery, Naval Gunfire, and Bomb Warning Leaflets

Psywar focused simultaneously on hearts and minds to create fear, raise suspicions, seed doubt, spread confusion, and emphasize wartime hardships. By stressing overwhelming UN firepower it was reasoned that the soldiers' will to fight and civilian support of the war would be weakened.<sup>3</sup> The warnings cited the deliberate Communist abstention from the Armistice negotiations and recalcitrance on specific points as the rationale for increased air and sea attacks.



“Naval Power” contained a photo of a UN warship firing a broadside against North Korean coastal military targets. The backside had a graphic depiction of the destruction. It was designed to warn civilians away from military targets and discourage North Korean troops.



This leaflet contained detailed pictographs for illiterate North Korean civilians.



“UN Artillery Power” depicted a North Korean soldier kneeling in the center of a large bulls eye and on the opposite side, the results: a large shell crater where the soldier used to be.



This “Bombing of North Korean Airfields” leaflet showed a bomb-pocked North Korean airfield after B-29 Superfortress raids.



This leaflet depicting aerial destruction of enemy supply lines had bombs with UN and member nation flags and the backside had a picture of U.S. Navy FH-1 Phantom fighter bombers attacking a train, railroad bridge, and a North Korean truck convoy.



Designed to emphasize UN materiel superiority the sides of this leaflet had pictures of a B-29 Superfortress, F-84 Thunderjet fighter bomber and F-86 Sabre fighter jets. A 155 mm "Long Tom" and 8" heavy artillery, an M-46 Patton medium tank, a battleship, and an aircraft carrier were overlaid on a blue & white UN flag.



A B-29 Superfortress bombing North Korean industrial targets was used on one side and the back was an aerial photograph of a rail yard being hit with high explosive bombs.



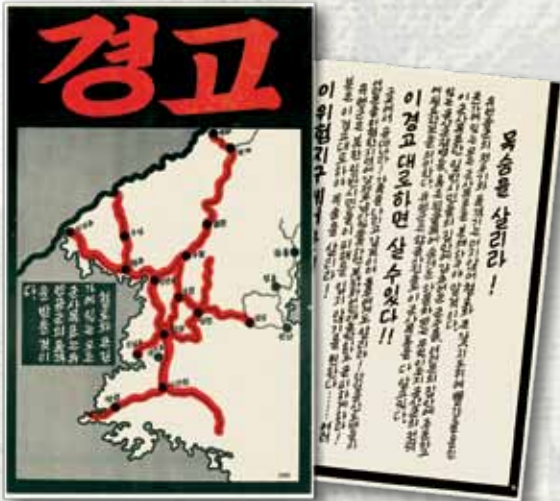
A graphic depiction of bombs falling on a munitions factory was back-sided with a three-part pictograph showing North Korean police confiscating warning leaflets and civilians being forced to work despite the bomb threat.

# Plan DEADLOCK & Plan STRIKE Leaflets

This Plan DEADLOCK leaflet focused on the willingness of the Communists to sacrifice North Korean lives by refusing to negotiate a just Armistice.



This leaflet supporting Plan STRIKE was one of a series that explained that Armistice stalemates by the Communists would result in retaliatory air attacks. It had a map of North Korea showing the principal B-26 light bomber targets: railroads, bridges, airfields, and troop assembly points.



Another Plan STRIKE leaflet had a map depicting key North Korean transportation-supply-communications lines with major cities identified.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Haynes interview, 17 September 2010.
- 2 Charles R. Broderick letter (Yokohama) to The Brodericks, Marion, Illinois, dated 22 January 1952 in Charles R. Broderick Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Broderick letter and date.
- 3 Photos of 1<sup>st</sup> RB&L Group Psywar Display at Tokyo Officers Club circa 1952 from the MAJ Herbert Avedon Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Avedon Collection.



Bomb destruction of a rail line in North Korea was emphasized in this Plan STRIKE leaflet.



The pictographs in this Plan STRIKE leaflet illustrated bomb targets: North Korean soldiers, transportation, military supply points; and military vehicle repair facilities.