

Themes in Korean War-Era Leaflets: Implications for Future North-South Korean & Korean-U.S. Dialogues

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Introduction

"The war has already almost destroyed that nation. I have seen, I guess, as much blood and disaster as any living man and it just turned my stomach the last time I was there. After I looked at that wreckage and those thousands of women and children and everything, I vomited."

- General Douglas MacArthur¹

"Korea does not really matter now. I'd never heard of the bloody place until I was seventy-four. Its importance lies in the fact that it has led to the re-arming of America."

- Winston Churchill²

Almost six decades after the war, the resilience and self-determination of the people who occupy the Korean Peninsula seem to have washed away most of the physical destruction of the Korean War. The streets of both capitals, albeit to varying degrees, are bustling with gleaming faces and the blood that soaked the land stretching from "the Yalu to the Nakdong" has long been dried up. No more is it likely that a well-decorated military strategist would vomit upon his encounter with Korean women and children today, especially in the southern half of the peninsula. Neither would an accomplished world leader venture such a blatant claim of ignorance about Korea. More significantly, the very root cause of the conflict -- i. e., the looming confrontation between two superpowers divided by ideological differences--has eroded. Unfortunately, we cannot celebrate the same rites of rejuvenation, passage of time or even amnesia when it comes to the emotional and mental scars of the war. The legacy of the Stalin-McCarthy era still dominates the mindsets of the two Koreas. This remains true in spite of the fact that the two Koreas experienced almost an 8-year long period of testing each other's intentions and nerves between 2000 and 2008. During this period two summit talks were held, a hefty amount of financial and material aids traveled northward, and a limited effort in economic collaboration materialized in the form of tourism and an industrial joint venture. After North Korea test-fired several long-range missiles and conducted an underground nuclear weapons test, the barely-open relationship returned to its previous frozen state.

It is quite obvious that the physical barriers between the two countries as well as occasional outbreaks of naval skirmishes in recent years seem to serve as a constant reminder of the severity of the

emotional scars of the Korean War period. The physical isolation and its ensuing political diatribes have left indelible marks in the psyche of the Korean people. At the level of ordinary citizens of this divided land, no meaningful communication has taken place between North and South Korea since the war. Not only have all means of direct communication been made inaccessible--no telephone, mail or personal contacts--but also the consumption or possession of mass media messages has been officially outlawed. In South Korea, for instance, it was against the nation's Anti-Communism (National Security) Law until late 1990s to include in one's stamp collection a stamp bearing the face of the North Korean leader, Kim Il Sung. A person who listened to a North Korean radio broadcasting service, out of sheer teenage curiosity, could easily have been arrested for "left-wing" sentiment under the same law. As for North Koreans, even today any similar acts would mean much more severe penalty including years of imprisonment in labor camp or even execution.

In the prolonged absence of dialogue between the two nations, then, the only prevalent communication symbols likely to preoccupy the minds of South and North Koreans who are engaged in conversation (or negotiations about the fate of their countries) would be the ones they gathered during the most 'recent' close contact which was, ironically, during the war period. Accordingly, it is imperative for us to understand the nature of the dialogue that the two nations carried out during this unfortunate period of time, not only as a means of understanding the historical value of those exchanges, but also as a means of gaining insights about how to 'talk' to each other both for achieving national unity and, once such a unity is realized, for sustaining it for a long time to come. The overall purpose of this paper is to examine how North and South Koreans communicated about their mutual feelings through one particular form of war-time communication to which the two nations were subjected at length: propaganda leaflets. This study raises, among others, three major questions: 1) What types of propaganda themes were predominantly exploited in the Korean War leaflet campaigns?; 2) What particular images of enemy--i.e., 'enemy reference'--did the two parties of the conflict heavily attempt to evoke?; 3) How are those themes and references, presumably providing the core foundation for how ordinary South and North Koreans perceive each other now, likely to dictate dialogues leading to national unity and beyond?

Psychological Warfare During the Korean War

"The best victory is when the opponent surrenders of its own accord before there are any actual hostilities. . . . It is best to win without fighting." -Sun Tzu, 4th Century, B.C.³

In addition to the usual languages of war--e. g., guns, tanks, bombs and massacres--whose meanings are conveyed imprecisely as they are 'spoken' through symbolic actions, the Korean war involved a variety of 'real language-based' instruments of war: weapons of psychological warfare. The prominence of psychological warfare in the Korean conflict has its basis in several disturbing facts about what happened to the American soldiers involved. Nearly thirty eight percent (i. e., some 2,700) of the captured Americans, for instance, died in captivity, recording the highest such mortality rate since the Revolutionary War. It was also during this conflict that, for the first time in U. S. history, as many as twenty-one American POWs declined to come home at the conclusion of the cease-fire talks, presumably due to the effects of Communist indoctrination programs. An equally unprecedented

historical fact is that somewhere between thirty-three and seventy percent of captured American soldiers were suspected of having collaborated with their captors at imprisonment camps.⁴

The perception that psychological warfare played a previously unmatched prominent role in the Korean War, however, is not an entirely retrospective one. I have argued elsewhere⁵ that the presumed success of Communist propaganda campaigns, to a great extent, was facilitated by the political and ideological predisposition existing in the West at that time. This view clearly posits that the prominent role of psychological warfare during the Korean War was at least partially nourished by the peculiar political and ideological climates. Indeed, the fear of seemingly potent Communist propaganda campaigns (widely held in the minds of American public as well as public opinion leaders) appears to have been predicting the importance of these weapons of minds and hearts. This is illustrated in the following New York Times editorial that appeared only ten days after the outbreak of the war:

Hearings that opened yesterday on Senator Benton's resolution favoring a large-scale democratic offensive in the world of ideas afforded an appropriate setting for Secretary Acheson's statement that his Department has already drafted a vastly expanded information program. . . . In introducing his resolution last March for a 'Marshall Plan of ideas,' Senator Benton noted that 'bullets and bombs, shells and flame do not change men's minds or win their loyalty.' The bullets may, alas, be necessary in defense against naked aggression, as they are being used now in Korea; but they alone cannot win this fundamental conflict. We are in the midst of a world-wide political campaign; we have been subjected to as fantastic an onslaught of calumny and abuse as the world has ever seen; and yet in the field of ideas, we ourselves have scarcely begun to fight. . . . Russians have operated a powerful radio station of an estimated 50,000 watts or more in North Korea, while the South Korean station used by the Americans for local propaganda broadcasts has had a feeble strength of some 3,000 or 4,000 watts. In contrast to the 'hundreds' of Koreans believed to have been sent to Russia for study, only seventeen Koreans hold Government-sponsored scholarships to the United States. To oppose the 'hundreds' of Communist 'cultural centers' in North Korea, there were just nine American libraries of information in South Korea, only one of which was manned by an American. . . . It is as foolish to discount the force of this propaganda as it is intolerable to permit it to go unanswered.⁶

Korean War Leaflets

Presumably motivated by this pervasive fear of the lack of parity in the international propaganda war, the United Nations forces in Korea utilized various techniques based on what President Truman called "the campaign of truth." Along with radio broadcasting and tactical use of loudspeakers, leaflets became the primary means of winning the hearts and minds of enemy troops and civilians. Several million copies of the first U. N. leaflet, produced by the Psychological War Section of the General Headquarters, Far East Command (FECOM) in Tokyo, were dropped only seventy-two hours after the eruption of armed conflict.⁷ During the peak periods of its activity, the 1st Radio Broadcast and Leaflet

Group of the FECOM averaged twenty million leaflets per week while the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company⁸ produced another three and a half million tactical leaflets of various kinds every week.⁹

The dissemination of the U.N. forces' leaflets was done by three principal means: 1) leaflet bombs dropped by B-29 planes over the Communist-held territories and C-47s over the U. N. held territories; 2) artillery loaded with 105-mm mortar shells containing up to 738 leaflets each; and 3) ground patrols. Apparently the last method had a limited use and was done on an improvised basis.¹⁰

The use of leaflets by the Communist forces, especially during the initial six-month phase, is generally believed to have been limited, mainly because of their inability to control the airspace. Pettee reports that the American intelligence team found forty-six different Communist leaflets between the outbreak of the war and January of 1951. With the exception of several dropped by air in July and November of 1950, the majority of the forty-six leaflets are believed to have been distributed by hand.¹¹

Data

Precisely how many different leaflets were used by the various parties of the Korean war remains an elusive question. The number of different leaflets produced by the U.N. Forces, for example, is vaguely described in the various sources as amounting to "several hundreds." In the U.S., the most complete collection of leaflets produced by all parties seems to be, for obvious reasons, those produced by the U.N. Forces in the Korean and Chinese languages. In addition, a limited number of leaflets produced by the North Korean Army (NKA) and the Communist Chinese Forces (CCF) seem to be scattered around in various military museums and government archives. The study reported here is based on the content analysis of 126 randomly selected Korean-language leaflets dropped by the U.N. Forces during various time periods of the Korean War and 50 "enemy series" leaflets disseminated by either NKA or CCF. Both of these two types of leaflets are part of the leaflet collection of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Museum, an arm of the U. S. Army Special Operations Command, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Functional Types of Leaflets

Depending on specific military situations under which leaflets were designed to perform specified functions, the Korean War period leaflets are commonly categorized into three types: 1) strategic leaflets; 2) tactical leaflets; and 3) consolidation leaflets.

Strategic leaflets attempt to achieve the broadest persuasive goal among these three types. With their long-term objectives of breaking the enemy's will to fight and ultimately bringing about military and political victory, these leaflets aim at causing dissension in the enemy leadership circle, resentment of people against their political or military leaders, suspicions about the motivations of foreign troops operating in the target areas, or demoralization of the enemy population suffering from severe wartime conditions of various nature.

Tactical leaflets are used primarily for the purpose of assisting specific, imminent (or on-going) military operations by creating a desired psychological impact. More immediate result-oriented,

tactical leaflets include those that urge surrender, inform enemy troops that they are helplessly surrounded or intimidate with the claim that their weapons are far inferior to "ours."

Consolidation leaflets are called in when a military success or occupation requires that civic order be restored and sustained in the various arenas of civic life--e.g., reconstruction, economy, education, health, or guerrilla activities.

Of the 126 U.N. Forces leaflets, 49% turned out to be strategic and 42% tactical, with the remaining 11% of the leaflets concentrating on consolidation themes. This is contrasted with the fact that, of the 50 Communist forces leaflets, 84% were primarily for strategic situations and only 14% for tactical purposes, while only 2% carried consolidation messages. Given the fact that the production and utilization of tactical leaflets require an instant adaptation to fast-changing battle situations and, thus, quickly-responding logistics and mobility, the proportionally greater representation of tactical approaches in the U.N. Forces leaflet campaign would seem to be an indication that they enjoyed clear advantages in those areas.

Thematic Types of Korean War Leaflets

The U.N. and Communist propagandists adopted a wide variety of propaganda themes which were specifically tailored to exploit certain features of the military and civilian lives of both sides. These themes were conveyed through particular images of the enemy or "our side" for the purpose of blaming, ridiculing, scorning, persuasion, reassurance or morale boosting. Overall, it appears nine major categories of exploitation themes can be identified in the leaflet campaigns of the Korean conflict.



Figure 1

1. Political Ideology & Leadership included references to political and military leadership, ideological doctrines/practices and antigovernment movements or rebellions back home. A good example of this category is Leaflet #1243 which was issued on November 18, 1952. In this leaflet (Figure 1), targeted for North Korean farmers, the leaflet designer focuses on the Communist system, which was

so proud of helping the previously exploited sharecroppers through land reform. The government is depicted as a new form of landlord who is squeezing "sweat and blood" [고혈] in the forms of various taxes and donations (to agricultural agents, self-defense squad, party cell chairman, propagandists, appraisal committee and people's committee), leaving the poor farmer with a piece of paper called "certificate of hero" as the only reward. The use of the term, 고혈["sweat and blood] is particularly ingenious in this case, as the term has been used from time immemorial in Korean history in reference to political leadership tainted with corruption and over-taxation. The clear message here is that the political and economic reform of Communist ideology has brought about very little in the context of the long-held exploitative behaviors of the ruling class.

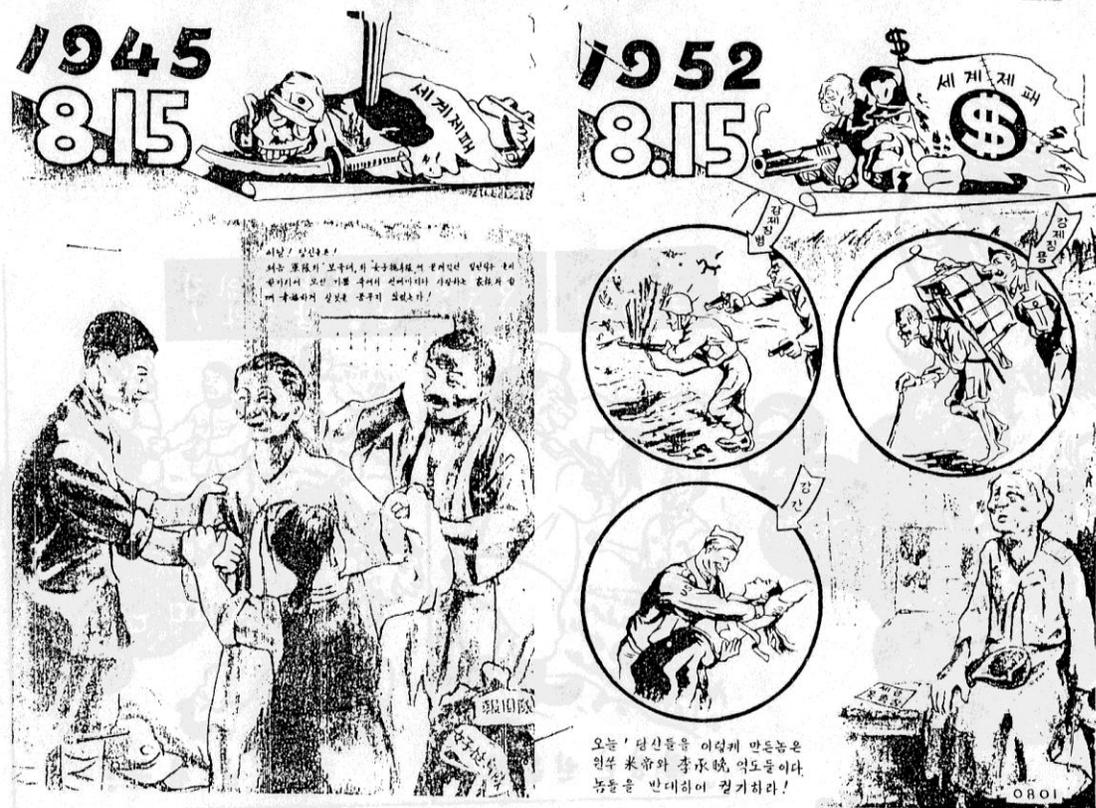


Figure 2

2. Nationalistic Sentiment / Foreign Forces included references to the enemy government's or leaders' alleged submissiveness to foreign forces, discriminatory or rude behaviors of the "occupying forces," military and economic assistance from outside, racial epithets used against foreign forces, foreign adoption of Korean children and reconstruction efforts for national pride and honor. The North Korean leaflet #0801 is a marvelous example of this category. In this leaflet two different meanings of August 15th ("Liberation Day") of 1945 and 1952 are juxtaposed. On the left-hand side in Figure 2, a Japanese soldier is lying dead with the Japanese flag carrying "World Conquest" covering his body. The accompanying message reads: "On this day, did you not dream of living happily forever with your family

returning from the forced services in the Japanese Army, National Salvation Labor Force and Women's Service Corps [i. e., 'Comfort Lady' Corps]?" On the right-hand side is an illustration of live Americans holding guns and the American flag imprinted with the \$ sign and "World Conquest." Forced conscription, forced labor, raping of Korean women by American troops and a helpless-looking old lady with a tax bill are depicted as some of the characteristics of this particular year's Liberation Day. The accompanying message reads: "Today! It is the American imperialists and the traitorous Rhee Syngman and his gangs who caused all this suffering. Rise against them."

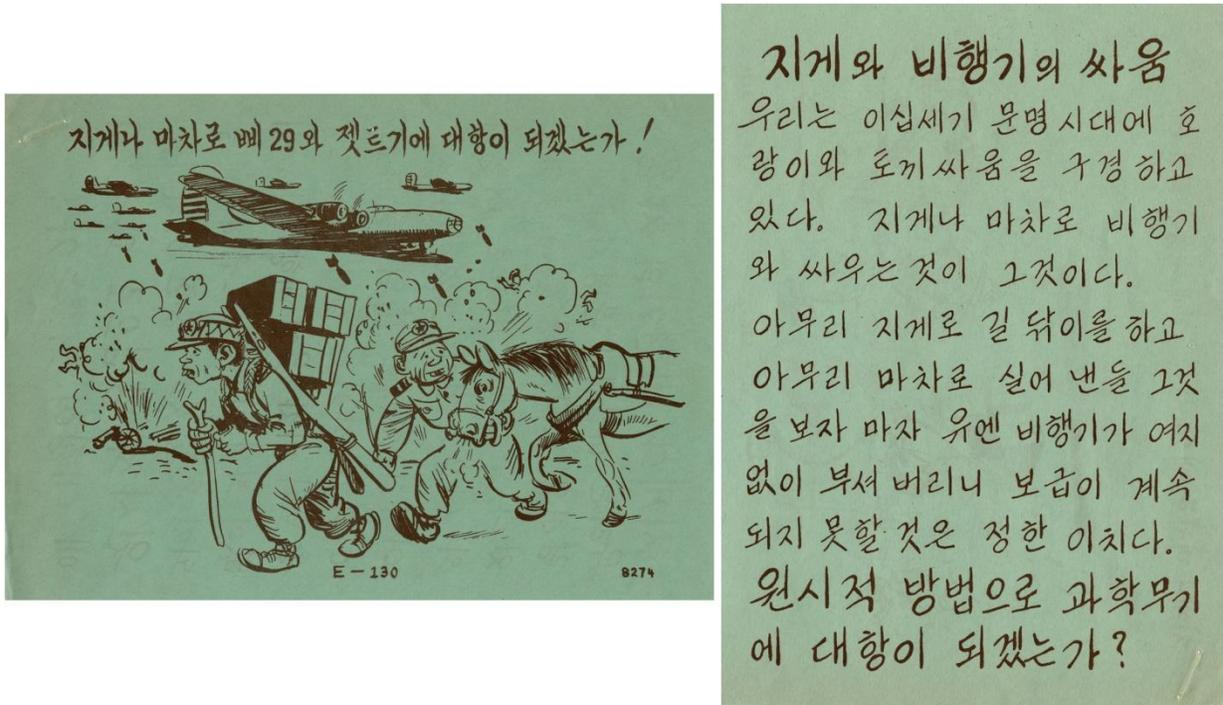


Figure 3

3. Military Technology & Tactical/Strategic Predicaments of War included references to superiority (or inferiority) of war machines, biological weapons, "the state of surround," cease-fire, deceptive conscription and testimonials provided by defectors. The U.N. leaflet #8274 represents this category. As shown in Figure 3, B-29 bombers are being compared with A-frames and horse-driven carts used by Communists for transportation, to epitomize the technological difference in the weaponry that both sides brought into the war. The caption above the illustration simply raises a ringing question: "Can a cart and A-frame stand against B-29's and jet aircraft?" The verbalized message on the back is essentially the same as the illustration: "We are witnessing a fight between a tiger and a rabbit in this civilized 20th century - a fight between an aircraft and an A-frame or cart. However repeatedly you may rebuild the destroyed roads with your A-frame and carry your supplies on your cart, they will be smashed away by the U.N. aircraft. No wonder you are not supplied regularly. Do you think you can resist the scientific weapons with your primitive methods?"



Figure 4

4. History/Culture/Tradition included references to heroic figures in Korean history, holiday celebrations, comparisons between the current war and other historical wars that Korea fought against invading forces, and the destruction of ancient Korean culture by occupying forces. The U.N. leaflet #1321 provides a useful snapshot of this category (Figure 4). Designed to create dissension and ill feeling about the Communist leadership, the leaflet features on the front an old Korean scholar with a horsehair hat (which is a symbol of scholarly achievement) seated in front of a group of young Korean students, practicing the teachings of Confucius. The caption reads: "Before the Communists came, Korea was known as the courteous nation of the East. We should recover the lost courtesy and morality of our forefathers so that the future generations of Korea can inherit them from us." On the back is the illustration of the same old Korean scholar, minus his horsehair hat, being forced to carry a heavy load of an A-frame by Kim Il Sung. Discarded at the Communist leader's feet are the old man's horsehair hat and books containing the teachings of Confucianism. Again, a fitting caption accompanies this illustration: "What the heck is filial duty? Get to work [you old man]! In this new world there is no place for humanism, courtesy, or sophistry of hermitic [scholars]. Is it clear?"

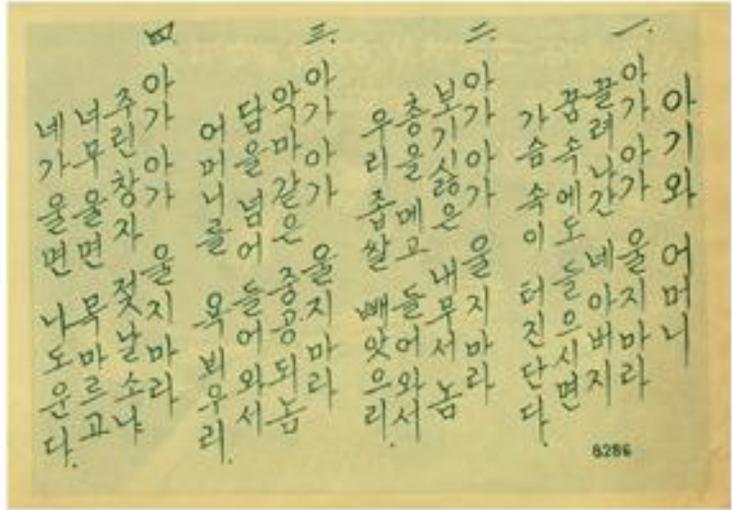


Figure 6

6. Hardships in Battleground/Civilian Life, Health included references to cold, food, rising prices, family's safety, material mobilization and health conditions. The U.N. leaflet #8286 ("Hungry Mother and Child," issued on May 19, 1952) typifies the essence of this category (Figure 6). The caption next to the self-explanatory illustration reads: "Your beloved baby is crying for milk. Mother also weeps when the baby cries." Printed on the reverse is a poem composed in the imitation of cadence commonly found in traditional Korean children's song genre, "Dong-Yo" [동요]: "Baby, baby, stop crying. If your Dad who was dragged out [to the battlefield] happens to hear you crying even in his dream, it will crush his heart into pieces. Baby, baby, stop crying. It may cause the ugly police man come in with his rifle and take our millet away. Baby, baby, stop crying. The devilish Chinky Commie may climb over our fence and violate your Mom. Baby, baby, stop crying. No milk flows out from the empty intestine. Your crying only dries up your throat and wets my eyes." This leaflet contained some of the most poignant symbols of "Korean hardship": "millet"[좁쌀] as the main staple instead of rice, "empty intestine" [주린 창자] which represents a state of hunger beyond "empty stomach" and "be violated by a chink" [악마 같은 중공 되놈 ... 어머니를 욕되우리]



Figure 7

7. Humane Treatment of Defectors/POW's included references to the comfort, food, medical treatment provided by "our side" in testimonials provided by defectors or former guerrillas. The North Korean leaflet (#2910) in the forms of two cartoons (Figure 7) exemplifies this category. The one on the top illustrates how Chilsong, who stayed in the Puppet Army (i. e., South Korean Army), became injured and a beggar. The one at the bottom shows how Yongsam, who defected to the People's Army, became happy. The captions read: "Yongsam, while serving in the Puppet Army, saw the handbills from the People's Army, came over to the side of the People's Army at the first opportunity, was warmly welcomed, was fed good food, happily in sports and recreation, went to school as he had long wanted, got the job he wanted, and is leading a happy life."

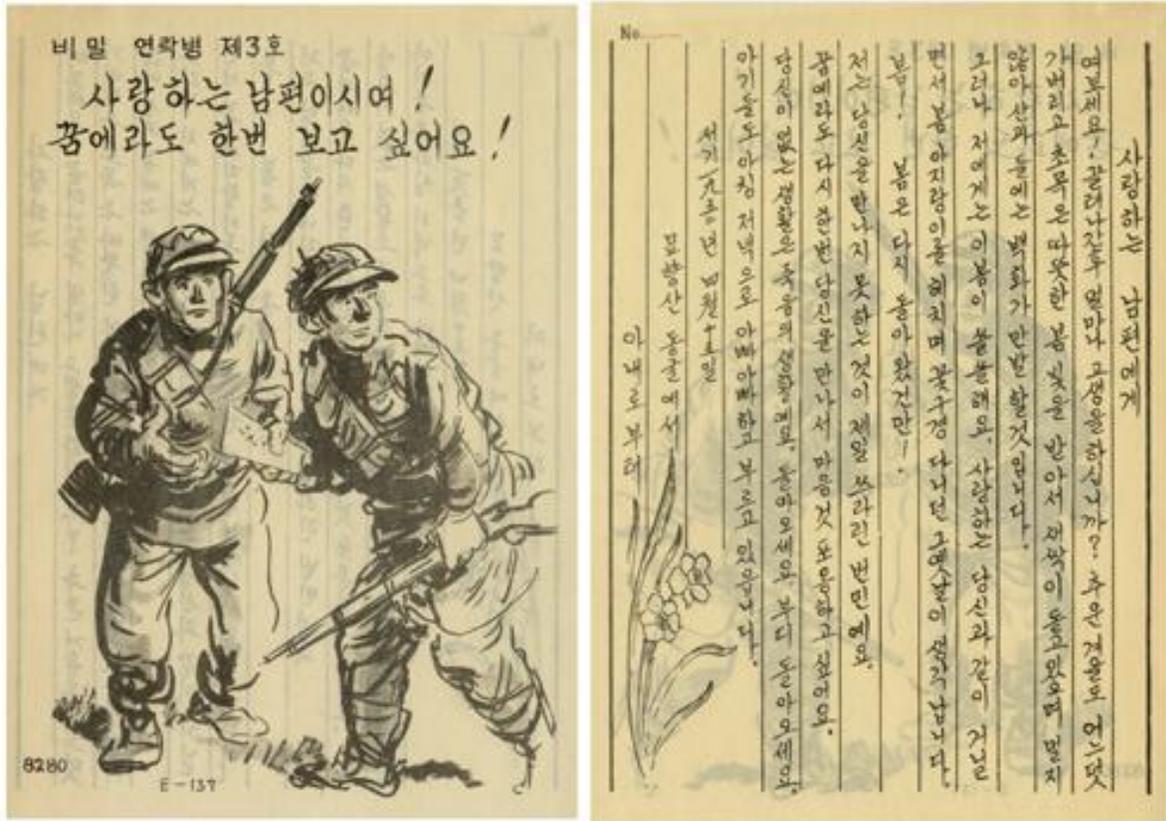


Figure 8

8. Nostalgia/Family included references to yearning/affection for family, homesickness and other factors that may perpetuate the separation from one's family. The U.N. leaflet (#8280) serves as a common example: With the sketch of a North Korean soldier, who is apparently coming back from his leave, delivering a letter from another soldier's wife, this leaflet contains a heart-felt expression of emotions by a young lady in which she recalls all the wonderful spring days they had together. Then, she describes her "life without you" as "death in life" and reveals her current residency as "a cave in Mt. Myohyang."

9. Life/Death included references to "imminent death you will be subjected to," "the meaningless death you can avoid," or "self-imposed death some of your fellow soldiers chose because of the unbearable conditions."

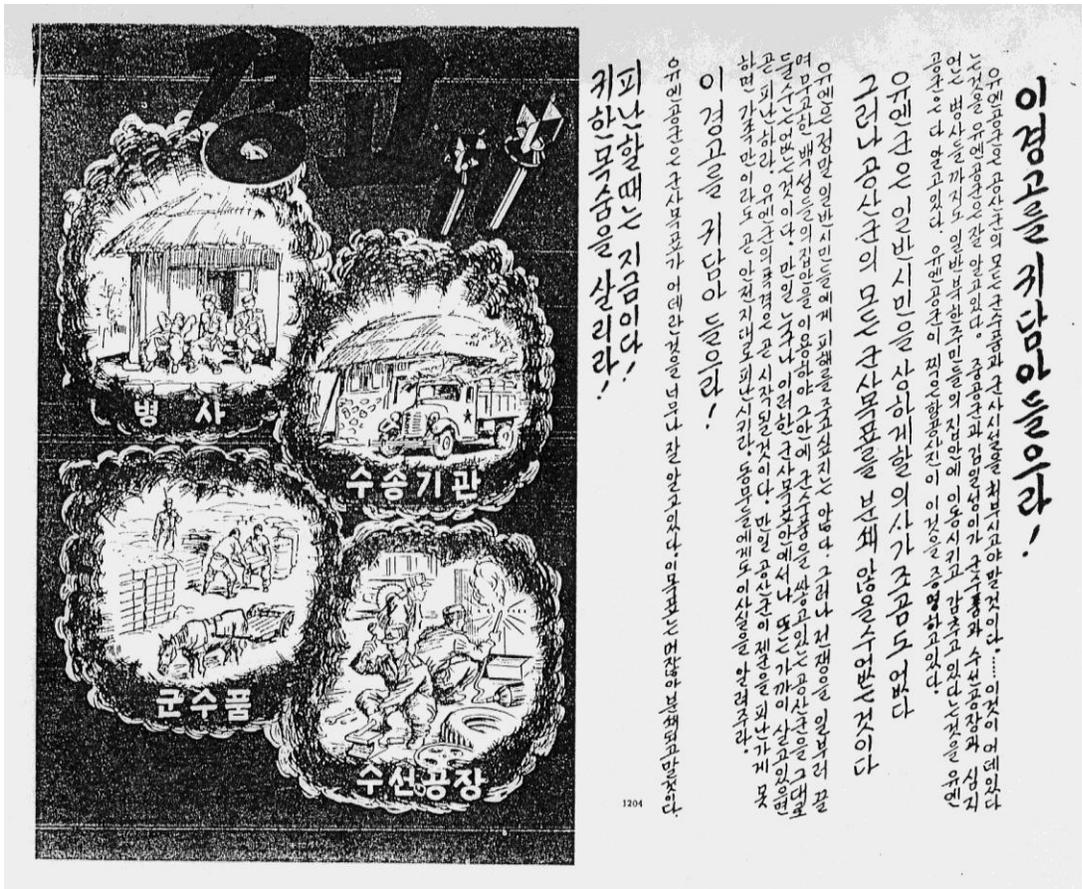


Figure 10

10. Information/Bombing Alert/Utility included references to warning to the civilian population about imminent bombing, warning to railroad or factory reconstruction workers about dangers of unexploded time bombs, calendars, cigarette wrapping papers, paper chessboards, stationery and other utilitarian devices the leaflet either contained or could be converted to. The U.N. leaflet #1204, which was dropped as part of the operation, "Strike," in July 1952, illuminates this category (Figure 10). Spot illustrations on the front show that the Communist forces are using residential buildings and shelters for various military storage facilities ("troops" "vehicles" "supplies" and "repair facilities" are the four categories identified). Above these facilities are accurately descending bombs of the U.N. forces. On the reverse, the leaflet explains the unavoidability of bombing the civilian residential areas because of the North Korean "disguise or deception."

All 176 leaflets were categorized up to three times into the above nine categories. This multiple categorization scheme was necessary because the leaflets, except for an extremely small number, carried more than one theme. Thus, the 126 U.N. leaflets could have contained the maximum 378 themes and the Communist leaflets the maximum 150 themes. Table 1 shows how the two parties of the conflict concentrated on different themes of exploitation. From the percentage figures in the table, one gets the impression that the U.N. leaflets, to a great extent, exploited nationalistic sentiments, political leadership/ideology, and hardships in military and civilian lives most frequently while the Communist Forces focused on hardships in military and civilian lives, nationalistic sentiments, and

tactical/strategic predicaments of war. It is quite significant to note that both the U.N. and Communist leaflets placed great emphasis on the theme of Korean troops fighting for foreign interests, of Korean civilians and military personnel being subjected to abusive and insulting acts of the "occupying" troops, and the claim that foreign aid in actuality is nothing but foreign exploitation. Relatively speaking, the U.N. leaflets placed twice as much importance on the theme of legitimacy of political leadership and ideology as the Communist leaflets did on that theme. The Communist leaflets, on the other hand, exploited symbols coming from traditional Korean culture and history much more frequently than their capitalist counterparts did. It is also rather noticeable that the Communist leaflets treated the nostalgia theme almost six times more often than the U.N. leaflets did. In addition to the possibility that the Communist propagandists believed that the U. N. forces were vulnerable to this particular sentiment, this might be a sheer artifact of sampling; this study did not include the Chinese language version of the U.N. leaflets, and leaflets targeting foreign troops are more likely to incorporate that particular theme. Thus, if the U.N. leaflets aimed at the Chinese troops were included in this study, this particular aspect of the results might have been different.

TABLE 1: Propaganda Themes of Exploitation in U. N. and Communist Leaflet Campaigns During the Korean War

	U.N.	Communist
1. Political Ideology	19.4% (67)	10.8% (15)
2. Nat'l Sentiment	22.0% (76)	18.0% (25)
3. Military Technology	12.5% (43)	12.2% (17)
4. History/Culture	2.6% (9)	6.5% (9)
5. Freedom/Discrmntn.	5.5% (19)	5.8% (8)
6. Hardships/Health	13.6% (47)	20.1% (28)
7. Humane Treatment	10.2% (32)	9.4% (13)
8. Nostalgia/Family	1.5% (5)	8.6% (12)
9. Life/Death	10.4% (36)	8.6% (12)
10. Information/Warning	2.3% (8)	0.7% (1)
Total Themes Counted	345	139

Intended Purposes of Leaflets

Carl Berger,¹² in his pioneering study of wartime leaflets, categorizes them into three types in terms of their specific purposes they are designed to achieve. The **Directive Leaflet** "gives orders, instructions, and directives to the target audience." The **Informative Leaflet** "avoids all arguments, urgings, or exhortations" and presents "unadorned facts in such a way that they will have a strong psychological impact on the reader." The **Persuasive (or Argumentative)** Leaflet tries to convert the reader by marshaling arguments designed to convince him. Berger, then, describes two types of persuasive leaflets; one whose main purpose is to cause enemy **surrender** and the other with an "attrition" motive--intended to **demoralize** the enemy's fighting spirit or will to resist.

The Korean War leaflet campaigns, however, seem to have made extensive use of yet another type of persuasive leaflet. In this first major armed conflict between these two diametrically opposite ideologies, both sides produced a large number of persuasive leaflets that focused on **ideological conversion** without invoking either surrender or demoralization, at least directly. These leaflets largely contained variations of propaganda slogans such as "Let's wipe out the evil Communist system" or "Why would you want to sacrifice your life for the shareholders of Du Pont, Standard Oil or General Motors?" In addition, there seems to be another purpose that was put into some Korean War leaflets: a **utilitarian** or **instrumental** purpose. As described earlier, the U.N. Forces dropped leaflets containing a chessboard layout, calendars, maps, carrying bags and stationery, while the North Koreans distributed cigarette wrapping papers. These leaflets, all printed with some simple propaganda messages, would clearly seem to have served a function that is more instrumental than propagandistic.

Accordingly, this study incorporated six different categories in analyzing the leaflets in terms of their intended propaganda purposes: 1) **Directive**; 2) **Informative**; 3) **Persuasive—Surrender**; 4) **Persuasive--Demoralizer**; 5) **Persuasive--Ideological Conversion**; and 6) **Instrumental**. Table 2 illustrates how the two sides embodied their intended purposes of propaganda in their leaflets. The most obvious difference is in the directive category, as the Communist sample did not contain even a single leaflet falling into that category. To a great extent, this seems to be directly related to the fact that the U.N. Forces enjoyed an absolute superiority in air power; the majority of directive leaflets involved warnings against imminent bombings (e. g., "Operation Strike")¹³ or advice for fleeing civilians to walk on open roads away from coastal areas. A more interesting difference, however, lies in the way the two adversaries conducted their persuasive campaigns; while the Communist side heavily more than 50% of the sample--resorted to the demoralization campaign, the U.N. side placed a relatively higher importance (than the Communist side) on the surrender campaign. In fact, the U.N. campaign had an evenly-divided significance between those two categories when compared to the heavily-skewed Communist campaign. Until someone secures a larger sample and analyzes these two types of persuasive campaigns in terms of more detailed subcategories, we will not be able to find any meaningful answer to why this difference emerged.

Table 2: Intended Propaganda Purposes in U. N. and Communist Leaflet Campaigns During the Korean War Period

	U.N.	Communist
1. Directive	17.5% (22)	0% (0)
2. Informative	16.7% (21)	18% (9)
3. Persuasive--Surrender	25.4% (32)	18% (9)
4. Persuasive--Demoralizer	27.8% (35)	52% (26)
5. Persuasive-- Ideological Conversion	8.7% (11)	10% (5)
6. Instrumental	4.0% (5)	2%(1)
Total Number of Leaflets	126	50

Enemy References in the Leaflets

The final research question this study pursued was how the two sides of the Korean conflict referred to each other. What particular images of enemy did the two adversaries of this bloody confrontation attempt to evoke as prominent features of the "opposite evil system" in the pursuit of hearts and minds of their enemy?

Up to five references to the enemy that appeared in each leaflet were categorized. There were a total of nine categories of references--including explicit names, titles and modifying words or phrases--that were used in describing the enemy or its behaviors.

1. References to War Acts and Terrorism:

"war criminals" "warmonger" "war-provoking" "causing terror and death"

2. References to being Subservient to Foreign Interests/Barbaric, Despicable Foreigners:

"partner in the colonization of the fatherland" (조국의 식민지화를 . . .)

"serving the foreign master, Russia"

"traitors of Korean people" (민족의 원수)

"Chinese barbarians"

"nauseating Yankees" (구역질 나는 양키)
"(Chinky or Yankee troops) violating your wives and sisters"
"Syngman Rhee and his cliques who sold out our fatherland" (이승만 매국 도당)
"slighted, humiliated, snubbed and discriminated (by the occupying foreign forces)"
"destroying traditional Korean culture"
"(American) running dog, Syngman Rhee" (주구 이승만)

3. References to Moral Character:

"atrocious"
"savage"
"inhumane"
"deceptive"
"wicked scheme"
"greedy"
"sinister desire"
"rude, arrogant"
"devilish"

4. References to Health Care or Food shortages/Spreading Disease or Germs/Forced labor:

"unvaccinated"
"without medical treatment"
"starving"
"germ-spreading"

5. Personal/Insulting Name Calling:

"This bum" 이자
"Internal Security Pigs" 내무서원 놈
"Damned Officers" "Damned Japs" 장교 놈
"Kim Il Sung" "Kim Il Sung's phiz" 김일성 상판
"Syngman Rhee's army"
"Syngman Rhee's puppet army"
"Gangster, Syngman Rhee" 이승만 도배

6. Ideological Name Calling:

"Communist puppet regime"
"American Imperialists, the enemy" 원수 미제
"Communist traitors"

"Communist heads, boss, honcho" 공산당 두목

'Communist gangsters or thieves" 공산 도배

"American Imperialist robbers or robbers from the sky" 미국 공중 강도

"Communist dictatorship"

"Communist sympathizers"

"Big boss, big business"

7. References to Aggressive/Destructive/Abominable Behaviors:

"invader"

"aggressor"

"slaughtering or massacring innocent people"

"fratricide" 동족 살생

"forcing (you) to spy or confess"

8. References to Incompetence/Poor Performance/ Failure/Corruption/Stupidity

"incompetent"

"(be) bombed ferociously or helplessly"

"(fighting with) primitive means"

"silly"

"clumsy fighters"

"poorly equipped"

"(preoccupied with) political infights"

9. References to Class Struggle/Exploitation

"new landlord" 새 지주

"enslaving"

"exploiting"

"blood sucking"

"landlord of bureaucracy" 관료 지주

As shown in Table 3, the Communist leaflets characterized (more frequently than the U.N. leaflets) their enemy as war criminals, servers of foreign interests (or loathsome foreigners) and perpetrators of abominable behaviors. The U.N. leaflets, on the other hand, engaged in name calling by focusing on their enemy's moral character, incompetence--especially their vulnerability to bombing--, and class exploitation.

When the percentage figures of the nine categories for the total sample--i. e., the U.N. and Communist leaflets combined together--are examined, one realizes that the two adversary parties of the Korean conflict inflicted each other heavily with most negative references in the

TABLE 3: Types and Frequencies of Enemy References in U. N. and Communist Leaflet Campaigns During the Korean War

	U.N.	Communist	Total
1. War Acts/Terrorism	4.1% (11)	8.6% (10)	5.7% (22)
2. Subservient to Foreign Interests/Barbaric Foreigners	16.0% (43)	18.0% (21)	16.6% (64)
3. Moral Character	21.2% (57)	14.5% (17)	19.2% (74)
4. Health/Food/Disease	14.5% (39)	15.4% (18)	14.8% (57)
5. Personal/Insulting Name Calling	3.7% (10)	4.3% (5)	3.9% (15)
6. Ideological Name Calling	13.0% (35)	17.1% (20)	14.3% (55)
7. Aggressive/Destructive/ Abominable Behaviors	11.5% (31)	17.1% (20)	13.2% (51)
8. Incompetence/Failure/ Corruption/Stupidity	12.3% (33)	3.4% (4)	9.6% (37)
9. Class Struggle/ Exploitation	3.7% (10)	1.7% (2)	3.1% (12)
Total	269	117	386

categories of moral character, submissiveness to foreign influences, lack of provision in health care and food, ideology-based name calling such as

미제 앞잡이 or 역적 공산당

The prevalence and frequencies of those volleys of these linguistic symbols, exchanged during the Korean War, make one wonder to what extent they have laid a rather deep-rooted foundation for ideological stereotyping about "the other side" in the core consciousness of North and South Koreans. Furthermore, if indeed the linguistic volleys found in these leaflets epitomize what transpired in other forms of dialogue between South and North Korea in their 45-year long psychological warfare

campaigns, then it would not be too conjectural at all to predict that this regrettable name calling would emerge as major impediments to the future dialogue between the two divided nations.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this study was to identify the most prevalent propaganda themes that were underscored in the Korean War-era leaflet campaigns. Treating the identified themes in the forms of verbal and visual imageries as potential instruments of mutual stereotyping (or typecasting) in future contacts between the two former warring parties, this paper attempted to shed some light on the contextual meanings of the Korean War communication between the two nations. Undoubtedly the applied value of this approach would hinge upon to what extent the North-South Korean political dialogues could navigate around the particular communication context developed over that unfortunate period.

In terms of both the propaganda themes exploited and the specific linguistic expressions adopted to evoke particular images of the enemy, there appears to be rather strong evidence that both the U.N. and Communist propagandists made Koreans aware that the two nations were being used as political, ideological, military and cultural pawns by foreign forces. Expressions such as "puppet regime," "cannon fodder," "imperialist front serving the interests of Wall Street," or "the running dog, Kim Il Sung" constituted the most frequently expressed feelings of hostility. A derivative of this theme is, of course, hatred expressed against American and Chinese troops. "Imperialist enemy Yankees" [원수 미제 양키] "Chink" [중공 되놈] ("pompous Mr. Wang who used to pull handcarts") [양차 끌던 왕서방이 거드름 피우며. . .] are some examples of this wholesale ethnic hatred fostered during these leaflet campaigns. It is worth remembering that this hatred was encouraged when some American soldiers, especially during the early phases of the war, were openly expressing their frustration and perplexity in a foreign land by spitting out ethnic slurs. Their calling Koreans as "gooks," for instance, seems to have posed extreme political difficulties. This was shown in a New York Times report barely a month after the war broke out:

The United States troops who in the last weeks set foot in Korea long had been trained to fight but no one had expected them to go to Korea. . . . On a personal basis the G.I.'s are about the friendliest soldiers in the world. But they find Korea primitive. Almost invariably officers and men refer to the Koreans as "gooks"National pride burns fiercely in Korean breasts. As in China, nationalism has been one of the prime forces harnessed by the Korean Reds. . . . On several occasions U. S. soldiers have drawn pistols to force bewildered [Korean] engineers to obey their commands. . . . United States soldiers over and over display their inherent affection for children. They pause by the roadside to play with bewitching, bobbed-haired, button-eyed Korean youngsters. Some Korean passersby pause on the sidewalk to applaud when U. S. troops march by. **Fundamentally, however, the United States soldiers look down on their Korean allies and the latter, sensitive and proud, are quick to feel it.**"¹⁴

When these findings are placed in the broad context of Korean history, which has shown more than occasionally the nation's obsession with fear of foreign invasion or occupation, and also in the context of political-economic philosophies North Korea has practiced in the past 45 years, one cannot help but remain rather apprehensive about the prospect of smooth dialogue between North and South Korea, and the U. S. and North Korea as well. Even if a mutually satisfactory political arrangement is reached and the two nations see themselves united in the near future, whenever a new controversial policy is drawn up, whenever new economic plans are implemented, or whatever new cultural trends emerge, its legitimacy or adequacy --especially when it happens to contain ideological elements--would be debated within this "foreign domination," "enslavement," or "Yankee-(or Communist-)loving" context. Such an ideologically tilted, nationalistic dichotomous mode of mutual perception would indeed be extremely unfortunate for the future of a unified Korea, especially in this age of global consciousness.

Accordingly, any future North Korea-South Korea contacts or North Korea-U.S. dialogues would have to be carried out with the highest level of sensitivity to this contextual meaning of war-time communication. Tempting as it may be to impose this ideology-based, derogatory framework on the behaviors of "the other side," both parties would have to see the other's genuine yearning or aspiration for peace and national unity through thick layers of stereotyped images (some of which were clearly self-imposed).

One could justifiably argue that such a temptation would be much greater for North Koreans than for South Koreans in their formal and informal contacts due to the simple fact that "self-reliance" has been the core of the philosophy influencing the nation's political, cultural, social, economic and even technological modes of existence since its inception. The finding that the Communist leaflet campaigns were more likely than the U.N. leaflet campaigns--by almost six times--to incorporate History/Culture/Tradition themes adds to their likelihood of focusing on "subjugation to foreign interest," "self-reliance" and "independence" frameworks in various communicative contacts. Since the two nations went their own ways, North Koreans have been engaged in an "inward-looking" and "self-reflecting" search for their national identities, placing their distinct characters and differences from other nations as prime qualities of nationhood. South Koreans, on the other hand, have relentlessly pursued a path of Western-technology-emulation, which can be largely characterized as "outward-looking" and identification with a global consciousness. When the residues of feelings engendered by the war-time communication are combined with this basic difference in the way the two nations developed their self-images, it is not too difficult to predict a communication breakdown of monumental size.

South Koreans (and Americans to a greater extent) are not totally immune from making potentially similar mistakes in their communication with North Koreans. As shown in the result of "enemy-reference" analysis, the category in which the U. N. campaigns and Communist campaigns displayed the greatest difference was "References to Incompetence/Poor Performance/Failure/Corruption/Stupidity." The U.N. leaflet campaigns assigned almost four times greater importance to this category than the Communist campaigns did. If this disparity can be regarded as a reasonable basis for potential typecasting about one's enemy (especially for South Koreans), then it wouldn't be too conjectural at all to suspect that South Koreans are more likely to perceive their

Northern brethren in that framework. This war-time view of incompetent, backward and poorly-equipped Communists, when coupled with the fact that the recent decline of Communism is being largely perceived as a case of "failure" of production and distribution of Communist ideology, would pose serious impediments for South Koreans in reading clearly the sincere desires of their long-lost brothers and sisters.

In conclusion, the unsettling emotions as they were expressed in the war-time communicative acts, unless they are carefully navigated around, are likely to serve as powerful sources of mutual stereotyping and typecasting for Koreans. Conscious efforts to avoid those communicative time-bombs would have to be made at various levels--e.g., textbooks, mass media products and even personal conversations--if the people occupying the Korean Peninsula, especially after they are unified, are to sustain peace, unity and progress.

1 *The Concise Columbia Dictionary of Quotations*, (Columbia University Press, 1990), Microsoft Bookshelf 1992, s.v. "War: The war has already almost destroyed ..."

2 Winston Churchill, "Time, Calm, Industry and Vigilance", speech delivered at the House of Commons, November 3, 1953.

3 From The Art of War, as quoted in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, 16th ed., Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1992, p. 80.

4 Thum, G., & Thum M. , The Persuaders: Propaganda in War and Peace. New York: Atheneum, 1974, pp. 70-1; Halliday, J. & Cumings, B., Korea: The Unknown War, New York: Penguin Books, 1988, p. 206; Harris, E., The "un-American" Weapon, New York: M. W. Lads Pub., 1967, pp. 46-47.

5 Kim, J., "Western Susceptibility to the Communist Propaganda During the Korean War: Political Factors," a paper presented at the 78th Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Chicago, Oct. 29-Nov.1, 1992.

6 "The War for Men's Minds," editorial, The New York Times, July 6, 1950.

7 Pettee, G., "U.S. Psywar Operations in the Korean War," Technical Memorandum, Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, January 23, 1951, p. 13.

8 For an excellent review of the organizational structure of the U.S. psychological warfare units during the Korean war, see Linebarger, P., Psychological Warfare, New York: Arno Press, 1972, pp. 301-308. See also Pease, S., Psywar: Psychological Warfare in Korea 1950-1953, Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1992.

9 Psychological Operations, FM 33-1, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1987, p. 2-9.

10 Berger, C., "An Introduction to Wartime Leaflets," Technical Report, Special Operations Research Office, The American University, 1959, pp. 81-101.

11 Pette, p. 54.

12 Berger, C., pp. 21-25.

13 Harris, E., "Operation Strike" in Daniel C. Pollock (ed.), The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application, vol. 1, Washington, D. C.: American Institute for Research in the Behavioral Sciences. 1976, pp. 412-413.

14 Sullivan, W., "G.I. View of Koreans as 'Gooks' Believed Doing Political Damage," The New York Times, July 26, 1950, p. 1.