

November 9, 1967

**Note, UN Under-Secretary Nesterenko to
Secretary-General U Thant, Concerning Scope of UN
Command in Korea**

Citation:

"Note, UN Under-Secretary Nesterenko to Secretary-General U Thant, Concerning Scope of UN Command in Korea", November 9, 1967, Wilson Center Digital Archive, "International incidents and disputes - Korea - correspondence (603.1)," Executive Office of the Secretary-General, S-0196-0002-01, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN ARMS), New York, NY. Obtained for NKIDP by Charles Kraus. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/117125>

Summary:

Under-Secretary Aleksei E. Nesterenko relays to Secretary-General of the United Nations U Thant the reaction of representatives from Hungary, Cambodia, United States, Ghana, and Liberia to Secretary-General U Thant's 7 November 1967 address concerning the United Nations Command in Korea. The representatives commented on the scope of the United Nations Command in Korea and the United States' involvement in Korea.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO: U Thant
A: Secretary-General

DATE: 9 November 1967

THROUGH:
S/C DE:

REFERENCE: _____

FROM: A.E. Nesterenko, Under-Secretary
DE: Department of Political and Security Council Affairs

SUBJECT:
OBJET:

I am transmitting for your attention a note relating to the reaction of a number of delegations on the Statement of the Secretary-General on 7 November 1967 in reply to the inquiry made by the representatives of Poland and Hungary at the 1516th meeting of the First Committee concerning the United Nations Command in Korea.

Note for the Secretary-General

In connexion with the statement of the Secretary-General of 7 November 1967, in reply to the inquiry made by the representatives of Poland and Hungary at the 1516th meeting of the First Committee concerning the United Nations command in Korea, a number of delegations commented on this subject.

The representative of Hungary speaking at the 1522nd and 1523rd meetings of the First Committee expressed thanks to the Secretary-General for his statement and said that the information contained in this statement was very revealing. It clearly indicated that the United Nations had no direct action over the so-called U.N. forces in Korea, that the reports came in very infrequently, and the last ones were dated 1953, 14 years ago.

He stated, among other things: "The information given by the Secretary-General informs us that after 1953 a gradual withdrawal of troops took place. We have no detailed information, of course, and it seems that the Secretary-General has no adequate information either, as to the extent to which those forces have been withdrawn or which forces have been withdrawn and there is no indication as to the need for maintaining certain parts of the forces in that country."

The representative of Hungary pointed out that in the light of information received from the Secretary-General and the statement made by the U.S. representative his delegation came to the following conclusions:

"The foreign troops in South Korea are only from the United States; other countries have only liaison officers, which means one or two men altogether. After more than 10 years, for the first time now, the United Nations has received official information from the United States on the size of its forces in South Korea. Until now this information has apparently been withheld, even from the Secretary-General, since it is not contained in the information we received."

Further, "... the so-called United Nations troops never received any directives from the United Nations but only from the United States and so they were only carrying out the policy of the United States Government aimed at occupation of foreign territories."

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"No information whatsoever has been forthcoming on the activities of the so-called United Nations forces since the Armistice agreement was concluded. Thus the Commander is only responsible to the United States Government and not to the United Nations."

In addition, ".... in the information given by the Secretary-General we have seen the very careful wording on the use of the flag of the United Nations which was permitted to the armed forces in the course of the operations. There is no provision whatsoever for such use of the flag of the United Nations after the Armistice. Thus my delegation thinks that after the Armistice was concluded in Korea, the United States army had no right whatsoever to use the United Nations flag."

The representative of Hungary protested against the use of the United Nations flag by the United States armed forces in South Korea and requested the Secretary-General to make this view of the Hungarian delegation known to the United States Government.

The representative of Cambodia speaking at the 1522nd meeting of the First Committee pointed out: "the statement of the Secretary-General, read at the beginning of this meeting by the Under-Secretary, confirms once again that the United Nations has no authority over this command of the so-called 'United Nations Forces'."

Speaking on charges of a number of delegations that the United Nations command had failed to keep the United Nations informed of its activities in Korea, the representative of the United States stated at the 1523rd meeting of the First Committee that these charges could best be answered by referring to the statement made on behalf of the Secretary-General on 7 November 1967.

The representative of Ghana addressing the 1523rd meeting of the Committee said that his delegation had been very interested in having answers to questions raised by the delegations of Poland and Hungary at the 1516th meeting of the Committee and was disappointed at the long delay in providing them. He said further on that a preliminary study of the answers given in the statement of the Secretary-General could only leave members of the Committee with a feeling of disappointment at their limited scope. He concluded his comment with a remark that in the absence of fully documented and continuous answers to those questions his delegation could not but have some reservations about the effective

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United Nations control of the forces in Korea.

Without making any special reference to the statement of the Secretary-General the representative of Liberia spoke on the subject and pointed out that after twenty-two years of maturity the United Nations should have effective control over any forces operating under its flag. "Therefore we feel that the proper thing to do is to have an up-to-date report on the activities of the forces in Korea and to take the matter to the Security Council for study and perhaps to take more effective action in the matter."