

**Sahr Conway-Lanz, Ph.D., "Beyond No Gun Ri: Refugees and the U.S. Military in the Korean War," *Diplomatic History*, Jan. 2005.**

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(the excerpt), "Beyond No Gun Ri," pp. 58-59, *Diplomatic History* (1/2005):

"But there exists an account of the meeting that the Pentagon investigation and other inquiries have missed. On 26 July, the American ambassador to Korea, John J. Muccio, sent a letter to Dean Rusk, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs, about the refugee problem in Korea. The letter described the problem as having developed 'a serious and even critical military nature.' The letter told Rusk that the ambassador was writing because the military was 'necessarily' making decisions about the problem, and the implementation of these decisions had the possibility of repercussions in the United States. The letter described the military problems of clogged roads and infiltration that the movements of refugees caused. It then reported to Rusk that a meeting had been arranged by request of Eighth Army headquarters at the office of the South Korean home minister on the evening of 25 July to address this problem. The letter said that the administration and personnel section (G-1), the intelligence section (G-2), the provost marshal, and the Counter-Intelligence Corps of the Eighth Army staff were represented at the meeting along with the American embassy, the ROK Home and Social Affairs ministries, and the director of the National Police.

Muccio reported to Rusk his impression of the decisions made at the meeting, the same meeting that the Pentagon report claimed had clarified that refugees would not be shot. Muccio's letter listed the meeting's decisions, and the first read: 'Leaflet drops will be made north of U.S. lines warning the people not to proceed south, that they risk being fired upon if they do so. If refugees do appear from north of U.S. lines they will receive warning shots, and if they then persist in advancing they will be shot.' The letter also reported that refugees would be warned that no group could move south unless so ordered and then only under police control. All movement of Korean civilians had to end at sunset or those moving would 'risk being shot when dark comes....'

With this additional piece of evidence, the Pentagon report's interpretation becomes difficult to sustain. Instead of isolated misunderstandings, the communications log entry of the 8th Cavalry and the claims by interviewed veterans that 'orders' to shoot advancing refugees existed appear to be evidence that the understanding on shooting refugees was widespread across units and resided all the way up and down the chain of command from the Eighth Army headquarters to soldiers on the front lines. Other evidence that the Pentagon investigation uncovered lends support to the interpretation that this understanding was widespread across units....."