

Korean War and Medical Activity of Swedish Red Cross Field Hospital in Busan(Pusan)

1. Introduction

It is known fact that '16 countries' under the name of United Nations provided military support to aid Republic of Korea during the Korean War. However, besides 16 countries, it is relatively not known the activities of the Kingdom of Sweden, Norway, Republic of India, Republic of Italy that dispatched UN Medical Assistance with the purpose of humanitarian.

This thesis provides information about Swedish Red Cross Field Hospital(SRCFH) which overviewed Medical support of those 5 countries and especially activated the longest and with the most people in South Korea.

2. Participation of UN and 5 Countries

When North Korean troops invaded South Korea in June 25 1950, urgently convened The Security Council defined Invasion of North Korea as 'peace destructive action' and strongly asked for stoppage of military action and also withdrawal to above north latitude of 38 degree. Though, North Korea disregarded such resolution and did not cease war act. Therefore, reconvened Security Council (June 27th) adopt <Resolution of Military Assistance to the Republic of Korea> in order to recommend member countries to provide military support to South Korea. According to the resolution, 16 countries sent troops to

the UN.

On the July 1st, United States of America (USA) Army primarily arrived to Busan and on the July 7th, the Resolution which let USA have Unified Command; the jurisdiction authority of member countries military force and other groups aid. As a result, the president of USA at that moment, Harry S. Truman who received Unified Command from UN, nominated General Douglas MacArthur as Commander of Unified Command. On the July 14th Korean operation control authority was handed over to Unified Command and on the July 24th, United Nations Command which served as head commander of multi-national troops was established on the Tokyo, Japan.

Besides Military troops, 5 countries dispatched Medical Support Team in the purpose of Humanitarian. As Sweden informed support willingness to UN, on the August, Denmark and Italy notified theirs. On November, India and on March 1951, Norway determined to dispatch Medical Support Team. Accordingly, on September 1950, Red Cross Field Hospital of Sweden in Busan, on December, the 60th Parachute Field Ambulance Platoon of India in Pyeong-Yang (the capital city of North Korea), on March 1951, Danish Red Cross Hospital Ship (the Jutlandia) in Busan, on June 1951m Norwegian Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (NORMASH) in Eujungbu(의정부), and on October 1951 the 68th Red Cross Hospital of Italy in Yeongdeungpo(영등포) started medical support activities. Among those countries, Sweden and India were neutral nations, Denmark, Italy and Norway were alliance with USA, and Italy was not a member country of United Nation. Table below summarizes each countries activities.

Table 1. the UN Medical Assistance during the Korean War

	Country	Participants		Support form	Active Location	Active period
		Members	Total			

		in 1 turn				
	Sweden	170	1,124	Red Cross Field Hospital	Busan	1950 September - 1957 April
	India	70	627	the 60 th Parachute Field Ambulance Platoon	Pyeong- Yang, Daegu, Ga Pyeung, Munsan	1950 November - 1954 February
	Denmark	100	630	Red Cross Hospital Ship	Busan, Incheon Port	1951 March - 1953 August

3. Dispatch of Sweden and initial circumstances

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, which is eternally neutral country, informed Secretary-General that Sweden would dispatch field hospital, covering work-force and expanses to South Korea instead of dispatching military force to Unified Command in Korea under the July 7th UN Resolution. When Resolution regarding of dispatching field-hospital was passed on August 10th, Swedish government authorized dispatch preparatory to the Red Cross. Moreover, according to the record that Swedish government had informed Secretary-General the application of Geneva Convention, established in August 12th. 1949 in order to improve treatment of injured people at the land warfare, to their field-hospital duty, Swedish government seemed to emphasis humanitarian purpose of dispatching field-hospital as neutral nation.

August 10th, when the decision to dispatch Swedish Red Cross Field

Hospital was made, situation in the Korean Peninsula was in urgent. At the beginning of the August, the UN army was in the middle of deadly combat at Nakdong River (낙동강) line of defense to protect Busan Perimeter which occupies 10% of land of South Korea. West boundary of Nakdong River line of defense almost matches to present Daegu-Masan Expressway(구마고속도로), and its North boundary to Seoul-Busan Expressway(경부고속도로) which connects Geongju(경주) with Daegu(대구). While UN military force and Korean military enduring August at Nakdong River defense line, North Korean military force power sharply declined to 50-60%. Though, the number of injured has exponentially increased due to the delaying defense operation.

One hundred and seventy six people out of 600 volunteers in Sweden was selected to be dispatched and Dr. Carl-Erik Groth was appointed as a director of a field hospital. Swedish Red Cross completed preparatory just in 15 days, left Stockholm in August 24th and arrived Busan in September 23rd through USA.

On those days when Swedish Red Cross arrived, the Eighth United States Army camped at Daegu withdrew to Busan and Busan was only 50-100km away from the front line.

However, it was after Operation Chromite (September 15th) took effect. UN Command headquarters placed SRCFH to Busan and have the Eighth United States Army jurisdiction over (the decision was based on July 7th Resolution number 84 which assigned UN member countries to US Army)

Hospital construction began in Camp Hialeah bound, 10 km north from Busan harbor as Sweden government had planned ahead. But, demanding of more sickbed from UN command headquarters caused plan to be changed. Before arrival of the hospital in September 14th, director Dr. Groth came to an agreement, after having discussion with US Army 2nd Logistical Command, to install Hospital at Busan Commercial High School (1 km south to Camp Hialeah).

But, according to other record, it is possible that the plan to install SRCFH was determined 2 months ahead. At that time, the campus of the Busan Commercial High School (부산상고) was placed under requisition by UN commander in July 12th. At the beginning, it was used as temporary military camp and from late July, US Army constructing facility renovated 30 class rooms into hospital facilities.

In September 23th Saturday, SRCFH arrived in Busan port, but, equipment which was ported from the US arrived one day after. Unloading of the equipment was performed through day and night and completed in September 25th Monday afternoon. Ten of 2.5 tons trucks and approximately 300 packages transported to main building of the Busan Commercial High School. The clinic opened on the Monday 6 50 PM; 68 patients went through.

SRCFH had 2 inpatient wards, 16 sick rooms, diagnosing rooms and operating rooms. In addition, on the school field, Quonset Building which contained Dormitory for nurses, admission rooms and canteen was assembled. At opening, the hospital had 200 sick-beds and 169 Swedish workers of 92 medical faculties, 76 administrative faculties and 1 priest. Besides of Swedish, 200 people of Korean was employed at the hospital as handymen, securities, sweepers etc. It was nearly impossible to translate Swedish in Busan at the time, therefore, Mr. Byeong Ho Cho (조병호) who was a English teacher at the Busan Commercial High School translated English until the hospital pulled out. One other Korean middle school student Young-Woo Han(한영우) who was a refugee from Seoul worked as a part time translator.

Table 2. Medical Faculties at the opening

Department	Name
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Director	Carl-Erik Groth (45) Surgeon
Doctors/Surgeons (9)	Gerhard A Rundberg (47) Hygiene-Epidemiologist Björn N E Hildebrand (41) Neuro/Psychiatrist Ivar Spak, (32) Surgeon Karl R Grunewald (29) Psychiatrist N Arne Åström (28) Surgeon Jarri A Wetterfors (28) Surgeon/Gynecologist Anders G Karlén Lars E T Hedwall Sven O Björlin
Dentist (1)	Bo Platon
Pharmacist/Assistant	Arne C G Pilz and 1
Nurse	Ester Svensson (Director of Nursing) and 16
Nurse Assistant	Kerstin S Svensson and 13
Radiology Technicians	Ingvar E G Jarnald and 2
Medical Assistant	Josef E Johansson and 44
Sum	92

Captain Groth, the director of the hospital, participated in Winter War as a military doctor in SRCFH, supporting Finland. In 1945, He experienced Military

medical system in US and became the key person of the Swedish military medical system after served as the chairman of Hospital Bureau in Sweden. After returning to Sweden after having finished service for South Korea, He revisited South Korea as a member of diplomatic committee of Scandinavia in 1959. At that time, he was at the position of a Rear Admiral Royal Swedish Navy. And later, He promoted to Surgeon General of Sweden.

Ms Svensson, dispatched as a director of Nursing, was already a very experienced nurse in the field of surgery. And other experienced doctors and surgeons in the field of surgery, pediatrics, Psychiatrics etc were dispatched. In addition, Interestingly, Hygiene-Epidemiologist also worked at the opening of hospital.

Facility for Radiology was run since the opening of the hospital. Additionally, Dental assistant was dispatched in 1951 July, Dental nurses and assistant in 1951 November. Physical therapists was also dispatched since 1952 October. Pediatric nurses, fully worked to save Children was dispatched in 1954 January (after cease fire). At the opening the hospital, the chief military director of the hospital was Captain Nyby, N Gunnar. Although Faculties' regular service term for the facility was 6 months, there were some faculties who re-volunteered for another dispatch or elongated 1 or 2 years of their service term.

September 1950 when the hospital was opened, the war situation changed severely. In September 15th, Operation Chromite (인천상륙작전) was successfully operated and only in few days, Seoul, the capital of South Korea was recovered by UN forces. At the same time, the defensive force of UN in the Busan perimeter began great counterattack. In the early of October, original territory, which was south of 38 line, was recovered. Due to big battles, many injured soldiers sent back to Busan. SRCFH expanded to 400 sick-beds in early October and later to 600 sick-beds.

Field Hospital is defined as a temporary hospital facility which is set near to the front line so that it can be moved depends on the circumstances. Normally, the Field hospital should follow the front line. However, SRCFH remained in Busan until the final withdrawal in 1957. At the first plan, the SRCFH should have moved to North Korea depending on the front line near Heungnam (흥남) or Wonsan (원산). But the retreat of UN force in January 4th, 1951, the hospital was not able to relocate. Finally, the roll of hospital changed from the field hospital to evacuation hospital. As a result, the injured soldiers who were transported via air or train to Busan and admitted to SRCFH. Some of soldiers who were severely injured transported via air or hospital ship to Japan or US.

In autumn of 1950 , the UN force moved to North Korea. Therefore, Busan was far from the front line and UN force took advantage in war circumstances. As a result, the number of injured soldier influx to the hospital declined. But, Since the China communist heavily counterattacked Korean peninsula, the UN forces retreated and simultaneously, the number of injured soldiers drastically increased. The first winter after the war begin caused many cold injuries. The first intended mission of SRCFH was to support UN soldiers. But, regardless of nationalities of soldiers including both Koreans and even Chinese Soldiers, SRCFH performed their best humanistic works. It was possible because the Sweden is neutral nation and the Host of the hospital was Red Cross.

4. Relief Activities of SRCFH

From July 10th, truce negotiation meeting has started. Therefore, the number of wounded soldiers radically decreased and lessened burden of hospital. In 1951 summer, Front line recovered its location as the war started and suffered from deadlock. From June 1st 1951 to June 30th 1952, for 13 months, the number of hospitalized civilian is estimated to be 900, the number of treatment performance

approximately 23,000, Radiation filmed people 7,800 and the numbers of photos to be more than 10,000.

Most of wounded civilians were severely wounded who were transported from civilian hospitals in Busan area. At that time, most of civilian hospitals in Busan were going through difficulties. As soon as the war began, a number of medical doctors volunteered to join the army, which resulted lack of doctors and lack of supplies lowered the condition of medicine and medical equipment. On the other hand, SRCFH's medical supplies were consistently fulfilled by the Swedish Red Cross.

Therefore, SRCFH had enough resources such as medicine and blood. In addition, many well-known doctors volunteered to come to Korea for treatment and performed amazing medical practice.

As time goes by, Scale of civilian medical treatment greatly expanded; SRCFH nurses stayed at Busan Korean Rail System Hospital in Busan (부산 철도 병원) and Jeokki Hospital (적기 병원) to help civilian getting proper treatment. From 1951 fall, once a week, Doctors from SRCFH performed treatment to Korean wounded civilians and instruct medical techniques to Korean doctors. Moreover, Severe wounded were able to be sent to SRCFH. From May 1952, Independent clinic was run in order to treat outpatients.

April 1953, Sickbeds for tuberculosis patients were newly established. Tuberculosis patients who used to be treated outside or only be sent to civilian hospitals were then able to occupy 5 sickbeds and were taken care before after surgery. However, from October, whole barrack which can contain 25 people turned into exclusive tuberculosis ward. This ward was always full and cost of treatment was always free obviously. Later, Doctors showed great passion in eradicating tuberculosis by demonstrating local BCG inoculation campaign.

July 27th 1953, when Armistice agreement was concluded, SRCFH changed

its name to Swedish Hospital in Pusan. However, for about a year, free treatment for injured soldiers, war refugee, destitute went along. From 1954, Swedish Hospital in Pusan mainly focused on treatment for civilian and in May 1955, after accepting redemption request from the Busan Commercial High School, it relocated its placement to the National Fishery University (국립부산수산대학교) campus.

At this time, though, SRCFH was still controlled by the Eight Army of US, its main patients were civilian. It established 'general hospital system'; having 150 sickbeds with outpatients treatment. According to statistics, most of call patients out of 53,000 out patients annually suffered tuberculosis and parasite disease. In order to treat increased number of Korean patients, 11 doctors and 35 nurses of Swedish medical team cooperated with 19 doctors and 40 nurses of South Korean medical team. Furthermore, SHP also had biggest scale of blood bank and provided 5,870 pint only in 1955.

However, according to public opinion of Sweden that it is against the spirit of Red Cross continue to stay on the country after the war is over, Swedish Hospital in Pusan closed in March 1957 and left Korea in April. Sweden Hospital spent 6 years and 6 months in Pusan, 1,124 Swedish worked at the hospital and treat more than 2,000,000 injured from 20 countries.

However from then on, pediatrician Dr. Aino Vainola who worked at the hospital and nurse Kerstin Persson cooperated with Korean doctors to vanish tuberculosis from South by conducting tuberculin examination and BCG vaccination at many hospitals and orphanage. From April 1957 to September 1958, total number of 61,172 had tuberculin examination and 24,983 of those people were vaccinated BCG.