



—UPI Photo.

THE PANTOMIME AT PANMUNJOM

By BASIL ATKINSON

PANMUNJOM is really too long for a dateline but the word slips easily off the tongue or typewriter. It sounds friendly, euphonious, almost melodious. But a name can mislead. Panmunjom in Korea is the essence of cold hostility. Men in yellow or red armbands pass silently by. They may stop to glare at one another, but they do not speak. The men in yellow armbands are mostly big men; the men in red armbands are invariably little men. Their skins are white, black or brown, but their attitudes are uniform: grim, unsmiling, businesslike, determined, tough. Here man shows no sympathy or feeling for his fellow-man if his armband is of a different color.

Nowhere else in the world where people of different ideologies meet is there this same open contempt. Nowhere else does the boiling point appear to simmer so constantly and ominously. Panmunjom is unique.

A visit to "Checkpoint Charlie" in Berlin can be a chilling experience, too, but here there are compensating factors. The glumness of the guards contrasts sharply with the joyous scenes 100 yards

away when brother is reunited with brother or mother meets son or grandson. And, conversely, the scenes are equally tragic when parting time comes and the farewells are being exchanged. With East German and West German there is emotion. There is love and feeling which a barbed wire border or a brick wall have failed to stifle. There is no such emotion at Panmunjom.

THE Chinese, too, are on different sides. The guns still pound away with monotonous regularity between Nationalist China's battered but defiant island fortress of Quemoy and the Communist shore batteries on the mainland only a few miles away.

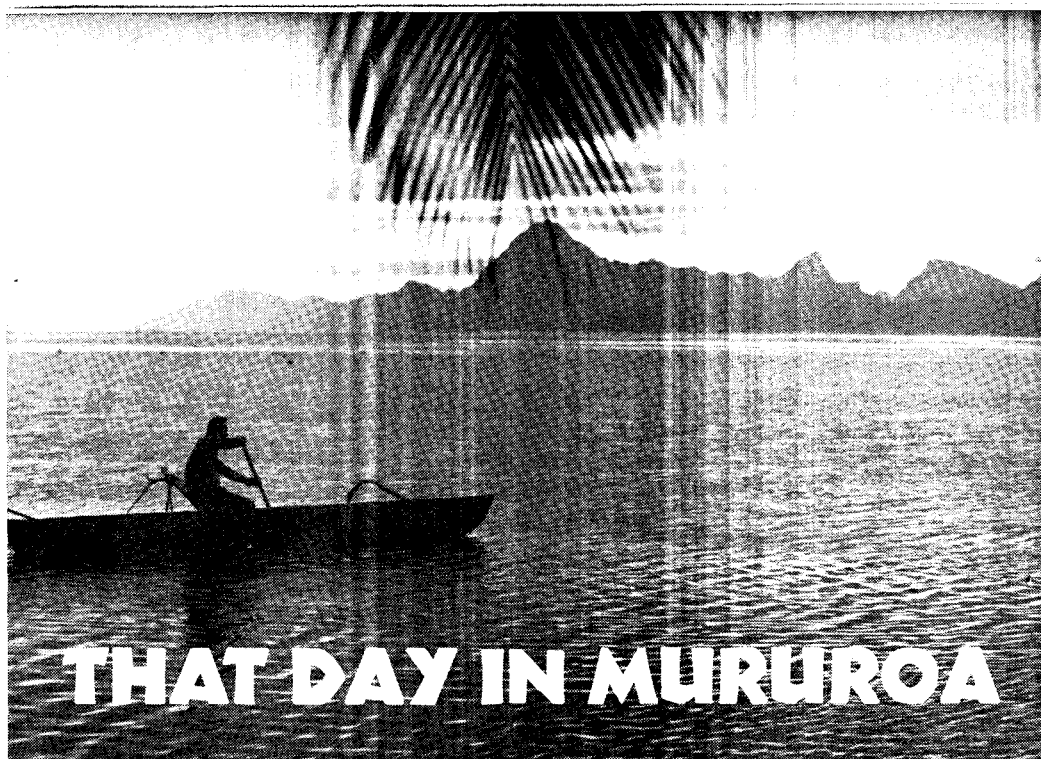
This is more than target practice. People still die from these shells although it has been happening for so long now—sixteen years—that it has ceased to be news. There is no love here. Quemoy, like Matsu, the other off-shore island a little further to the north, has become a symbol to the people of Taiwan, 120 miles to the east, and to millions of overseas Chinese and others who are opposed to Communism. But there is something sporting about this little war, nevertheless. A few years ago the Com-

munists announced that they would shell only on odd-numbered days and, by mutual consent, there is a general cease-fire so that both sides can take time off to enjoy the Chinese New Year.

There is no respite from the grimness at Panmunjom. Even on festive occasions the faces are set just as firm and silently. The Americans put up a Christmas tree last year hoping it might bring some cheer. Instead, it brought a charge that it had been put there for purposes of provocation.

Officially, Korea is still in a state of war. A peace treaty has never been signed, although the armistice has lasted since July 27, 1953—the longest cease-fire in history. Panmunjom is the place where the peace is being kept. It sits precariously on the 38th Parallel at the western side of the demilitarized zone which winds 151 miles across the Korean peninsula. This zone, which was the line of ground contact between the opposing forces at the moment of cease-fire, has now grown thick with underbrush and is about two-and-a-half miles wide stretching to the east to just below the 39th Parallel. The center of the strip is marked every few hundred yards

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THAT DAY IN MURUROA

—Fred Lyon (Rapho-Guillumette).

By E. BUZZ MILLER

Within the vastness of the Pacific Ocean lies one of nature's most beautiful and perhaps most unseen works of art—seventy-eight low coral islands known to map makers as the Tuamotu Atolls, and to sea-faring men as the "Dangerous Archipelago." It is these mounds of coral sand and coconut palms that have moved the pens of such men as James Norman Hall, Jack London, and, later, James Michener, who was compelled to record: "When the great seas pound on the reef, when the stars shine down upon the lagoon, there is a mysterious, fragile something that no amount of misrepresentation can destroy. . . . On a lonely atoll . . . good men find loveliness, weak men find evil."

PAPEETE, TAHITI.

THERE ARE NO streetlights in Tahiti, and that momentous Monday morning, before the sun came up, the pre-dawn was dark and heavy with chill. What with the "Maraamu" blowing, it was even cooler than usual. The Maraamu is a strong, southeasterly wind, and when it blows up it will stay for five to eight days.

It was a calm morning except at Faaa Airport. The brightly lighted terminal building, which had been opened in early 1964 "to assist in the promotion of tourism," was filled with loud conversation in rapid French by a large group of men in white shirts, a mode of dress rarely seen in Tahiti except at weddings or funerals. Shouting commandants shouted to other shouting commandants and waved their arms. The commandant for the CEP (*Centre d'Expérimentation du Pacifique*—roughly equivalent to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission) approached with a "bonjour," and invited me to meet the only other English-language journalist on the tour—the Sydney correspondent for Reuters. We ordered coffee, and the commandant turned to

me. "You know, you are the first and only American to visit Mururoa, and the last before the experiments begin," he said. I asked if there was any particular significance to the honor. His answer was cryptic: "Well, you're here," he said.

We boarded the awaiting DC-6B. The *Force de Frappe*, de Gaulle's name for the atom bomb task force, was going ahead with some help from America, after all. The sign in the front of the cabin, like the sign in the front of all cabins of DC-6B's in the United States, flashed in perfect English: FASTEN SEAT BELTS, NO SMOKING.

We passed gracefully over Tahiti's famed Pointe Vénus and the towering spire of Tahiti's volcanic center. Sunrise began now and created a spectacle below so stunning the Parisians were awed to silence. One hour away from Tahiti, we passed over the first of several perimeter atolls of the Tuamotu group. The airborne breakfast was a large cup of Nescafé, two small rolls, and jelly still in a carton labeled "Carriage House Cherry Jelly—San Jose, California."

It was only after *le petit déjeuner* had been served that I discovered that General Jean Thiry was aboard. He is chief commander of all French nuclear activities, a sensitive man, who spoke mostly of the beauty of the islands and of the birds he fed when he first came to Hao. "Now they're gone: too many people; scared them away," he said. Of the tests he spoke only guardedly, answering pointed questions with "no comment," the only words he admitted knowing in English.

We were about twenty-five minutes into the Tuamotu Archipelago when I spotted a large, oval-shaped isle. My thoughts drifted to the three months I had spent living the relaxed, carefree Paumotu way of life. It had been exactly two years since I had ventured to Rangiroa to bathe in the daily sun at the edge of the pounding surf, to fish in waters filled with every