

NEWS FROM KOREA CUT OFF FOR HOURS

Army's Taking of Equipment, Atmospheric Conditions Lead to a Long Blackout

By The Associated Press.

Korean war news began flowing again last night after a blackout for half the day.

Radio reception conditions improved on some channels and Tokyo dispatches again became receivable in the United States. This made possible resumption of Korean war coverage from General MacArthur's headquarters.

An Associated Press correspondent, Don Huth, got through to Tokyo from United States Eighth Army headquarters in Korea under circumstances not immediately clear.

His dispatch, filed at 10:45 A. M. Sunday, Korean time (8:45 P. M. Saturday, Eastern daylight time), was timed many hours after Tokyo reported that the Eighth Army had removed telephone and teletype lines used by correspondents between advanced headquarters and Tokyo.

Radio transmission of press and commercial messages to and from the United States and Europe and South America also was disrupted. A Western Union spokesman said an atmospheric disturbance—the aurora borealis or Northern Lights—was responsible for the Atlantic blackout. He said it lasted about half an hour.

An Associated Press correspondent, in a brief telephone call from Korea just before the line was taken down, quoted United States officers as saying that the equipment was needed by the military elsewhere.

Correspondents had been either telephoning or teletyping their stories from South Korea to Tokyo, where they were relayed by radio to the United States.

The natural blackout fell about 12 noon Saturday, Eastern daylight time. Reception had been bad for several hours before the complete interruption of signals.

Radio telephone communication with Tokyo failed about the same time as radio signals. There is no trans-Pacific underwater cable connection between the United States and Japan.

Army officers in Korea did not explain where they intended to use the telephone and teletype equipment.

The correspondent in Korea said the removal of telephone and teletypes in Korea had been under way for two days. The last press telephone line, located in a correspondent's billet, was taken away after a reporter literally had sat on it.

Brig. Gen. George I. Back, signal officer for Gen. Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo, explained the Army's action as being "necessary to thin out the Signal Corps equipment" at United States Eighth Army headquarters

in Korea "to provide some auxiliary communications for other points."

Most correspondents on the scene were convinced signal officers had done their best to take care of the situation.

"We would prefer to turn the whole problem over to commercial agencies," General Back said. "They are equipped to handle direct transmission from Korea to the United States over portable equipment."

Army officials in Washington said one commercial company, Press Wireless, Inc., had received permission to handle news dispatches from Korea. He said efforts were being made to have Press Wireless equipment flown to Korea.

Army officials estimated, however, that it would take two weeks for the equipment to be flown to Korea and placed in operation.

During the early days of the seven-week-old war, correspondents also were hampered by communications difficulties. For several days only one telephone line was available between the battle zone and Tokyo.

In recent weeks, however, the situation had improved to such an extent that a dispatch filed by one correspondent from the front was sent to Tokyo, relayed to the United States and signed off on news wires in this country within eight minutes.