

MOVES ON PUEBLO HINTED IN KOREA

Swedish Envoy's Activities
Indicate Mediation Effort

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SEOUL, South Korea, Feb. 27—There were growing indications today that the mission to Korea by the Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan, Lieut. Gen. Lennart Finnmark, is more than routine.

The indications seemed to support speculation that his purpose was to mediate between North Korea and the United States for the return of the crew of the Pueblo, the captured American intelligence vessel. Some informed observers suggested that he was studying the situation and would simply report to Stockholm on the possibilities of mediation.

General Finnmark arrived here last Wednesday, ostensibly to become the new chief of Sweden's delegation to the



Associated Press

Lennart Finnmark

Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, an inspection group set up to assist the military Armistice Commission. He has been given the rank of lieutenant general on a temporary basis.

But today it was disclosed that Rear Adm. Nils Erik Odman would arrive next month as scheduled to replace the retiring chief delegate, Maj. Gen. Gunnar Smedmark. General Smedmark's six-month term on the commission expires March 26.

Swedish officers at Panmunjom, the truce village in the demilitarized zone, said that General Finnmark was on a temporary assignment and would return to Pakistan as Ambassador when he finished. They said they did not know how long he would stay.

He Will Serve as Chief

Col. Mircu Rolf, Sweden's alternate chief delegate on the commission, said that General Finnmark would be chief delegate as long as he stayed, but that Admiral Odman would be ready to take over as soon as General Finnmark left.

The unusual arrangement seemed to lend support to the reports that General Finnmark had come on a mediation mission to free the 82 crew members who survived the seizure of the Pueblo on the high seas by the North Korean Navy Jan. 23. One member of the crew died.

Last Saturday a South Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said that he understood that mediation was the purpose of a meeting General Finnmark had Friday with Maj. Gen. Pak Chung Kuk, the senior North Korean member of the Military Armistice Commission.

A Swedish officer, however, described the meeting as a routine courtesy call. He said General Finnmark had "no function other than what derived from his position as the Swedish member of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission."

Specific Purpose Indicated

General Finnmark is the first man of ambassadorial rank to represent Sweden on the commission since 1957. Explaining this, the Swedish aide said, "In light of the present situation in Korea, the Swedish Government felt that it was natural to revert to the old practice of having a diplomat head the mission."

Nevertheless, the report of Admiral Odman's pending arrival indicated that General Finnmark was here for a specific and limited purpose, and speculation mounted that it had something to do with the Pueblo.

The speculation seemed further supported by General Finnmark's unusual round of calls to senior officials of South Korea, the United States and other Governments yesterday and today.

The calls go far beyond those usually paid by a new chief delegate to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, diplomats here said.

North Korea Accuses U. S.

TOKYO, Feb. 27 (AP)—North Korea accused the United States today of "causing obstacles" in the negotiations at Panmunjom and said the American attitude had created an "extremely tense, grave situation."

The statement carried special weight because it was issued through the North Korean Foreign Ministry. Similar accusations often are carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.