

JAN 31 1973  
**South Korea Hails  
 Returning Soldiers  
 As Pullout Is Begun**

NYTimes — JAN 31 1973

Special to The New York Times

SUWON, South Korea, Jan. 30 — The first contingent of South Korean troops withdrawn from Vietnam after the cease-fire returned home today to a heroes' welcome.

The 125 officers and enlisted men, led by Maj. Gen. Kang Won Chae, deputy commander of the Korean forces in Vietnam for operations, arrived at the Suwon Air Force Base, 20 miles south of Seoul, aboard a chartered World Airways jetliner provided by the United States military.

All the remaining South Korean troops in Vietnam, numbering 37,000, are scheduled to fly home within the 60-day limit set for the withdrawal of foreign troops after the Viet-

nam truce. They are the largest foreign force still in South Vietnam.

The returning men included soldiers from the Tiger Division, the White Horse Division and the logistic support command, stationed on the central coast of South Vietnam.

Thousands of citizens and students and military officials were at the airport here for a welcoming ceremony. The Deputy Minister of Defense, Yu Keun Chang, praised the troops for their "glorious battlefield victories," which he said had enhanced South Korea's international prestige.

South Korea sent its first combat troops to South Vietnam in October, 1965. Its military strength there once totaled 48,000 men. About 10,000 were brought home early last year.

Since 1965, a total of 310,000 South Korean troops have served in the war-torn country. They have suffered 3,700 men killed in combat and 8,300 wounded.