reserve. General Smith hoped his men could get some well-deserved rest after replacing elements of X Corps at Line Ready near Chunchon. An unusual exception was the 7th Marines, which was actually slated to participate in the drive north.

There was a small modification to the plan almost immediately. Instead of going into reserve, the 1st Marine Division (less the 7th Marines) was ordered to continue the attack. "This arrangement," noted General Smith, "gives me responsibility for 28,000 meters of front and I have for the time being no reserve." The 1st Marines became IX Corps reserve and moved back to Hongchon. The 5th Marines and the Korean Marines continued to move forward toward Line Ready. To do this the 5th Marines had to force a crossing of the Soyang River and seize Hills 734, 578, and 392 against moderate to heavy resistance. Once this was accomplished, elements of the U.S. Army's 7th Infantry Division took over, and the Marines began making their way back to the assembly area near Chunchon on the afternoon of 4 April for what promised to be five days off the firing line, the first real rest for the division since moving up from Pohang in mid-February.

On 1 April, the 7th Marines was placed under the operational control of Major General Charles D. Palmer's 1st Cavalry Division. The plan was for the division to advance about three miles from Line Dover to secure Line Kansas just north of the 38th Parallel. Colonel Litzenberg's regimental combat team, composed of the 7th Marines; 3d Battalion, 11th Marines; Company D, 1st Tanks; Company D, 1st Engineers; and various service detachments, was assigned the left (western) sector for the advance with specific

National Archives Photo (USN) 80-G-442505

Hospital Corpsman Richard De Wert, USNR

Born in 1931 in Taunton, Massachusetts, Richard De Wert enlisted in the Navy in 1948. Following "boot camp" and Hospital Corps training at Great Lakes, Illinois, he was assigned to the Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, Virginia. Attached to the 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Division, in July 1950, he participated in the Inchon, Seoul, and Chosin operations. On 5 April 1951, while serving with the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, on Hill 439 near Hongchon and the 38th Parallel, he gave his life while administering first aid to an injured Marine. His Medal of Honor award said, in part:

> When a fire team from the point platoon of his company was pinned down by a deadly barrage of hostile automatic weapons fire and suffered many casualties, De Wert rushed to the assistance of one of the more seriously wounded and, despite a painful leg wound sustained while dragging the stricken Marine to safety, steadfastly refused medical treatment for himself and immediately dashed back through the fire-swept area to carry a second wounded man out of the line of fire.
>
> Undaunted by the mounting hail of devastating enemy fire, he bravely moved forward a third time and received another serious wound in the shoulder, after discovering that a wounded Marine had already died. Still persistent in his refusal to submit to first aid, he resolutely answered the call of a fourth stricken comrade and, while rendering medical assistance, was himself mortally wounded by a burst of enemy fire.

The Secretary of the Navy on 27 May 1952 presented Corpsman De Wert's Medal of Honor to his mother, Mrs. Evelyn H. De Wert. The guided missile frigate, USS *De Wert* (FFG 45), bears his name.

— Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

instructions to keep the main supply route clear, protect the ferry site, and maintain liaison with the 6th ROK Division.

Colonel Litzenberg closed his command post at Hongchon and moved it to the assembly area near Chunchon. By 1000 on 2 April, the lead element of the 7th Marines, Lieutenant Colonel Wilbur F. Meyerhoff's 2d Battalion, had crossed the line of departure and was moving up Route 17 with the other two battalions in trail. The attack proceeded against very light opposition, and no Marine casualties were reported. The major holdup was the time it took to ferry the Marines across the Pukhan River. Army amphibian trucks took the men across. Most large vehicles were able to ford the river, and smaller ones used rafts operated by an Army assault boat detachment. By the end of the day all objectives had been secured. The next day's mission was to take an intermediate objective, Phase Line Troy. Again, all assigned objectives were reached, without enemy interference, by darkness on 3 April. The main stumbling blocks were torturous terrain, craters and debris blocking the road, and land mines.

The 6th ROK Division on the left moved up against virtually no opposition until it reached Line Kansas. Unfortunately, things did not go so smoothly in the 1st Cavalry zone of action where the enemy increased the pressure near the 38th Parallel and stubbornly held out in the hills south of Hwachon. While the 7th Marines had thus far encountered few enemy, the 7th and 8th Cavalry Regiments became entangled in a fierce slugging match and fell far

Truman Fires MacArthur

Fighting men in Korea, as were people all across the United States, were shocked to learn American President Harry S. Truman had relieved General of the Army Douglas MacArthur of his commands (Commander in Chief, Far East; United Nations Command; and Supreme Commander, Allied Powers) on 11 April 1951. This removal of America's longest-serving warrior turned out to be one of the most controversial military decisions in American history. The President was well within his constitutional authority to depose a field commander, but Truman's action initiated an acrimonious debate about both U.S. political leadership and America's proper role in world affairs that deeply divided the country.

This incident was the result of long-standing policy disagreements about grand strategy and the ultimate purpose of military action. General MacArthur sought an absolute commitment to victory and felt anything less than surrender by the Communists was an unacceptable outcome of the conflict. President Truman, on the other hand, believed that Korea was only one theater in the Cold War and insisted the Communists would be deterred in other arenas if the viability of South Korea could be maintained. In short, the general wanted a military victory akin to those that ended the two World Wars, but the leader of the free world viewed Korea as a limited military action intended to achieve very specific diplomatic aims without embroiling the world in global warfare. President Truman framed the essence of this dispute when he wrote about Korea: "General MacArthur was willing to risk general war; I was not."

The roots of the dispute began almost as soon as the United States became enmeshed in Korea. MacArthur bristled over what he considered political meddling in military affairs in August 1950, and then more frequently and more vociferously aired his views in public as time wore on. The U.N. commander felt he was being saddled by unrealistic restrictions and chafed at not being given the resources he needed to successfully fight the war. Controversial statements about these issues caused Truman to personally confront MacArthur at Wake Island in October 1950 and then led the President to issue several "gag" orders over the next few months.

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC353136

Gen Douglas MacArthur greets President Harry S. Truman on his arrival at Wake Island for their October 1950 conference. Within five months the President would be forced to relieve his Far East commander.

One problem was that MacArthur's track record with respect to Korea was enigmatic, one marked by brilliant successes offset by seriously flawed diplomatic and mil-

itary judgements. The general predicted, despite intelligence reports to the contrary, that China would not intervene in Korea; then, after his U.N. forces were roughly pushed out of North Korea, demanded measures well outside of the U.N. mandate (i.e. bombing Red China, blockading the Chinese coast, and intervention by Nationalist Chinese forces). His recommendations were immediately rejected by all allied nations even though MacArthur proclaimed failure to adopt his plan would mean the annihilation of the United Nations Command. MacArthur suffered a loss of face when his dismal forecast did not come true, but instead United Nations forces rolled back the enemy and regained the 38th Parallel without drastic measures in the spring of 1951.

The most egregious of MacArthur's forays into the diplomatic arena came when he purposely torpedoed secret peace feelers in late March 1951 by publicly taunting the enemy commander and threatening to widen the war. The near simultaneous publication of an earlier letter to Republican House Leader Joseph Martin, which many viewed as a thinly veiled attack on the Truman Administration that closed with the inflammatory statement, "There is no substitute for victory," finally brought the Truman-MacArthur controversy to a head. Thus, at half-past midnight on 11 April 1951, President Truman issued orders to recall General MacArthur.

This unexpected and seemingly rash act, spurred by the insensitive manner in which the relief was handled, created a firestorm on the home front. MacArthur returned from Korea a hero. He was welcomed across the country by an adoring public before he culminated his 52-year military career with a moving and an eloquent speech to Congress. MacArthur's popularity was at an all-time high as he enjoyed his final triumph—a gala ticker tape parade through New York City—before, like the old soldier in his speech, he "faded away" by dropping out of the public eye. On the other hand, Truman's action was so controversial that his popularity dropped to an all-time low. The President's opponents flamed the fires of public dissatisfaction with the war when they demanded public hearings. These were held, but did not turn out as expected. In the end, the Senate reaffirmed the President's right to dismiss a subordinate and surprisingly vindicated Truman's decision after equally venerated General of the Army Omar N. Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, asserted MacArthur's plan would have resulted in "the wrong war, at the wrong time, at the wrong place, and with the wrong enemy."

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behind schedule as they battled their way north. Still, a milestone was achieved on 4 April when a Marine patrol from First Lieutenant Orville W. Brauss' Company B became one of the first Eighth Army units to recross the 38th Parallel. The 11th Marines fired 17 missions hitting some enemy troops in the open and peppering suspected emplacements with excellent results, and a four-plane flight scattered an enemy column.

The next day, the Marines became heavily engaged and had to fight their way forward for the next 48 hours. On 5 April, the 1st Battalion met very stiff resistance. Automatic weapons and mortar fire pinned down two companies. The 2d Battalion likewise met stubborn resistance and had to call for tank support to overrun its objectives. Navy Corpsman Richard D. De Wert, serving with Company D, was mortally wounded after fearlessly exposing himself to enemy fire four times and being hit twice as he dragged injured men to safety at Mapyong-ni. De Wert was awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor for his actions. Ten very accurate close air strikes coordinated with artillery fire enabled the Marines to push forward late in the day. Good coordination between the assault and support companies (Captain Jerome D. Gordon's Company D, Captain Merlin T. Matthews' Company E, Captain Raymond N. Bowman's Company F, and Captain William C. Airheart's Company G) provided textbook examples of infantry fire and maneuver. The next day enemy opposition was less formidable, but First Lieutenant Victor Stoyanow's Company I took a beating when it became pinned by automatic weapons fire in some low ground which was also zeroed in on by enemy mortars. There was no air support available because of weather (low-lying cloud cover, high winds, and heavy rain), but artillery counter-battery fire, as well as American tank and mortar fires, eventually silenced the enemy guns. The enemy suffered about 150 casualties trying to hold out. The Marines lost five killed and 22 wounded.

On the afternoon of 6 April, the 7th Marines finally reached the Kansas Line after some tough fighting. Twenty Marines were wounded during the day, most by enemy 76mm fire but some to small arms and mortars. With the Kansas Line reached, the men of Colonel Litzenberg's regiment patiently waited for the 1st Marine Division to relieve the 1st Cavalry. General Smith received orders to do so on 8 April, and the relief was tentatively slated for the 10th. General Ridgway also told General Smith that the 1st Marine Division (less the 1st Marines in corps reserve) would then attack north to seize the northwest end of the Hwachon Reservoir. The situation did not look promising. The 1st Cavalry Division had been stopped by

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A131342

Generals meet along the central Korean fighting front. Pictured from left are MajGen Oliver P. Smith, USMC, LtGen James A. Van Fleet, USA, and MajGen William M. Hoge, USA. LtGen Van Fleet replaced Gen Ridgway as commander of the U.S. Eighth Army.

uncharacteristically fierce resistance and was stalled almost three miles from its final objective, and the Chinese still controlled the Hwachon Dam.

This situation became serious when the enemy opened some of the dam's sluice gates on 8 April sending a massive wall of water around the river bend and onto the Chunchon flood plain. Luckily, the low level of water within the reservoir and the fact that not all the gates were opened kept the damage to a minimum. Only one bridge was knocked out, although several other pontoon bridges had to be disconnected until the rising water subsided. In the end, this man-made flash flood only raised the river level about a foot downstream. Still, the pent-up waters of the reservoir represented a potential threat to future operations. Accordingly, seizure of the dam itself or destruction of the gate machinery became a high priority. Unfortunately, several Army ground attacks and a night raid failed to achieve that goal. The latter was a water-borne raid by Army rangers paddling rubber assault boats, not an amphibious assault as is sometimes claimed; and, contrary to some sources, no Marine units were involved in either the planning or execution. Failure to take or knock out the Hwachon Dam meant its capture unexpectedly became the next major Marine task for Operation Dauntless.

The Marines began arriving at the Kansas Line as scheduled on 10 April, but not all units were in place until two days later when Korean Marines relieved the last elements of the 1st Cavalry Division. Seizing the Hwachon Dam as well as securing the main supply route leading north to Kumhwa and reaching the Wyoming Line were now the objectives for an expanded Operation Dauntless. With this in mind, General Smith assigned his division an intermediate phase line. The Quantico Line included the heights overlooking the Hwachon Dam and the hills north of the village of Hwachon, while the exact positions held on the Marine left flank were to be tied to the advances made by the 6th ROK Division. This was the plan when the 1st Marine Division deployed along the line of departure. Then, Operation Dauntless was suddenly postponed.

Although a time of general tranquility on the Central Front, the break between operations was one of international tumult. Its root cause was President Harry S. Truman's decision to relieve General MacArthur of command. This unexpected announcement was greeted for the most part by stunned silence in Korea, but created a considerable stateside uproar known as "the great debate."

General Ridgway was named the new commander of United Nations forces and was in turn replaced as Eighth Army commander by Lieutenant General James A. Van Fleet, USA. A former football coach, 59-year-old "Big Jim" Van Fleet was an aggressive leader who favored expending fire and steel instead of men. A veteran of both World Wars and the general officer who had seen the most frontline combat in the European theater during World War II, Van Fleet had recently served with the Joint Military Aid Group that saved Greece from Communist insurgents. Like-minded Generals Van Fleet and Ridgway made a good team. This was fortunate because Ridgway had planned Operation Dauntless, but Van Fleet was going to have to carry it out. Obviously,

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A7862

After 10 days of patrolling and preparation of defensive works on Line Kansas, the 5th Marines resumed the advance toward Line Quantico.

the new commander needed a few days to "snap in" before leading a new offensive.

Van Fleet was greeted with some ominous news. In the wake of Operation Ripper intelligence officers began to grasp that another Communist offensive was near, the fifth such major effort since the CCF intervened in Korea the previous fall. Prisoners of war reported the attack could begin within one week, and captured documents claimed the ultimate goal was to eject U.N. forces from Korea after the Communists celebrated May Day in Seoul. To this end more than 700,000 CCF and NKPA troops had been amassed. The enemy's main force, 36 Chinese divisions, gathered inside the Iron Triangle. About half of the NKPA divisions were also poised to strike in the east. Although the time and place of the expected offensive had been generally deduced, an unforeseen development—-a deep penetration of South Korean lines far from the enemy's planned main effort—-unexpectedly placed the Marines of the 1st Division in the center of the action, and the period from late April until mid-May featured a series of desperate fights and some intricate maneuvers that kept the enemy at bay until the Chinese Spring Offensive lost its momentum.

CCF Spring Offensive

Spring finally arrived in mid-April. The days were generally warm and sunny with the temperature reaching into the mid-60s. The nights were mostly clear and cool, but there was no longer the need for heavy winter clothing or arctic sleeping bags. All of the snow had melted, and patches of flowers were sprouting up among the scrub pines. And, although there were still a few April showers, the heavy rains let up and the mud was finally drying out.

Thanks to the high-level turmoil caused by the sudden change of command, the 1st Marine Division spent 10 quiet days on the Kansas Line before beginning Operation Dauntless on 21 April. The IX Corps objective was the Wyoming Line, but the Marines were also given an intermediate objective labeled Quantico Line, which included the Hwachon Dam and the meandering Pukhan River as well as Route 17 and a line of hills north and west of the village of Hwachon.

At 0700 on the 21st, the 1st Marine Division resumed the attack with the 7th Marines on the left, the 5th Marines in the center, the Korean Marines on the right, and the 1st Marines in reserve. The 5,000- to 9,000-yard advance, in the words of one regimental commander, was "made into a vacuum." Strangely, there was almost no sign of the enemy other than a few pieces of lost equipment and the ashes of a few cooking fires—the flotsam and jetsam left behind when any large body of troops moves out in hurry. Korean Marines made the only significant contact by killing one straggler and capturing another. About the only reminder that an unseen enemy was lurking nearby was a green haze of deliberately set fires that hugged the damp earth.

The lack of enemy activity was welcome, but it was also baffling. The front was eerily quiet, too quiet for many wary veteran Marines who felt something big was about to break. Lieutenant Colonel John L. Hopkins, commanding officer of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, thought this "strange atmosphere of silence . . . was much like the stillness which had preceded the first CCF attack on Yudam-ni on 27 November." This nearly universal feeling of unease along the front lines was supported by several ominous signs. Aerial observers suspected the enemy was up to no good, but could not be specific because the area was shrouded by smoke that masked troop movements. There were unconfirmed reports of several thousand troops on the move, but the Marines spotted no actual enemy. Enemy prisoners of war taken in other sectors indicated

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51

By 22 April the Marines had seized and held Line Quantico. To the north Chinese Communist Forces were poised to attack and the IX Corps zone was to be the target area for the attempted breakthrough. Heavy machine gun teams were the backbone of the defense.

that at least four CCF armies were poised to take on IX Corps, and they named 22 April as the date of the attack. A particularly disturbing bit of information was that the 6th ROK Division on the Marine left had opened a 2,500-yard gap, and all physical contact with that unit had been lost. Numerous patrols failed to find the elusive South Koreans. Consequently, on the eve of what appeared to be a major enemy effort the Marine western flank was dangling.

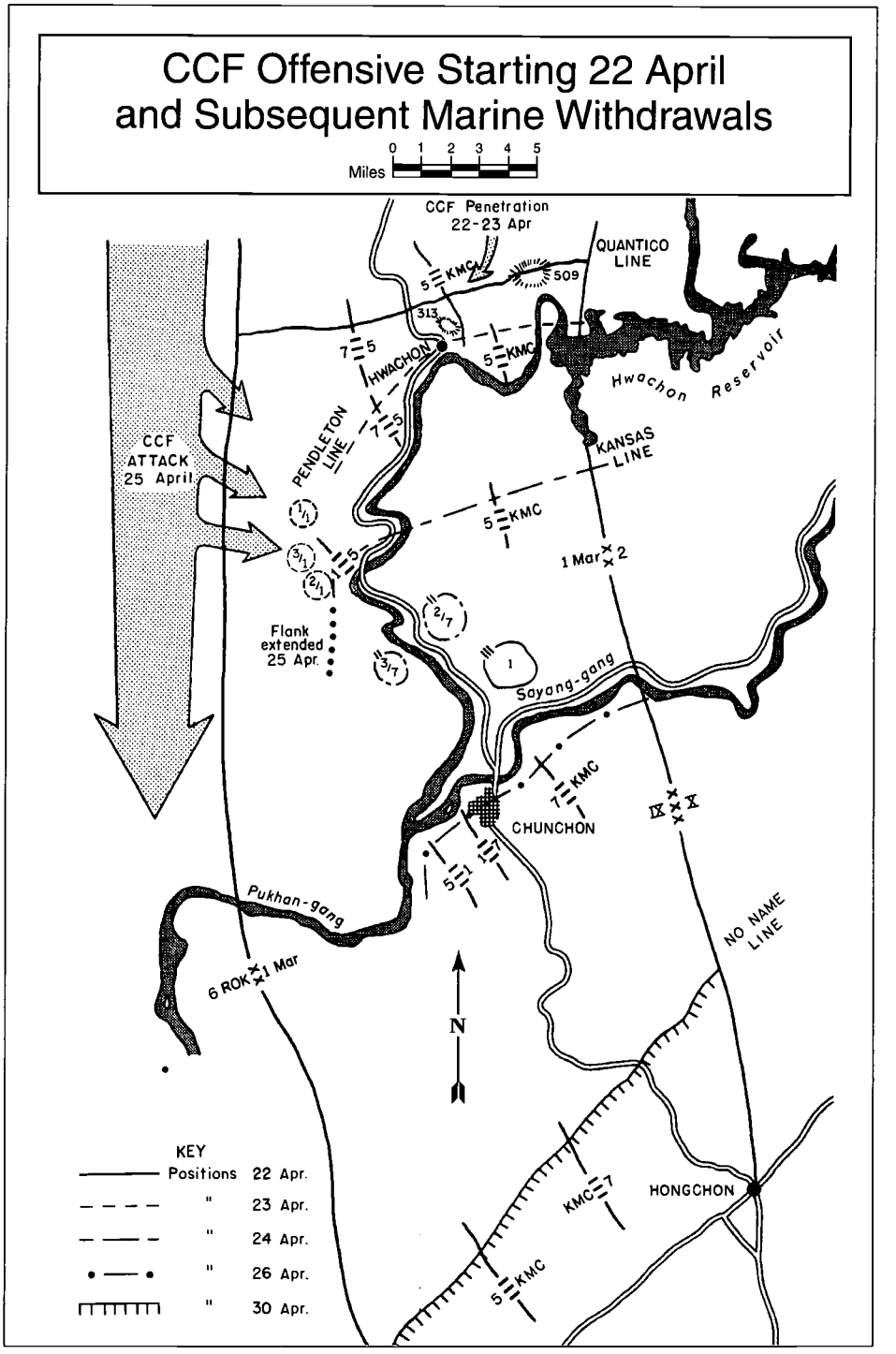
At 0830 on the morning of 22 April, preceded by low-flying observation aircraft and jeep-mounted ground reconnaissance units, the 1st Marine Division proceeded up the Chunchon Corridor west of the Hwachon Reservoir. Unlike the day before, however, this time the enemy harassed the Marine advance with small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire. Captain Robert L. Autry's Reconnaissance Company, aided by a tank detachment, entered Hwachon village under intermittent fire. They found more than a dozen badly wounded men left behind by the Communists and spotted several dozen more fleeing north. The 7th Marines, commanded by pre-war China veteran and World War II artilleryman Colonel Herman Nickerson, Jr., who had relieved the ailing Colonel Homer Litzenberg, advanced several miles on the left flank with only one man wounded. Air strikes hit suspected enemy assembly areas and possible field fortifications. The 5th Marines moved up Route 17 and occupied the hills on either side of a slender valley encompassing the village of Hwachon against moderate to heavy fire. Korean Marines seized the Hwachon Dam and the heights protecting it, but were then pinned down for a while by accurate enemy indirect fire. Total losses when the Marines reached Quantico Line were five men (two America and three Korean) killed and two dozen wounded (20 U.S. and four Korean).

At the end of the day, the 1st Marine Division was at the Quantico Line arrayed on a nearly straight line north and west of the Hwachon Reservoir with the 7th Marines, 5th Marines, and the Korean Marines from left to right. Two tank companies (B and C, in support of the 5th and 7th Marines, respectively) were forward deployed. The 11th Marines, reinforced by corps artillery (including the 8-inch guns of the 213th and 17th Field Artillery Battalions and the 155mm howitzers of the 92d Armored Field Artillery) was set up in the flat land just behind the front line troops. The Army guns were positioned near the west flank so they could reinforce either the ROKs or U.S. Marines as needed. Artillery ammunition trucks and prime movers jammed the narrow road making resupply and overland travel difficult. The 1st Marines was in reserve several miles away across the Pukhan River at Chunchon.

Enemy resistance seemed to be stiffening, but there was no reason for alarm as the Marines settled in on the night of 22-23 April. The evening promised to be crisp and clear with a full moon. At about 1800, General Smith issued instructions for the 1st Marine Division to continue its advance to seize the Wyoming Line at 0700 the next morning. These orders, however, were overcome by events three-and-a-half hours later. Although unrealized at the time, nearly 350,000 enemy troops were pushing silently forward between Munsan-ni in the west and the Hwachon Reservoir in the east. The CCF Fifth Phase Offensive was underway just as the enemy prisoners had predicted. Furious mortar and artillery barrages struck United Nations lines all across the

front before midnight. The first blows on IX Corps' front were not directed at the Marines, but at the shaky 6th ROK Division on their left, which was hit full force. That hapless unit simply evaporated as its frightened soldiers fled the field of battle. Facing only token resistance, the CCF *40th Army* was on its way south in full gear by midnight. Soon, a 10-mile penetration was created and the 1st Marine Division was in serious jeopardy. Some of the toughest fighting of the Korean War marked the next 60 hours, and the magnificent defenses of Horseshoe Ridge and Hill 902 were reminiscent of similar heroic Marine stands at Les Mares Farm in World War I and Guadalcanal's Bloody Ridge during World War II.

The dull mid-watch routine at the 1st Marine Division command post was interrupted when the duty officer was informed at about 2130 that the Chinese had penetrated South Korean defenses and were headed toward Marine lines. Not long after the message arrived the vanguard of a long line of demoralized South Korean army soldiers began filing in. By midnight, the Reconnaissance Company and Captain Donald D. Pomerleau's Military Police Company were rounding up stragglers and placing them under guard at the ferry site just south of the 5th Marines' command post. These dejected remnants of the 6th ROK Division reported their unit was in full retreat and further noted that thousands of enemy troops were rapidly moving south. Despite attempts to reconstitute the division as a fighting force, the 1st Division's liaison officer called and said: "to all intents and purposes, the 6th ROK Division had ceased to exist." This was alarming news because the Marine left flank was wide open, and the division's



main supply route and all crossing points of the Pukhan River were at great risk.

The first U.S. troops to confirm the disaster on the left were cannoneers from Army artillery units that earlier had been sent west to shore up the South Koreans. Elements of the battered 987th Armored Field Artillery came pouring back into the American lines after being ambushed. The ill-fated artillery unit had lost about half of its 105mm howitzers to the ambush, and the 2d Rocket Artillery Battery lost all of its weapons when its defensive position was overrun. As Lieutenant Colonel Leon F. Lavoie, commanding officer of the 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion acidly observed: "there had been more

Private First Class Herbert A. Littleton

On the night of 22 April 1951, radio operator Herbert A. Littleton serving with an artillery forward observer team of Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, sacrificed his life to save the lives of his team members.

Born in 1930, in Arkansas, he attended high school in Sturgis, South Dakota, where he played football and basketball and then worked for Electrical Application Corporation in Rapid City. Shortly after his eighteenth birthday, he enlisted in the Marine Corps, received recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, and additional training at Camp Pendleton before being sent to Korea with the 3d Replacement Draft in December 1950. His Medal of Honor citation read, in part:

> Standing watch when a well-concealed and numerically superior enemy force launched a violent night attack from nearby positions against his company, Private First Class Littleton quickly alerted the forward observation team and immediately moved into an advantageous position to assist in calling down artillery fire on the hostile force.
>
> When an enemy hand grenade was thrown into his vantage point, shortly after the arrival of the remainder of the team, he unhesitatingly hurled himself on the deadly missile, absorbing its full, shattering impact in his own body. By his prompt action and heroic spirit of self-sacrifice, he saved the other members of his team from serious injury or death and enabled them to carry on the vital mission that culminated in the repulse of the hostile attack.

Departmentt of Defense Photo (USMC) A46967

Private First Class Littleton's heroic actions were later memorialized at Camp Pendleton by a marksmanship trophy, a baseball field, and a street, all named in his honor.

— Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

artillery lost in Korea up to that point than there was lost in the whole of the European theater in the last war by American forces."

By 2224, the impact of the disaster on the left was apparent, so all plans to attack the next day were abruptly canceled. Units along the forward edge of the battlefield were placed on full alert with orders to button up tight. Commanders hurriedly sent out combat patrols to locate the enemy and to try fix his line of march, while the Marines at the main line of resistance dug in deep and nervously checked their weapons. In addition, Smith ordered Colonel McAlister to send Lieutenant Colonel Robley E. West's 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, up from Chunchon to tie in with the artillery and tanks located in the valley on the far west flank. West's battalion was soon on trucks headed for its new position, but the convoy could only creep along over roads choked with panic-stricken South Korean soldiers escaping the battle zone. Captain John F. Coffey's Company B led the way. At about 0130, while still 1,000 yards short of its assigned position, the long column of vehicles stopped at the tight perimeter formed by the 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion, which a short time before had established a road block, collected more than 1,800 South Koreans, and attempted by machine gun and bayonet with little success to deploy them to slow the Chinese advance. Moving west, Coffey's company assisted in the extricating the 987th Artillery's 105mm howitzers that were stuck in the mud. After as many guns as possible were freed, Coffey returned to friendly lines where the 1st Battalion was manning a wooded semi-circular ridge with Captain Thomas J. Bohannon's Company A on the right, Captain Robert P. Wray's Company C in the center, and the 81mm mortars of First Lieutenant Wesley C. Noren's Weapons Company on relatively level ground in the immediate rear. Company B was promptly assigned the battalion left flank.

The enemy began probing Marine lines around 2300 on 22 April and then mounted an all-out assault to turn the Marine flanks about three hours later. The 7th Marines on the left was the hardest hit U.S. unit. Enemy mortar, automatic weapons, and small arms fire began at about 0200 on the 23d. This reconnaissance by fire was followed by a very determined ground assault an hour later. Shrieking whistles, clanging cymbals, and blasting bugles signaled the onslaught. Up and down the line grizzled veterans of the Chosin Reservoir walked the lines to settle down young Marines who had not yet experienced a terrifying "human wave" ground assault. Noncommissioned officers force-

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51

Near the Quantico Line, a Marine 75mm recoilless rifle crew opposes the Chinese Communist attack on 23 April. Recoilless rifles provided long-range pinpoint accuracy, but were light enough to be carried up and down Korea's mountainous terrain.

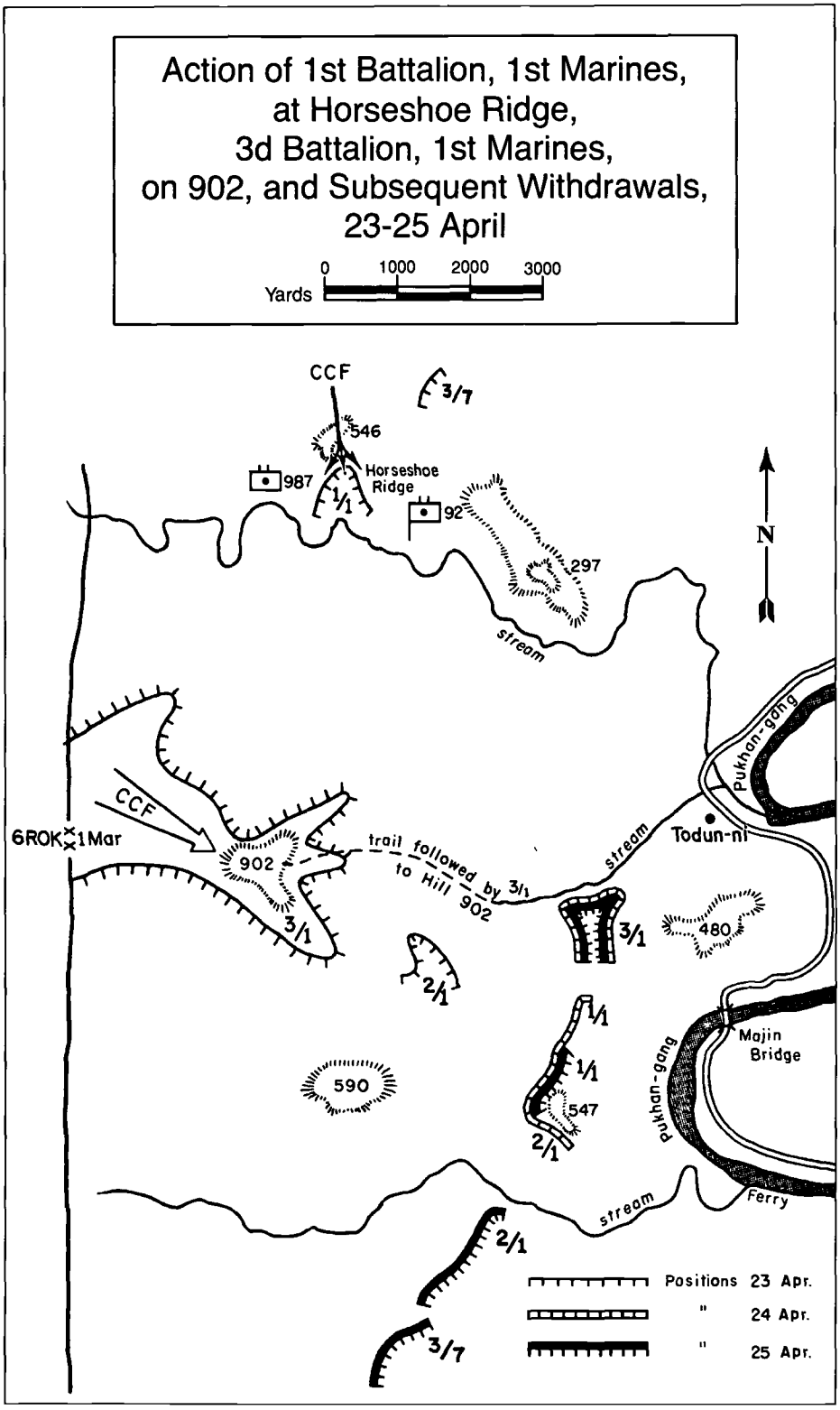
fully and profanely reminded their charges not to use grenades until the enemy was close at hand, and more than one of them tried to calm the new men by remarking about the frightening cacophony: "Those guys sure could use some music lessons!"

At least 2,000 enemy troops hit Major Webb D. Sawyer's outmanned 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, full force. That attack by the CCF *358th Regiment, 120th Division*, primarily directed at Captain Eugene H. Haffey's Company C and Captain Nathan R. Smith's Company A, was repulsed by hand-to-hand fighting that lasted almost until dawn. Private First Class Herbert A. Littleton, a radioman with the forward observer team attached to Company C, was standing the mid-watch when the enemy appeared. He sounded the alarm then moved to an exposed position from which he adjusted supporting arms fires despite fierce incoming machine gun fire and showers of enemy grenades. Forced back into a bunker by enemy fire, Littleton threw himself upon a grenade to save his comrades in that crowded space at the cost of his own life. He was awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor for his selfless actions that night. Heavy fighting—much of it grenade duels and close quarters combat—lasted several hours. Enemy mortar fire and small arms continued throughout the night and into the next day. As always, supporting arms were a critical Marine advantage. The 11th Marines ringed the endangered position with a wall of steel, and Marine tanks successfully guarded the lowland approaches.

In the division's center, Chinese infiltrators silently slipped through the 5th Marines' outpost line to occupy Hill 313. A futile counterattack was quickly launched, but despite tremendous heroism (three Marines received the Navy Cross for their actions) the assault platoon was held in check and suffered heavy casualties. It was not until the next morning that elements of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 5th Marines, retook the hill. At around 0300, Korean Marines on the right came under heavy attack in the vicinity of Hill 509. The stalwart Koreans threw back successive enemy attacks throughout the long night and had ejected the enemy by the next morning. Particularly hard hit was a single

rifle company of the 1st KMC Battalion holding the left flank. The 150-man company was reduced to only about 40 men ready for duty by daylight.

The timely arrival of the reserve 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, eased the pressure on Major Sawyer's 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, and solidified the division west flank, but fierce fighting continued into the next morning. The Chinese, well aware that they would be pounded from the air during the day, hurriedly retreated as the first rays of light began to creep over the horizon. Eight Marine Corsairs swooped over the battlefield guided onto their targets by aerial observers flying vulnerable OY observation aircraft; Marine Fighter Squadron 323 flew in support of the 5th Marines while Marine Fighter Squadron 214 worked over the Chinese in the 7th Marines' zone. The retreating enemy was slaughtered by this blitz from above. Enemy casualties by all arms were estimated to be well above 2,000 men. By noon on the 23d, it was obvious the Marines had won the first round, but it was also obvious that the fight was far from over. For his skillful and aggressive leadership in securing the division's vital flank, Major Sawyer, the recipient of two Silver Stars for the Chosin Reservoir campaign, was awarded a Navy Cross.



Although the Marines held fast and remained a breakwater that stemmed the onrushing Red tide, the Chinese were still pouring through South Korean army lines. "The position of the 1st Marine Division was beginning to appear to some persons," noted Major Martin Sexton, "very similar to the situation at the Chosin Reservoir." On the Marine left a deep envelopment threatened. As a result General Hoge ordered the 1st Marine Division to fall back. Consequently, General Smith passed the word for his units to retire to new defensive positions on the Pendleton Line at 0935. This would be no small feat. The enemy threat was so great that Smith was forced to place the entire 1st Marine Division on the high ground north of the Chunchon Corridor to protect the vital Mujon Bridge and several ferry crossings. This was a bold move because the Marines would have an unfordable river at their back and there was no division reserve in place. It also required a complex set of maneu-

National Archives Photo (USN) 80-G-429642

A Bell HTL-4 light helicopter waits for a badly wounded Marine to be loaded on board for a trip to a rear area hospital. These bubble-top aircraft saved lives by cutting the amount of time it took seriously wounded men to get to medical attention.

vers whereby the Marines would have to defend the Pukhan River line, and at the same time move back to Chunchon. General Smith would have to carefully coordinate his supporting arms as well as effect a passage of lines under fire. Air and artillery would keep the enemy at bay while armor and the division's heavy weapons protected the avenues of approach and the river crossings. Smith's plan was to give ground rapidly in the north while slowly pulling back in the south, letting his westernmost units alternately pass through a series of blocking positions. Engineers would finally blow the bridges once the rear guard made it over the river. A key element was the Marine aviators whose fighter-bombers would be guided onto their targets by airborne spotters to delay enemy pursuit. All hands were called upon to contribute during this fighting withdrawal. Cooks, bakers, and typists—even a downed pilot—were soon shouldering M1 rifles or carrying stretchers under fire. Just as at the Chosin Reservoir, the creed that "every Marine is a rifleman regardless of his military occupational specialty" saved the day.

General Smith wanted to form a semi-circular defense line that arched southwest atop key ground from the tip of the Hwachon Reservoir west for a few miles then bending back along the high ground abutting the Pukhan River and over looking the Chunchon Valley. To do this he immediately ordered the rest of the 1st Marines forward from Chunchon to hold the hills in the southwest while in the north he instituted a "swinging gate" maneuver whereby the Korean Marines anchored the far right, the 5th gave ground in the center, and the 7th Marines pulled back in echelon to link up with the 1st Marines

Fighting continued throughout the day. In the west, the 7th Marines had its own 3d Battalion and the attached 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, to cover the retrograde. The hard-hit 1st Battalion pulled back covered by fires from the 2d Battalion. Major Maurice E. Roach Jr.'s 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, seized some fiercely held high ground while Lieutenant Colonel Robley E. West's 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, fought off repeated enemy probes that lasted until nightfall. Units of the 1st Marines held the southernmost positions. The remaining two reserve battalions had moved out of their assembly areas that morning, crossed the Pukhan River, then occupied a pair of hills protecting the main supply route and several crossing points. Actually, the arrival of the 2d and 3d Battalions, 1st Marines, was a close run thing. The Marines had to virtually race up the hills to beat the Chinese who were also on the way to take what was obviously the most important terrain feature in the area. Hill 902 (actually a 4,000-foot mountain top) dominated the road to Chunchon and protected the concrete Mojin Bridge as well as two ferry sites. Its defense became the focal point of the Marine retrograde. In the center, Colonel Richard W. Hayward's 5th Marines moved back under scattered small arms and mortar fire, but encountered no enemy ground units. On the division right, Korean Marines pulled back and then dug in just before being ranged by enemy mortar and artillery fire. Unfortunately, the 1st Marine Division's line was fragmented, not continuous, with units of the 1st and 7th Marines holding widely separated battalion-sized perimeters located atop key terrain. The 11th Marines, reinforced by several Army artillery battalions, was busy registering defensive fires as night fell on 23 April.

That day also marked the first mass helicopter medical evacua-

tion in history. All of VMO-6's Bell HTL-4 "bubble top" helicopters (able to carry two litter cases and one man in the observer seat) were airborne at first light. Fifty critically wounded men were flown out by these Marine "egg-beaters" between 0600 and 1930. A total of 21 sorties (22.6 flight hours) were made from Chunchon to the front lines then back to the 1st Medical Battalion collecting and clearing station. Every flight encountered some type of enemy fire, but there were no losses of aircraft or personnel. Captain Dwain L. Redalin logged 9.7 flight hours while carrying 18 wounded men to safety. First Lieutenant George A. Eaton accounted for 16 more evacuations. The final flight had to be guided in with hand-held lights because the airfield had been officially blacked out. Ground personnel and flying officers alike were formed into provisional platoons and assigned defense sectors in case the enemy broke though, and all excess material and equipment was loaded on trucks for movement back to Hongchon that night.

On the night of 23-24 April, the 1st Marines caught the brunt of the CCF *120th Division* attack. In the north, the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, still under the operational control of Colonel Nickerson's 7th Marines, was dug in on Horseshoe Ridge. This was a key position which, if lost, would split the 1st Marine Division wide open and allow the enemy to defeat it in detail. Farther south, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 1st Marines, manned separate perimeters on Hill 902 overlooking the flat lands of the Chunchon Corridor. These positions constituted the last line of defense, and if they were lost the division would be surrounded and cut off. In short, the situation that night was as desperate as any in

Technical Sergeant Harold E. Wilson

Born in 1921, in Birmingham, Alabama, Harold E. Wilson enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve and was assigned to active duty in April 1942. During World War II, he served 27 months overseas stationed on Midway Island. In addition to his Pacific service, he was stationed at Parris Island, South Carolina; Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; and Portsmouth, Virginia. Sergeant Wilson was honorably discharged in 1945.

Recalled to active duty in August 1950, he was assigned to Company G, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, and participated in the Wonsan landing and was wounded during the Chosin Reservoir Campaign. In March 1951, he was awarded a Bronze Star Medal for "fearless and untiring leadership" of his platoon. While serving as a platoon sergeant, his bravery on the night of 23-24 April 1951 brought an award of the Medal of Honor, with a citation that read, in part:

> Wilson braved intense fire to assist the survivors back into the line and to direct the treatment of casualties. Although twice wounded by gunfire, in the right arm and the left leg, he refused medical aid for himself and continued to move about among his men, shouting words of encouragement. After receiving further wounds in the head and shoulder as the attack increased in intensity, he again insisted upon remaining with his unit. Unable to use either arm to fire, and with mounting casualties among our forces, he resupplied his men with rifles and ammunition taken from the wounded.
>
> After placing the reinforcements in strategic positions in the line, [he] directed effective fire until blown off his feet by the bursting of a hostile mortar round in his face. Dazed and suffering from concussion, he still refused medical aid and, despite weakness from loss of blood, moved from foxhole to foxhole, directing fire, resupplying ammunition, rendering first aid and encouraging his men.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A46634

Following the April 1951 action, Wilson was evacuated to the Yokosuka Naval Hospital in Japan and five months later returned to the United States. He was awarded a meritorious promotion to master sergeant in 1951 and commissioned as warrant officer in 1952. After a number of assignments, he assumed the post of Adjutant, Marine Corps Engineer Schools, Camp Lejeune, in December 1962, and a year later, was assigned to Force Troops, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, serving as adjutant and personnel officer of the 2d Tank Battalion.

During the Vietnam War, Chief Warrant Officer Wilson served with Marine Aircraft Group 13 prior to being assigned as the 6th Marine Corps District's personnel officer in November 1968. He retired from the Marine Corps in 1972 and died in Lexington, South Carolina, on 29 March 1998.

— Captain John C. Chapin, USMCR (Ret)

the history of the Marine Corps.

The Marines were hit by artillery, mortar, small arms, and automatic weapons fire all through the night. The 1st and 7th Marines on the left flank were probed as Chinese forces searched for crew-served weapons positions and weak spots in the line. The four-hour fight for Horseshoe Ridge began at about 2000. There, the men of the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, managed to blunt an attack by the CCF *358th Regiment* in savage hand-to-hand fighting. Farther north, the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, repelled enemy probes all night long. As part of that action, the "Redlegs" of the Army's 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion acquitted themselves well by repelling a dawn ground attack using machine guns and direct fire artillery to eliminate several hundred enemy troops, while continuing to deliver fire for the hard-pressed Marines on Horseshoe Ridge. Marine M-26 Pershings from Lieutenant Colonel Holly H. Evans' 1st Tank Battalion eventually joined the hard-fighting cannoneers, scattering the enemy with deadly flat-trajectory fire. Enemy stragglers were cleared out by joint Army-Marine patrols before the Army artillerymen displaced to new positions.

The enemy's main thrust that night, however, was directed farther south where the CCF tried to turn the open Marine flank but instead ran headlong into Lieutenant Colonel Virgil W. Banning's 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, atop Hill 902. A series of full-scale assaults began at about midnight. The CCF *359th* and *360th Regiments* repeatedly crashed into the 3d Battalion's exposed perimeter, but all efforts to eject the determined defenders were unsuccessful. After enemy mortars pounded Banning's Marines for several hours a "human wave" ground assault almost cracked First Lieutenant Horace L. Johnson's Company G. That this did not happen was a tribute to the actions of Technical Sergeant Harold E. "Speed" Wilson. Despite being wounded on four separate occasions, he refused evacuation and remained in command of his platoon. Unable to man a weapon because of painful shoulder wounds, Wilson repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire while distributing ammunition and directing tactical movements even though he was hit several more times. Wilson was later awarded the Medal of Honor for his stirring leadership that night. The Marines took heavy casualties during fierce hand-to-hand fighting, but the Chinese were unable to dislodge them. At 0930 on 24 April, the battered Marines were almost out of ammunition and their ranks had been severely thinned, but they were still standing tall. The Chinese plan to trap and annihilate the 1st Marine Division had been a costly failure.

General Hoge ordered the Marines to pull back to the Kansas Line as part of a general realignment of IX Corps. This would not be an easy maneuver because it would require disengaging under fire and making several river crossings. To do this, General Smith had to restore tactical unity prior to movement. The 1st Marines was reunited on the morning of the 24th when 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, which had been hotly engaged while attached to the 7th Marines for the past few days, rejoined the regiment. Concurrently, the 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, conducted a fighting withdrawal protected by Marine, Navy, and Air Force air strikes and artillery fire by Marine and Army units. The battered 3d Battalion passed through the 2d Battalion and then both units fought their way back to the high ground covering the river crossing. The regiment was under continuous fire during the entire movement and suffered numerous casualties

A Marine 105mm howitzer battery near Sapyong-ni fires on suspected enemy positions. The guns of the 11th Marines rendered outstanding fire support regardless of time of day or weather limitations.

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51

enroute. At the same time, Major Roach's 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, set up farther south on Hill 696 to defend the Chunchon-Kapyong road as well as the southern ferry sites. This key position, the southernmost high ground, dominated the Chunchon Corridor and the Pukhan River and would be one of the last positions vacated. On the right, the 5th Marines and the Korean Marine battalion pulled back harassed by only scattered resistance. The resultant shortening of the division front allowed Smith to pull the 7th Marines out of the lines and use it as the division reserve. By the evening of 24 April, the 1st Marine Division's lines resembled a fishhook with the Korean Marines at the eye in the north, the 5th Marines forming the shank, and the 1st Marines at the curved barb in the south. The 7th Marines, less the 3d Battalion, was charged with rear area security and its 1st and 2d Battalions were positioned to protect river crossings along the route to Chunchon as well as the town itself.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A8030

MajGen Oliver P. Smith bids farewell to division staff officers before turning command over to MajGen Gerald C. Thomas, center, on 25 April. BGen Lewis B. Puller, the assistant division commander, would follow Smith a month later.

The 24th of April was another busy day for Marine aviators as well. First Lieutenant John L. Scott evacuated 18 wounded in his HTL-4 to become the high-rescue-man that day. Another HTL-4, piloted by First Lieutenant Robert E. Mathewson, was brought down near Horseshoe Ridge by enemy fire. Mathewson escaped unhurt, but had to wave off a rescue attempt by First Lieutenant Harold G. McRay because enemy fire was so intense. The downed pilot was promptly given a rifle and joined his fellow Marines as they broke out of the Chinese encirclement. Over the battlefield an OY observation plane flown by Technical Sergeant Robert J. Monteith, struck a Corsair in midair and crashed. He and his artillery spotter, First Lieutenant Roscoe F. Cooke, Jr., were both killed when their plane spun out of control, hit the ground, and burned.

The 1st Marines again bore the brunt of Chinese probes on the night of 24-25 April, but accurate close-in fires by 105mm and 155mm howitzers kept potential attackers at a distance. The 2d Battalion repelled an enemy company in the only major action of the evening. But the Chinese were still lurking in the west as became evident when patrols departing friendly lines in that area quickly struck an enemy hornet's nest the following morning. One such patrol was pinned down less than 200 yards from friendly lines. Another platoon suffered 18 casualties and had to be extricated from an ambush by tanks. On the other hand, 5th Marines and Korean Marine scouts ventured a mile to the north without contact. Air and artillery plastered the western flank, but enemy machine gun, mortar, and artillery fire continued to hit Marine positions. In the 1st Marines' zone Chinese gunners found the 3d Battalion command post, wounding Colonel McAlister; Lieutenant Colonel Banning; Major Reginald R. Meyers, the executive officer; and Major Joseph D. Trompeter, the operations officer. Banning and Meyers had to be evacuated, and Major Trompeter took over the battalion. Colonel McAlister refused evacuation and remained in command of the regiment.

It was obvious the Chinese were biding their time until they could

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A8362

Marine infantry and vehicles start the long haul back to Chunchon, where they would defend along the south bank of the Soyang River until service units could move their large supply dumps.

gather enough strength for another try at the Marine lines. There was continual pressure, but the 11th Marines artillery harassment and interdiction fires, direct fire by Marine tanks, and an exemplary air umbrella prevented a major assault. Enemy action was limited to only a few weak probes and a handful of mortar rounds as the Marines moved back. The 1st Marine Division reached the modified Kansas Line in good order. Despite suffering more than 300 casualties in the last 48 hours, the Marines handled everything the enemy threw at them and still held a firm grip on the IX Corp right flank when the Chinese Fifth Phase, First Impulse Offensive ground to a halt.

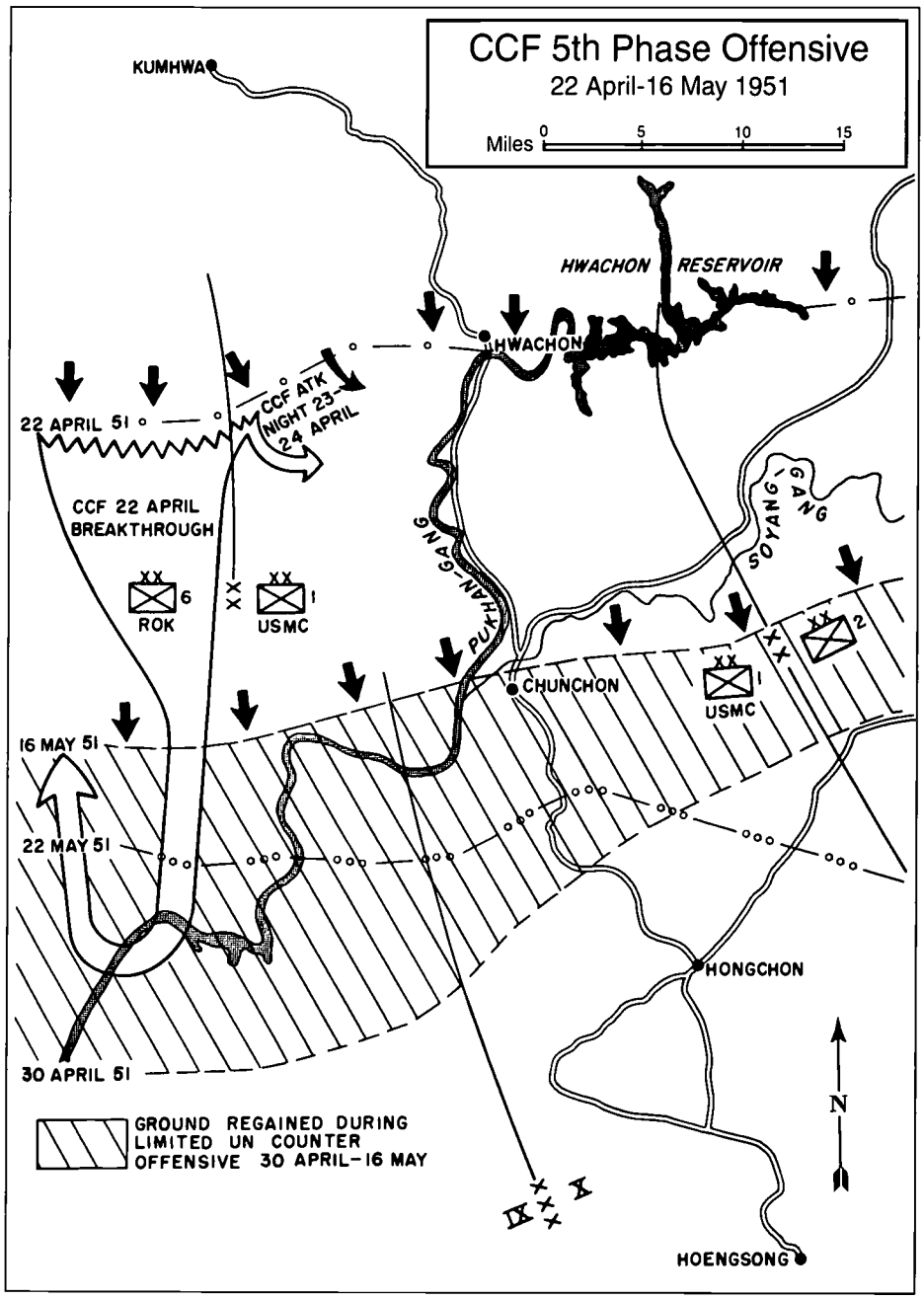
During this very brief break in the action a new division commander took over. Major General Gerald C. Thomas became the 1st Marine Division's commanding general at a small ceremony attended by the few available staff members on the afternoon of 25 April. Thomas had been awarded a battlefield commission in recognition of his outstanding combat performance during World War I, then pulled sea duty and fought in the Banana Wars between the World Wars. His experience as a highly respected staff officer in the Pacific during World War II prepared him to handle a division, and his post-war duties at Headquarters Marine Corps and Quantico gave him a good look at the "big picture" as well. Despite the hurried nature of the command change and the fact that it occurred in the midst of a complex combat action, the transition was a smooth one that did not hinder operations.

The first order General Thomas received was one no aggressive commander relishes. He was told to pull the 1st Marine Division back to a new position where Korean laborers were toiling night and day to construct a defensive bulwark. The Marine movement was no isolated withdrawal. All across the front, the United Nations Command was breaking contact in order to man a new main line of resistance known as the No Name Line. This unpressured retrograde marked a radical change in U.N. tactics. As will be recalled, upon taking charge of Eighth Army General Ridgway adopted mobile defensive tactics to deal with enemy attacks. Instead of "hold your ground at all cost," he instituted a "roll-with-the-punches" scheme whereby U.N. units traded ground to inflict punishment. To do this Ridgway insisted that his troops always maintain contact with both the enemy and adjoining friendly forces during retrograde movements. This time, however, General Van Fleet decided to completely break contact. He opted to pull back as much as 20 miles in places. There, from carefully selected positions, his troops could trap exposed attackers in pre-planned artillery kill zones at the same time air power pummeled ever-lengthening enemy supply routes. In hindsight, this sound combined-arms approach fully utilized United Nations Command strengths while exploiting enemy weaknesses, but at the time it befuddled many Marines to have to abandon hard-earned ground when there seemed to be no serious enemy threat. Such was the case when the 1st Marine Division was told to fall back to a section of the No Name Line located near Hongchon far to the south.

This movement would be done in two stages. The first leg of the journey was back to Chunchon where the rifle units would cover the support units as they pulled out. When that was accomplished the combat units would continue on to the No Name Line. Luckily, there was no significant enemy interference with either move. The initial departure began at 1130 on 26 April. The 5th Marines and Korean Marines retired first, followed by 1st Marines, with 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, attached. A curtain of close air support supple-

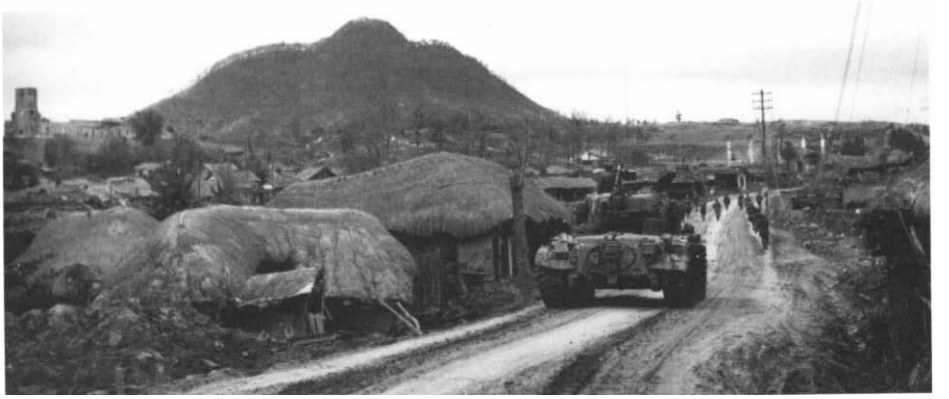
mented by rocket and artillery fires shrouded these movements. All units, except the rear guard, were safely across the meandering Pukhan River before dark. The last remaining bridge across the chest-deep river was blown up at 1900, forcing 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, and 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, to wade across the chilly barrier in the middle of the night. The movement back to Chunchon was completed by noon, and the Marines took up defensive positions along the southern banks of the Soyang River on the afternoon of the 27th without incident. The only enemy encountered during the pull-back was one bewildered Chinese straggler who had inadvertently fallen in with the Marine column in the darkness. Needless to say, he was more than somewhat surprised to discover himself in the midst of several thousand Americans when daylight came.

On 28 April, the second phase of the withdrawal began. The Marine retrograde was again unpressured, but it took three days to finish the move south due to serious transportation problems. Finally, on 30 April, the Marines settled in at the No Name Line with the 5th Marines on the left, the 1st Korean Marine Regiment in the center, the 1st Marines on the right, and the 7th Marines in reserve.



The month of April cost the Marines 933 casualties (93 killed, 830 wounded, and 10 missing), most lost during the First Impulse of the Chinese Fifth Phase Offensive. The enemy enjoyed some local successes, but overall their attacks fell far short of expectations. The U.N. counteroffensive had been stopped in its tracks, but what little ground the enemy gained had been purchased at a fearful cost; the CCF lost an estimated 70,000 men. The headlong U.N. retreat the Chinese expected did not materialize. This time there was no "bug out," to use a popular phrase of the day. Instead, most breaks in the line were quickly sealed, and the United Nations Command was holding firm at the No Name Line. By the last day of April, it was apparent to both sides that the Communists would not be parading through the streets of Seoul on May Day as their leaders had promised.

The first days of May were so quiet that no Marine patrols made contact. This temporary lull, however, was about to end because a Second Impulse Offensive was aimed at eastern Korea. To meet this threat, General Van Fleet redeployed his command. As part of this reorganization the 1st Marine Division was taken from IX Corps and was once again assigned to Major General Edward M. Almond's X Corps (it will be recalled that the Marines landed at Inchon, liberated Seoul, and fought their way out of the Chosin Reservoir as part of X Corps). This was easy to do because the 1st



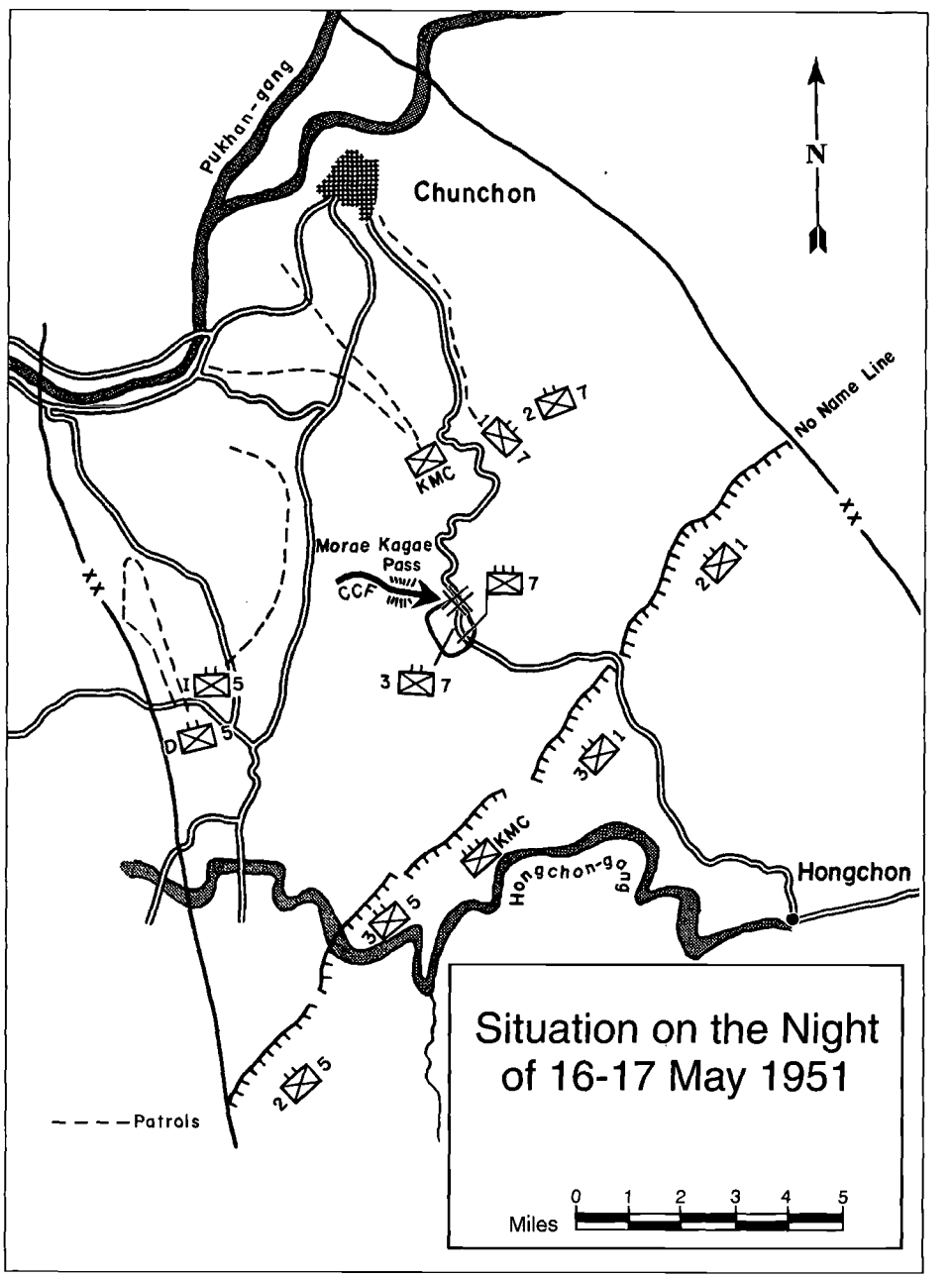
Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A155669

A tank-infantry patrol from 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, moves through the deserted city of Chunchon. The ebb and flow of Korean fighting ended when the U.N. lines stabilized after the Marines reached the Punchbowl in June 1951.

Marine Division was located on the IX and X Corps boundary. That imaginary line was simply shifted about 12 miles west, and only one battalion of the 5th Marines had to actually move. Other than that the only action required was to redraw the grease pencil lines on tactical maps.

The next two weeks were devoted primarily to improving defensive positions, but some tactical issues came to the fore. General Thomas was particularly disturbed by two Eighth Army orders. First, the 1st Marine Division was told to establish an "outpost line of resistance" to maintain contact with the enemy, provide early warning of a major attack, and delay the enemy advance as long as possible. Second, the 11th Marines was ordered to shoot a unit of fire each day whether there were observed targets or not. Thomas felt he could adequately cover his zone of action using aerial observation and long-range reconnaissance patrols, so he protested the placement of an entire battalion outside of 105mm artillery range. When told that the post must be manned, Thomas requested that an entire regiment be located at the exposed position. When this request was granted, he sent Colonel Nickerson's 7th Marines onto some high ground over looking the Chunchon Valley with orders to keep the road open and be prepared to fight its way out if the Chinese came down in force. Thomas also protested that shooting a unit of fire each day was a wasteful practice, one that would surely cause an ammunition shortage sooner or later. He was overruled in this case.

The expected Second Impulse of the Fifth Phase Offensive fell upon units of the Republic of



Korea Army in the east on 16 May, and soon a 30-mile penetration threatened the U.S. 2d Infantry Division on the Marine right. That night Chinese forces entered the Marine zone in regimental strength where the 5th Marines and the Korean Marines had several company-sized patrol bases well north of the main line of resistance in the left and center sections respectively. To the right, Colonel Nickerson's 7th Marines had Lieutenant Colonel John T. Rooney's 1st Battalion patrolling the Chunchon Road, 2d Battalion (now commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Wilbur F. Meyerhoff, formerly the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, commanding officer) manning the outpost, and Lieutenant Colonel Bernard T. Kelly's 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, holding Morae Kogae Pass—-a vital link on the road leading from the forward edge of the battle area back to the main front line. Well aware that whoever controlled the pass controlled the road, the Chinese made Morae Kogae a key objective. Under cover of darkness, they carefully slipped in behind the Korean Marines and headed straight for the pass, which they apparently thought was unguarded. The assault force unexpectedly bumped into the northern sector of the 7th Marines perimeter at about 0300 and a furious fight broke out. Within minutes the 11th Marines built up a wall of fire at the same time the infantrymen initiated their final protective fires. Burning tracer rounds crisscrossed all avenues of approach and exploding shells flashed in the night as Marine artillery pinned the enemy in place from the rear while Marine riflemen knocked them down from the front. In spite of the curtain of steel surrounding the Marine positions, the quilt-coated enemy closed the position. Amid the fierce hand-to-hand fighting First Lieutenant Victor Stoyanow led a counterattack to throw the enemy back out of Company I's lines. The critical battle for the pass did not end until daybreak when the Chinese vainly tried to pull back but were instead caught in the open by Marine artillery, mortars, and some belated air strikes. The Chinese lost an estimated 530 men. By actual count, they left behind 112 dead, 82 prisoners, and a wealth of abandoned weapons that included recoilless rifles, mortars, machine guns, and even a 76mm antitank gun. Marine losses in this one-sided battle were seven dead and 19 wounded.

Col Francis M. McAlister, left, extends congratulations to Col Wilburt S. Brown, as the latter assumed command of the 1st Marine Regiment.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A8654

The following day, 18 May, the 1st Marine Division performed a very tricky maneuver to readjust defensive dispositions that allowed the U.S. 2d Infantry Division to move east to reinforce its right flank which was bearing the brunt of the new Chinese offensive. The 7th Marines pulled back to the No Name Line to relieve the 1st Marines which then sidestepped east to take over an area previously held by the U.S. Army's 9th Infantry Regiment and the 5th Marines swung over from the far left flank to relieve the 38th Infantry Regiment on the extreme right.

By noon on the 19th, all four regiments (1st Korean Marine, 7th Marines, 1st Marines, and 5th Marines) were aligned from left to right on the modified No Name Line as the enemy's offensive lost its momentum. That same day, Colonel Wilburt S. Brown, an experienced artilleryman known throughout the Marine Corps as "Big Foot" because of his large feet, took over the 1st Marines. There was also a change at division headquarters. Brigadier General William J. Whaling—an avid sportsman and Olympic marksman who commanded regiments at Guadalcanal, New Britain, and Okinawa during World War

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A13555

A Grumman F7F Tigercat armed with napalm flies over North Korea seeking a suitable target. The twin-engine, single-seat, carrier-borne Tigercats were primarily used as night fighters, but sometimes conducted bombing and aerial reconnaissance missions.

II—became the assistant division commander on 20 May.

The final action of the Chinese Spring Offensive occurred at about 0445 on 20 May when Major Morse L. Holladay's 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, caught elements of the CCF *44th Division* in the open. The Marines on the firing line opened up with everything they had as Major Holladay directed rockets, artillery, and air support during a five-hour battle that cost the enemy 152 dead and 15 prisoners. This action marked the end of Marshal Peng's attempts to drive the 1st Marine Division into the sea. The enemy, short of men and supplies after the previous month's heavy combat, had finally run out of steam and was now vulnerable.

With the Chinese Fifth Phase Offensive successfully blunted, General Van Fleet was ready to shift back into an offensive mode to exploit what was clearly a devastating Communist defeat. The United Nations Command had come through the last month with relatively light casualties and for the most part had only ceded territory on its own terms. Many Marine veterans of both campaigns, however, later recalled that the hard fighting to hold the Pendleton Line was as desperate as any they encountered at the Chosin Reservoir. The 1st Marine Division not only weathered the storm, it had given the enemy a bloody nose on several occasions and performed many complex maneuvers well. Reiterating his experiences in Korea, General Smith said that blunting the Chinese counterattacks in April "was the most professional job performed by the Division while it was under my command." Likewise, by the time the CCF Spring Offensive ended General Thomas remarked that he commanded "the finest division in Marine Corps history."

Marine Air Support

Major General Field Harris' 1st Marine Aircraft Wing comprised of two aircraft groups, Colonel Boeker C. Batterton's Marine Aircraft Group 12 (MAG-12) and Lieutenant Colonel Radford C. West's Marine Aircraft Group 33 (MAG-33), and flew more than a dozen different aircraft types. Lieutenant Colonel "J" Frank Cole's Marine Fighter Squadron 312 (VMF-312), Lieutenant Colonel Richard W. Wyczawski's VMF-212, Major William M. Lundin's VMF-214, and Major Arnold A. Lund's VMF-323 all flew "old reliable and rugged" propeller-driven Chance-Vought F4U-4 Corsair fighter bombers. Lieutenant Colonel Neil R. MacIntyre commanded the "hottest" squadron, VMF-311, which flew Grumman F9F-2B

A VMF-323 "Death Rattler" F4U armed with 5-inch rockets and napalm readies for take off from the Badoeng Strait *(CVE 116). At least one Marine squadron was on board an aircraft carrier at all times during the spring of 1951, as this duty rotated among the Corsair squadrons.*

Photo Courtesy of LtCol Leo J. Ihli, USMC

1st Marine Aircraft Wing, 1951

Marine land-based tactical and support aircraft, except for the observation planes and helicopters attached to the 1st Marine Division, comprised the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in Korea. The wing had two aircraft groups (MAGs -12 and -33) that flew more than a dozen different aircraft types in 1951. Its most famous airplanes were World War II vintage F4U Corsairs and brand new F9F Panther jets, but also included in the combat aircraft mix were F7F Tigercat and F4U-5N Corsair all-weather fighters. Most Marine land-based aircraft were under the operational control of the U.S. Fifth Air Force, and the Joint Operations Center coordinated most air operations. Marine carrier-based aircraft, on the other hand, were under the operational control of the U.S. Navy task forces to which their respective carriers were assigned. A few utility aircraft (SNBs and TBMs) were assigned to headquarters squadrons. The aircraft of VMO-6 (OY "Sentinels," as well as HO3S and HTL helicopters) flew in direct support of the 1st Marine Division. Marine R4Q Packets and parachute riggers of the 1st Air Delivery Platoon supported the U.S. Air Force Combat Cargo Command. Marine transport planes (R4D Skytrains and R5D Skymasters) flew in support of the Naval Air Transport Service and the Combat Cargo Command.

1st Marine Aircraft Wing
- Marine Aircraft Group 33
- Marine Aircraft Squadron 12
- Marine Wing Service Squadron 1
- Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron 1
- Marine Fighter Squadron 212
- Marine Night-Fighter Squadron 513
- 1st 90mm AAA Gun Battalion
- Marine Night-Fighter Squadron 542
- Marine Fighter Squadron 323
- Marine Air Control Group 2
- Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron 2
- Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron 3
- Marine Fighter Squadron 214
- Marine Fighter Squadron 312
- Marine Fighter Squadron 311
- Detachment, Marine Transport Squadron 152

Supporting Naval Air Transport Service
- Marine Transport Squadron 242
- Marine Transport Squadron 152
- Marine Transport Squadron 352

Attached to 1st Marine Division
- Marine Observation Squadron 6

Panther jets. Lieutenant Colonel David C. Wolfe led Marine Night (All-Weather) Fighter Squadron 513 (VMF[N]-513) mounted in F4U-5N Corsair night fighters. The other night fighter squadron, Lieutenant Colonel Max J. Volcansek, Jr.'s VMF(N)-542, flew twin engine Grumman F7F-3N Tigercats. Wing headquarters had specially configured General Motors (TBM) Avenger single-engine torpedo bomber radio relay planes, F7F-3P and F4U-5P photo reconnaissance planes, Douglas twin-engine R4D Skytrain and SNB light utility transports. Major Vincent J. Gottschalk's Marine Observation Squadron 6 (VMO-6), flying Consolidated OY Sentinel light observation planes and Sikorsky HO3S and Bell HTL helicopters, was attached to the 1st Marine Division and did not come under the operational control of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Other Marine aircraft serving the Korean theater but not part of the wing included Marine transport planes such as four-engine Douglas R5D Skymasters and twin-boom Fairchild R4Q Packets.

Normal operational relationships were disrupted by the CCF Winter Offensive, which forced retreating U.N. forces to close air bases at Yonpo, Wonsan, Seoul, Kimpo, and Suwon as they pulled back. The few airfields still in U.N. hands in early January 1951 could not handle all United Nations Command aircraft, and the resulting ramp space shortfall scattered Marine air assets throughout Korea and Japan. This unanticipated diaspora placed Marine squadrons under several different control agencies. The "Checkerboard" Corsairs of VMF-312 were in Japan at Itami Air Base on the island of Honshu along with the wing rear support units. The other three Corsair squadrons were carrier-borne. The "Devil Cats" of VMF-212 were on the light carrier USS *Bataan* (CVL 29) under the operational control of combined Task Group 96.8 operating in the Yellow Sea near Inchon, while VMF-214's "Black Sheep" were on the USS *Sicily* (CVE 118) and the "Death Rattlers" of VMF-323 were flying off the USS *Badoeng Strait* (CVE 116) under the operational control of U.S. Navy Task Force 77 in the Sea of Japan. The only land-based fighter squadron still in Korea was the "Panther Pack" of VMF-311 operating from airfield K-9 at Pusan. Unfortunately, the Panther jets were temporarily out of service due to mechanical and electronic teething problems serious enough to ground the entire squadron until

it could be pulled back to Japan for maintenance. The two Marine night fighter squadrons, the "Flying Nightmares" of VMF(N)-513 and the "Tigers" of VMF(N)-542, were in Japan under the direct control of U.S. Fifth Air Force flying air defense missions as part of the 314th Air Division. VMO-6 was attached to and collocated with the 1st Marine Division at Masan. Two Marine transport squadrons supported the Naval Air Transport Service. Colonel William B. Steiner's Marine Transport Squadron 352 (VMR-352) shuttled between California and Hawaii, while Colonel Deane C. Roberts' VMR-152 flew two legs, one from Hawaii to Japan and the other from Japan to Korea.

All four Marine fighter-bomber squadrons flew daily sorties during the first week of January. Their missions included close air support for the Eighth Army, combat air patrols, armed reconnaissance, coastal surveillance, and interdiction bombing. By mid-month the wing administrative and service units, the Corsairs of VMFs-214 and -323, and VMF-311's jets were temporarily ensconced at Itami until facilities at Bofu on Honshu and K-1 (Pusan West) in Korea were activated. Wing headquarters stayed at Itami, MAG-33 was slated to move to Bofu once the airfield was operational, and MAG-12 was temporarily assigned to K-9 (Pusan East) until all of its squadrons returned to Korea.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A132120

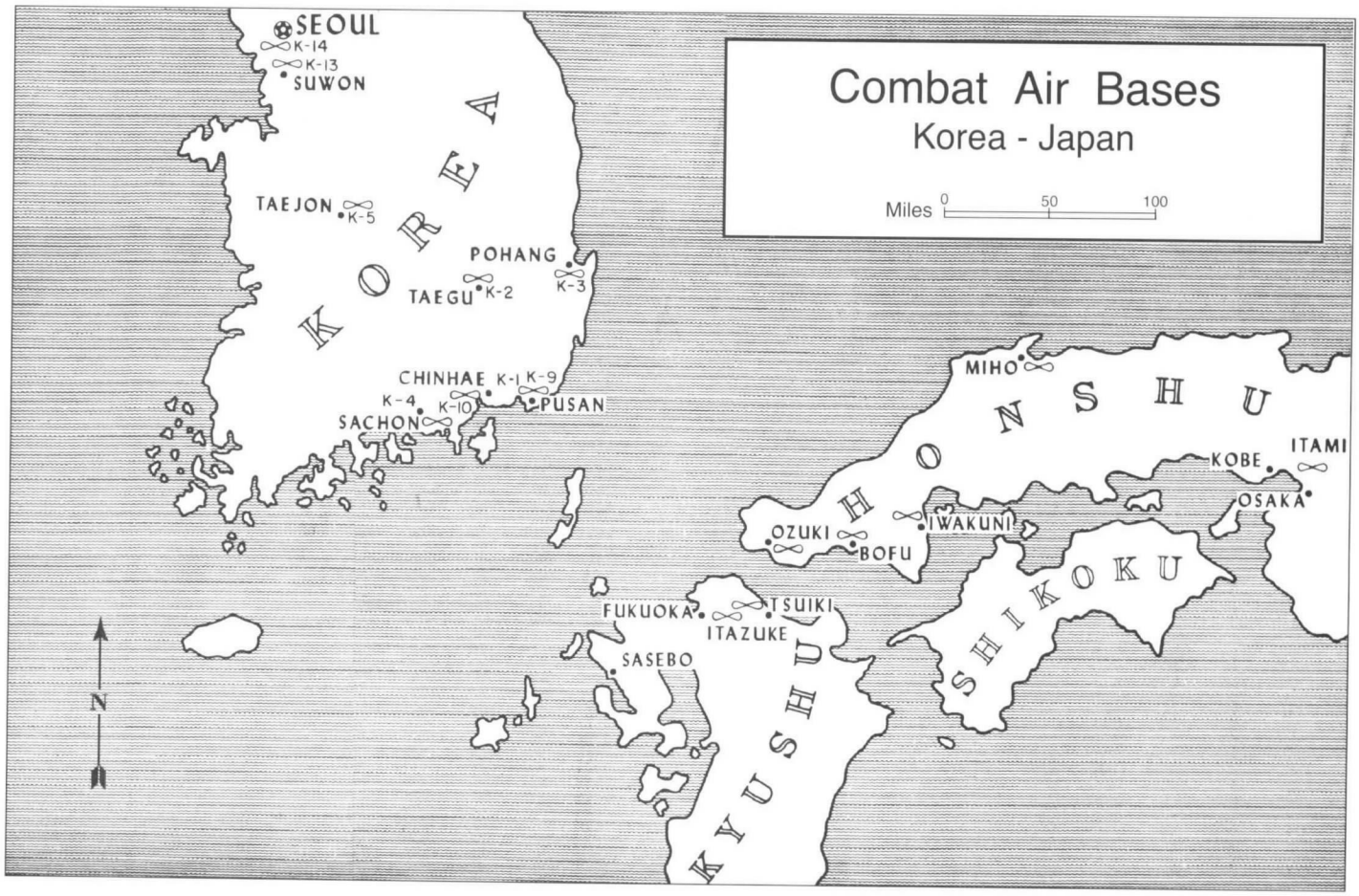
A Vought F4U Corsair from VMF-214 is guided into position for take-off on its way to a close air support mission. The bent-wing, single-seat, propeller-driven "Dash Fours" featured six .50-caliber machine guns.

Calling "Devastate Baker." A Marine pilot serving with a ground unit directs a close air support mission. The assignment of Marine aviators to ground units ensured proper ground-to-air liaison.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A9458

This Japanese interlude was a period of transition for Marine aviation. The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing was reorganized, some command changes occurred, and several moves were accomplished. As part of the wing reorganization, squadrons were realigned among the air groups. The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing had to be realigned because its elements were going to be split up, some operating from air bases in Japan while others would be stationed in Korea, and one squadron would be afloat. Lieutenant Colonel Paul J. Fontana replaced Lieutenant Colonel Radford C. West as MAG-33's commanding officer. New squadron commanders included Major Donald P. Frame (VMF-312), Major Stanley S. Nicolay (VMF-323), Major James A. Feeley, Jr. (VMF-214), and Lieutenant Colonel Claude H. Welch (VMF-212). Lieutenant Colonel James R. Anderson took over both night fighter squadrons (VMF[N]-513 and VMF[N]-542) in February, a unique arrangement that lasted until VMF(N)-542 returned to the United States in mid-March. The squadrons slated to move to Bofu were assigned to MAG-33 and the squadrons returning to Korea were assigned to MAG-12. In addition, the night fighter squadrons returned to Marine control.

This temporary turmoil was a source of irritation, but it was far less ominous than an emerging doctrinal issue. The 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing were separated for the first time since they arrived in the Far



East. Marine land-based aircraft had been under the titular control of the Fifth Air Force for months, but a verbal agreement between Marine General Harris and U.S. Air Force General Earl E. Partridge allowed the wing to regularly support ground Marines. As the wing pulled back to Japan, however, Harris' de facto control of Marine air was lost and this agreement went by the wayside. Thereafter, all land-based wing aircraft would be under the operational control of the Fifth Air Force, and all missions would be assigned by the Fifth Air Force-Eighth Army joint operations center. Leery veteran Marine aviators foresaw procedural and allocation problems and, needless to say, there was great trepidation by all

A Sikorsky HO3S helicopter sits on a mountaintop landing zone while Navy Corpsmen prepare three wounded Marines for evacuation. In addition to standard command, liaison, and observation duties, these helicopters also often flew search and rescue missions behind enemy lines.

National Archives Photo (USN) 80-G-439571

Marines about the breakup of the combat-proven Marine air-ground team. These concerns were acknowledged, but General Partridge insisted that a vastly increased enemy air threat and plans to initiate a deep air interdiction campaign demanded new air control measures. Unfortunately, Marine reservations about this system were soon justified by events on the battlefield. After the joint operations center took over, Marine air and ground commanders chafed at what they considered inordinate delays and inappropriate use of aircraft. The problems were so serious that every commander of the 1st Marine Division (Generals Smith, Puller, and Thomas) filed formal complaints about the quality, quantity, and timeliness of close air support.

Late January and early February 1951 were devoted to maintenance, training, and movement back to Korea. General Harris opened his command post at Itami and MAG-33 completed its temporary move to Bofu during the third week of January. The only Marine combat sorties during the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing stand-down from 16 to 23 January were conducted by VMF-212 on board the *Bataan*. When the land-based Corsair squadrons returned to action, most sorties were flown in support of Eighth Army units conducting Operations Thunderbolt and Roundup in western Korea. This was because the 1st Marine Division needed few air strikes during the "guerrilla hunt" at Pohang, but on 26 January MAG-12 aircraft flying from K-9 (Pusan East) did manage to conduct close air support strikes for the division for the first time since the Chosin campaign.

The next month saw the return of the wing to Korea. In mid-February, K-1 at Pusan became the new home of MAG-12, and MAG-33 moved from Japan to K-3 at Pohang. The night fighters of VMF(N)-513 and -542 moved to K-1 and K-3 respectively. Major Donald S. Bush's task-organized "Marine Photographic Unit" operated its reconnaissance planes from K-1 under the auspices of the Air Force's 543d Tactical Support Group. Thus, all Marine tactical squadrons were back in Korea in time for the upcoming U.N. spring offensives.

The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing flew most of its sorties in support of Eighth Army units during Operation Killer, but Operation Ripper found the Marine air-ground team once more in action as wing aircraft cleared the way for the 1st Marine Division's rapid advance from Hoengsong to Hongchon. Responding to intense criticism from ground commanders, General Partridge reluctantly granted General Harris at least 40 sorties per day in support of the gravel-crunching Marine infantry. In the way of organizational changes, VMF-312 became the carrier squadron when it replaced VMF-212 on board the *Bataan*, VMR-152 established a five-plane forward echelon at Itami, and an additional Marine Air Control Squadron (MACG-2) was sent to Korea. The efficient performance of Lieutenant Colonel John F. Kinney's refurbished Panther jets of VMF-311 for armed reconnaissance and close air support was a pleasant surprise after their inauspicious introduction to combat.

There were several important command changes in April and May. Lieutenant Colonel Fontana departed MAG-33 on 31 March and Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Beard, Jr., became acting commander until Colonel Guy M. Morrow arrived on 9 April. When Major Donald P. Frame was killed in action on 3 April, the "Checkerboard" executive officer, Major Frank H. Presley, assumed command of VMF-312. Major David W. McFarland took over VMO-6 on 5 April. On 3 May, Major Charles M. Kunz replaced Major Donald L. Clark who had commanded VMF-323 since 1 March. On 16 May, Lieutenant Colonel James W. Poindexter took the reins of VMF-214 from Major Edward Ochoa and Colonel Stanley W. Trachta assumed command of MAG-12. On the 28th, Brigadier General Thomas J. Cushman became commanding general of the wing when General Harris rotated back to the United States. Cushman was a veteran aviator who had commanded the 4th Marine Base Defense Wing in the Central Pacific during World War II

Panther jets of VMF-311 are gassed up at K-3 (Pohang). Refueling operations were a slow and laborious process. Fuel had to be transferred ashore in landing ships, hand pumped into fuel trucks, and then hauled out to the airfield.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A130478

and brought MAG-33 to Korea in August 1950.

Marine air was used all along the U.N. front during the CCF Spring Offensive, and close air support played an important, if not decisive, role during that hectic time. Fifth Air Force regularly used Marine planes not earmarked to support the Marine division for armed reconnaissance and battlefield interdiction beginning in late April. On 20 April, a pair of VMF-312 pilots flying off the *Bataan*, Captain Phillip C. Delong and First Lieutenant Harold D. Daigh, encountered four North Korean Yakovlev YAK-9 fighters over central Korea. Delong, a double ace with 11 kills during World War II, shot down two of them. Daigh knocked one YAK out of the sky and left the other one trailing smoke as it fled north. These were the first Marine aerial victories in Korea, and they were among the very few kills scored by Marines not on exchange duty with the U.S. Air Force or flying a night intercept mission. Seventy-five Marine aircraft, Panthers and Corsairs, participated in the largest air raid to date as part of a 300-plane sweep that hit Communist airfields at Sinuiju just south of the Yalu River on 9 May.

One reason for pulling the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing away from the 1st Marine Division was that the Fifth Air Force instituted an all-out effort to halt enemy traffic south with a deep interdiction campaign codenamed Operation Strangle. The goals of the campaign were to cut enemy supply routes, which were channelized by the mountainous terrain, and to destroy supply columns halted by swollen streams. Bomb damage assessments credited the wing with the destruction of more than 300 enemy troops, more than 200 trucks, about 80 boxcars, and 6 locomotives. The price of this success was, however, high; the Marines lost a plane a day during the first week. Much to the dismay of ground and aviation Marines alike, close air support became a secondary mission. This change in priority abruptly cut the number of sorties allocated to ground units almost in half. In addition, cumbersome joint operations center request procedures often delayed air strikes for excessively long periods of time. Generals Puller and Thomas successively complained directly to the Fifth Air Force commander, and Lieutenant General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, took the issue up with the theater commander, all to no avail. The controversial joint operations center control and allocation procedures remained in force. The official Marine Corps history describes the questionable success of the Operation Strangle deep interdiction campaign: "There can be little doubt [Operation Strangle] added enormously to the Communists' logistical problem. It is equally certain that . . . . their combat units were never at a decisive handicap for lack of ammunition and other supplies [so] air interdiction alone was not enough to knock a determined adversary out of the war."

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Jan-Feb51

A Marine 105mm howitzer sets up for a fire mission in the Andong area. The trusty "105" was the backbone of the 11th Marines in Korea, just as it had been during much of World War II.

Despite these problems, many innovations were instituted in Korea. In addition to well-practiced daylight air-ground combat procedures, new techniques improved nighttime close air support. Marine R4D transport planes were put to use dropping flares that illuminated the battlefield and allowed VMF(N)-513 to deliver accurate night close air support. This experiment was so successful that the U.S. Navy provided the wing with four-engine, long-range PB4Y Privateer bombers, nicknamed "Lamplighters," whose bigger payloads and longer linger time were put to good use.

In characterizing Marine air support from January to May 1951, Marine aviators provided crucial support to their ground brethren throughout. Venerable performers—both aircraft and personnel—from World War II once again proved their mettle, and new types of aircraft and pilots were introduced to combat. The ground Marines were well served by the attached observation squadron,

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A tank commander carefully scans the hills near Pohang for signs of the enemy. Pershing tanks like the one shown were the forerunners of the "Patton" tanks that served as the Marines' main battle tanks in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf.

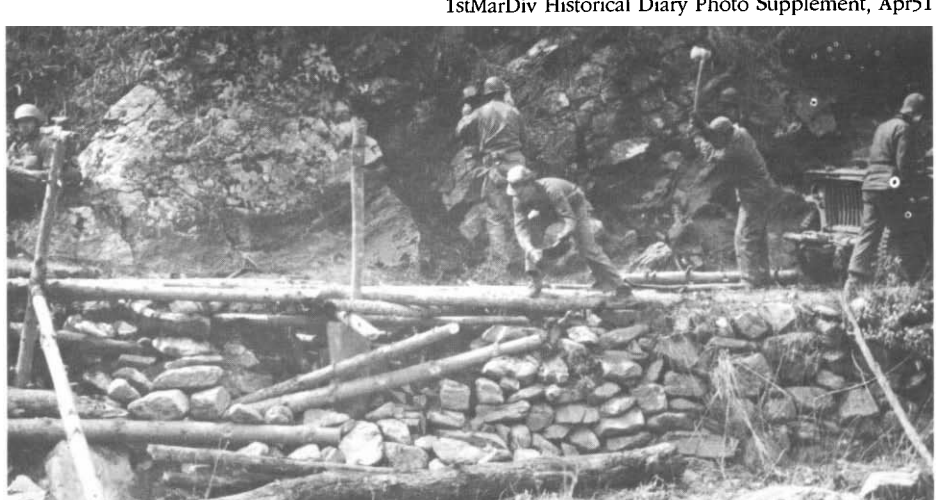
which directed artillery fire and close air support, evacuated wounded, and brought in emergency supplies. Transports delivered badly needed replacements and carried returning veterans safely home as well as dropping vital supplies by parachute to forward units. Aerial reconnaissance kept ground commanders informed of enemy movements and locations. The pilots of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing relentlessly attacked the enemy at every possible opportunity, and Marine close air support was the envy of every United Nations Command commander. The appearance of Marine air on the scene almost always forced the enemy to rush for cover, and occasionally caused him to surrender or abandon key positions. It was with great reluctance that Marine fliers were diverted from their close air support mission, and all Marines became extremely frustrated when that vital support was gradually diminished due to circumstances beyond their control.

Combat and Service Support

The 11th Marines was the 1st Marine Division artillery regiment. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Carl A. Youngdale and then Colonel Joseph L. Winecoff, the regiment mustered 54 M2A1 105mm towed howitzers (18 each in the 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions) while the 4th Battalion had 18 M2 155mm towed howitzers. The 105mm units were most often used for direct support with one artillery battalion assigned to fire exclusively for a particular rifle regiment, and the 155mm were most often in general support so they could use their longer range and heavier firepower to the best advantage. This was not always true, because the U.S. Marines provided artillery support for the 1st KMC Regiment as well as its organic units, and when all four rifle regiments were on the main line of resistance every artillery battalion had to be used for direct support. The nature of the fighting in Korea dictated that additional firepower was needed so the 11th Marines had Battery C, 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battalion, permanently attached. Marine units were often supported by U.S. Army artillery as well. It was common for the corps commander to furnish at least one self-propelled howitzer battalion and a battery of 8-inch heavy guns to the 1st Marine Division for additional firepower. Army artillery units working with the 11th Marines at various times included the 17th Field Artillery, the 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion, the 96th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, and the 987th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. Offensive artillery missions included supporting maneuver units, neutralizing enemy fire, and isolating the battlefield. On defense, artillery fire was used effectively against CCF mass infantry assaults. Forward

Marine engineers construct a bridge near the Kansas Line. Road construction and bridge building took the lion's share of the 1st Engineer Battalion effort in the spring of 1951.

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51



1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51

Marine combat engineers remove a land mine on a road near Hongchon. Trained to install and maintain friendly minefields, the engineers were the first called to remove enemy mines.

observation teams at the leading edge of the battlefield controlled most artillery fires, but airborne spotters flying in light observation planes also sometimes directed them. The main problems encountered by the cannoneers of the 11th Marines were transporting heavy guns over poor roads and intermittent ammunition shortages. Generals Ridgway and Van Fleet preferred to "use steel instead of men" and artillery was the favored combat arm under both men. Ammunition expenditure was much heavier in Korea than during World War II, and shooting several units of fire on a single mission was referred to as a "Van Fleet load" by Marine artillerymen. Unfortunately, this practice sometimes drained carefully hoarded ammunition caches that were not easy to replenish, so orders to deliver specific amounts of unobserved ("harassment and interdiction") fire became a bone of contention between the Eighth Army and the Marines.

The 1st Tank Battalion, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Harry T. Milne, also provided excellent combat support. The battalion was divided into four companies (A, B, C, and D) each with 17 medium tanks. These companies were usually placed in direct support of a specific rifle regiment. It was not uncommon for five-vehicle tank platoons to accompany combat patrols. When the regiment they supported was in reserve, the tankers tried to use that time for maintenance and rest. The super-accurate 90mm guns of the M-26 Pershing tanks were particularly well suited for long range "bunker busting" and were occasionally used to supplement artillery fires (much to the chagrin of the tankers who felt this practice was a deplorable misuse of their point target guns). Tanks were also sometimes pressed into service as armored ambulances In addition to the modern M-26 Pershing main battle tanks, there were also a dozen or so World War II-vintage M-4A3 Sherman bulldozer tanks with 105mm short-barrel guns and front-mounted plows used for mine clearing, hasty engineering, and tank recovery as well as fire support. Although Korea's mountainous terrain was generally unsuited for armor operations, frequent use was made of separate axis attacks whereby the road-bound tanks in the valleys supported infantry units as they worked their way along ridgelines. During the CCF Spring Offensive tanks were used to protect lines of communication and river crossings or cover nearby flatlands with their machine guns and main guns.

The 1st Engineer Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John H. Partridge, provided services including rebuilding airstrips, constructing and repairing roads and bridges, emplacing and clearing mines, demolitions, manning water points, and preparing field fortifications. Although the 1st Engineers did all of these things, Lieutenant Colonel Partridge's number one priority throughout the spring of 1951 was keeping the main supply route open. The 1st Engineer Battalion spent most of its time and energy constructing, improving, and maintaining the supply route. Korea's primitive roadways were neither designed nor built to meet the demands of a major modern military force. There were few hard-surface roads, and there was no true road network. Most roads were little more than narrow dirt pathways that simply ran between local villages by the most direct route. Almost all roadways were poorly drained, inadequately bridged, and unpaved.

Snow and ice hampered movement in cold weather, the dry season choked the roads with dust, and spring thaws and summer rains often turned them into impassable bogs. Unfortunately, the need for constant road maintenance sometimes required foregoing other vital engineer functions, which were then left to the combat units.

Logistics—the acquisition and distribution of the means to wage war—encompassed the supply, maintenance, medical, transportation, and administrative services necessary to support combat operations. Although the efforts of the men who furnish the beans, bullets, and bandages are often overlooked, logistics are no less important than tactics in determining the outcome of a battle because—according to an old military adage— "logistics set operational limits." This was particularly true in Korea where Marine logisticians faced a wide array of challenges. Most short-term problems were the result of Korea's poorly developed infrastructure, rugged terrain, inhospitable weather, the rapidly changing tactical situation (which saw the entire 1st Marine Division go from offense to defense within a matter of hours on several occasions), and the wide physical separation of Marine air and ground elements. Unfortunately, some nagging problems also stemmed from doctrinal shortcomings. In 1951, U.S. joint operations did not feature the smooth multi-Service integration common among today's branches of the Armed Forces. The Marine air-ground task force concept was not developed, hence, there was no single Marine component commander in Korea so the Marine air and ground combat elements had no common superior below the theater commander. For the most part Marine ground and aviation units remained separate logistical entities operating without central direction because no equivalent of Vietnam's Force Logistics Command or modern force service support groups emerged in Korea. Luckily, Lieutenant General Lemuel Shepherd, the commanding general of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, was an energetic leader who took an active role. His forceful suggestions and direct intervention unclogged many bottlenecks and kept the personnel and supply pipelines flowing smoothly.

Difficult terrain, bad weather, and the inadequate road and rail networks were physical obstacles not easily overcome, but doctrinal issues and equipment shortages also created logistics problems. The 1st Marine Division, specifically structured for amphibious warfare, was neither organized nor equipped for sustained inland operations like those on Korea's Central Front. Unfortunately, this simple fact was either misunderstood or ignored by the high command. Repeated requests to keep the Marines close to the coast in order to minimize logistical concerns fell upon deaf ears at Eighth Army and United Nations Command headquarters. Service support challenges were further complicated by the physical separation of the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Additionally, during the spring of 1951 the 1st Marine Division provided much of the logistical support for the Korean Marines.

Logistical support in Korea was a massive multi-Service operation; it was a complicated logistical maze, one not easily traversed by the uninitiated, that existed because Marine units had to draw upon the resources of all four Services as well as indigenous labor. At the lowest level the Marines relied upon their own robust organic service and support units. The 1st Combat Service Group functioned as an intermediate clearing house and established liaison with the other Services. The Marines drew upon Eighth Army for theater-level support and further relied upon Navy and Marine service support from Pacific Command. The Marines also obtained support from the Republic of Korea.

The first option when answering logistics challenges, of course, was to make the most effective possible use of organic assets. 1st Marine Division logistics units included Commander Howard A. Johnson's, and after 23 January, Commander Clifford A. Stevenson's 1st Medical Battalion; Lieutenant Colonel Olin L. Beall's (Lieutenant Colonel John R. Barreiro, Jr., commanded after 16 March) 1st Motor Transport Battalion; Lieutenant Colonel Carl J. Cagle's 7th Motor Transport Battalion; Major Lloyd O. Williams' 1st Ordnance Battalion; the 1st Service Battalion (commanded successively by Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Banks, Colonel Gould P. Groves, Lieutenant Colonel Horace E. Knapp, and Lieutenant Colonel Woodrow M. Kessler); and 1st Shore Party Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Henry P. "Jim" Crowe until 10 May and thereafter commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Horace H. Figuers). The 1st Marine Division was specifically tailored for amphibious operations, but in Korea the specific needs of the moment very often superseded doctrine. Amphibious combat support units, such as the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion and the 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion, could not be fully utilized by the 1st Marine Division when it operated far from the coast, so one amphibian tractor company provided ship-to-shore

Saving Lives

No cry for help on the battlefields of Korea carried more urgency than the plea "Corpsman up!" This chilling entreaty invariably meant that a Marine was seriously wounded. Within moments, a medical corpsman would come scurrying forward through a hail of fire to lend life-saving assistance, often conducted in full view of the enemy and done at great peril to the caregiver.

The U.S. Navy provided medical (doctors, nurses, and corpsmen) and morale (chaplains) personnel to the United States Marine Corps. The chaplains were known by a variety of names that indicated their particular status or religious affiliation; "Father," Rabbi," "Reverend," and "Padre" were among the most common nicknames. On the other hand, Navy medical personnel—from the lowest ranking hospital apprentice all the way up to the chief surgeon of the Medical Corps—were simply known as "Doc" to the Marines they served.

Most medical personnel assigned to the 1st Marine Division in Korea came from the 1st Medical Battalion, which was successively commanded by Navy Commanders Howard A. Johnson and Clifford A. Stevenson. That parent unit was divided into a Headquarters and Service Company and five medical companies—two hospital companies and three collecting and clearing companies. Headquarters and Service Company (Commander William S. Francis and Lieutenant Commander Gustare T. Anderson, successively) provided administrative and support personnel and functions. Hospital Companies A (Commanders Buron E. Bassham, Philip L. Nova, and James A. Addison, respectively) and B (Lieutenant Commanders James A. Kaufman) were staffed and equipped to operate one 200-bed hospital each. The three collecting and clearing companies were: Company C (Commanders Harold A. Streit and Lewis E. Rector), Company D (Lieutenant Commanders Gustare T. Anderson and Daniel M. Pino), and Company E (Lieutenant Commanders Charles K. Holloway and John H. Cheffey). Generally speaking, Company C worked in direct support of the 5th Marines, Company D in support of the 1st Marines, and Company E in support of the 7th Marines during the spring of 1951.

The lowest rung on the medical evacuation chain was the individual hospital corpsman. Generally, two junior ratings of the 40 corpsmen assigned to each infantry battalion accompanied each rifle platoon into action. The primary jobs of these men, most of whom had only six

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A155354

weeks of advanced medical training under their belts, were to stabilize wounded men and to supervise the initial evacuation process. Under fire on the battlefield they would conduct a hasty exam and apply necessary first aid measures (start the breathing, stop the bleeding, stabilize or bandage the crucial area, and treat for shock). Once this was done, the corpsman would arrange for evacuation. Usually, this meant four Marines or Korean litter bearers would carry the wounded man to the nearest collection point (usually the company command post) for transportation to the battalion aid station. The 28 chaplains assigned to the 1st Marine Division often played a critical role in this stage as well. They frequently lent a hand as stretcher-bearers or administered first aid in addition to performing last rites or building up the sagging spirits of the wounded.

Two Navy doctors, usually lieutenants, manned the battalion aid station (called the BAS), along with 10 or so enlisted corpsmen headed by a chief pharmacists mate. Incoming casualties were quickly inspected by an experienced corpsman so they could be categorized for treatment precedence ("triage"). The BAS facility was simple: usually an open air or tent operating arena, where rudimentary "meatball" surgery was performed while the patient's stretcher was placed upon a pair of sawhorses. This procedure saved time and minimized the amount of uncomfortable shifting. The battalion medics applied either life-saving surgery or gave just enough treatment to get the casualty ready for further evacuation.

The collecting and clearing companies then evacuated patients from the BAS to one of the 60-bed mobile field hospitals (in Army parlance, a MASH; to the naval services, depending upon which letter company was used, the nomenclature was something like "Charlie Med"). Here the facilities and care were more advanced. Surgical teams treated non-evacuables requiring resuscitation or immediate surgery then sent them on their way to semi-permanent division hospitals, which provided definitive care and short stay hospitalization. Extreme cases that were stable but could not return to duty in the near future were sent on to theater-level hospitals from whence they usually were returned to the United States.

Two intermediate steps in the evacuation process came into their own during the Korean War, use of hospital ships and aerial evacuation. Prior to the Second World War, hospital ships were used only to transport badly wounded men home. During World War II, however, hospital ships could often be found waiting off the landing beaches to provide a safe haven for treating casualties incurred during the opening rounds of amphibious operations. In Korea it was common practice to keep at least one hospital ship nearby at all times. These Haven- and Comfort-class vessels mustered about

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC358063

150 officers and more than 1,000 enlisted men to man the operating rooms and healing wards which could accommodate several hundred critical short-term patients at one time. This practice, combined with the increasing use of helicopters for medical evacuations, ensured rapid advanced medical treatment was available. Several Haven- and Comfort-class hospital ships rotated station watches during the spring of 1951, and the USS *Consolation* (AH 15) was fitted with a helicopter landing pad—an adaptation that soon thereafter became standard practice.

Many view the advent of rotary-wing aircraft as the most important aviation innovation during the Korean Conflict. Inevitably, the nimble helicopters soon became an important means of medical evacuation because they could fly directly to the forward areas, pick up wounded men from previously inaccessible locations, then deliver them to an advanced care facility within a matter of minutes rather than hours or days. Helicopters could land atop the mountains and ridges that dotted Korea eliminating the rough handling and long movements necessary for overland evacuation. Unfortunately, the Sikorsky HO3S-1 could carry only one stretcher case at a time (and the patient's lower extremities would have to extend out the rear hatch), limiting their utility as an evacuation machine. By the spring of 1951, the bubble-topped Bell HTL, which mounted a pair of stretchers on each side and could carry a sitting evacuee as well, augmented these older machines. Eventually, even more capable evacuation helicopters (Sikorsky HO5S and HRS) made their way to Korea. Fixed-wing observation aircraft were sometimes pressed into service for emergency evacuations as well. Twin- and four-engine fixed-wing transport planes were used to deliver men to in-country theater-level facilities, hospitals in Japan, or to take the badly wounded back to the States.

transportation at Pohang while the remaining tracked landing vehicles were used by Eighth Army for non-Marine support. The 1st Engineer Battalion often used Shore Party motor transport and engineer assets. In addition, U.S. Army transportation units or trucks on temporary loan from other Marine units often reinforced the motor transport battalions. Navy Seabee Construction Battalions regularly furnished construction engineer support, Army engineer assets were often temporarily attached to Marine units, the U.S. Air Force provided equipment and materials for air base construction and maintenance, and the Korean Service Corps furnished laborers.

Colonel John N. Cook, Jr.'s 1st Combat Service Group at Masan furnished Marine general logistics support. The 1,400-man group was composed of headquarters, maintenance, supply, support, and truck companies. It furnished most service support functions: advanced maintenance and repair, central storage, general administration, and laundry services. Colonel Cook coordinated inter-Service logistics efforts, requisitioned supplies and equipment from higher echelons, controlled and maintained rear area depots, stored spare parts and high demand items, and distributed these to the division and the wing. The group also mustered special support units including a bath and fumigation platoon and an air delivery platoon. Although it provided support to the wing, the 1st Combat Service Group was actually attached to the 1st Marine Division. Group detachments were located in Japan, Pusan, Pohang, and operated forward area supply terminals at Wonju, Hoengson, and Chunchon.

The Military Sea Transportation Service, Military Air Transportation Service, and Naval Air Transport Service furnished inter-theater lift of supplies, personnel, and equipment. Army Brigadier General Crump Garvin's 2d Logistical Command replenished common use items for all Services in Korea. Fleet Marine Force, Pacific's Service Command furnished unique Marine equipment and supplies. The situation was more complex with regard to aviation. The 2d Logistical Command provided a few aviation-related items but for the most part did not stock technical equipment such as aircraft parts, special maintenance tools, or aircraft ordnance. The U.S. Navy Pacific Service Command handled most of these, although Marine-specific items came from Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. Emergency resupply procedures allowed critical items to be flown to Korea from the United States.

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51

A column of Korean Civil Transport Corps bearers brings supplies from a rear area to the main battle line. Rugged terrain and lack of roads often dictated that man-packing supplies was the only way they would reach the front lines.

Marine logistics problems mirrored the tactical situation. In January 1951, the major challenge was filling critical personnel and equipment shortfalls in the wake of the costly Chosin Reservoir campaign. After that the major logistics challenge became sustaining units almost constantly on the move.

Major equipment shortages occurred in communications and transportation. The Marines had only half their authorized radios and only 58 (of 1,162) EE8 telephones. The division was also short 58 jeeps and 33 two-and-a-half ton trucks. Not revealed in these statistics is the poor condition of the trucks that survived the Chosin campaign. Most were in terrible shape and badly needed advanced maintenance and new tires. The only significant combat arms shortfall was tanks; the 1st Tank Battalion had only 78 of its 97 authorized M-26 and M-4 tanks.

After the Marines left Masan in mid-January, resupply became the overriding logistics concern. The supply pipeline ran from the United States to Japan then on to Korea. Cargo and transport ships and long-range airplanes carried men, supplies, and equipment from the United States to depots and processing centers in Japan. The 1st Combat Service Group maintained an administrative processing center and a supply receiving area at Kobe, Japan. Unfortunately, there was a poor supply flow from Japan to Korea, partially due to labor and trans-

portation shortages and partially due to red tape. The Marines in Korea had few rear area storage facilities and inadequate transportation assets. There was only one true deep-water seaport in all of Korea, Pusan, and it was located at the peninsula's southernmost tip, which was serviced by a very limited road and rail network. This created a tremendous supply bottleneck. The Marines were able make some use of Pohang as a port of entry, but unloading there was a cumbersome and time-consuming process. The U.S. Army 55th Quartermaster Depot which handled joint-Service requests did not back-order most types of supplies, hence, requests were routinely denied if a particular item was not on hand. Eventually, 1st Service Battalion assigned a Marine liaison team to smooth out this problem. Regardless, there was a constant shortage of expendable items, such as steel wool or stationery supplies, and individual requests sometimes required a four-week lead-time before issue. The 1st Combat Service Group ran railheads at Masan and Dalchon, the 1st Shore Party Battalion handled incoming supplies at Pohang and ran the railhead at Yodo-nae, and the division established truckheads as far forward as possible.

The poor roads, inadequate railroad system, and fluid nature of the fighting made resupply of forward units a never-ending headache. Trains, trucks, and airplanes carried in-country supplies from rear areas to forward supply points. From there, however, it was division's job to get those supplies to its troops in the field. Unfortunately, there was no rail line north of Wonju, and there were often too few trucks to move the supplies that did arrive in a timely manner. The closing of forward supply points and ammunition storage areas during the CCF Spring Offensive also created problems. The closures created temporary ammunition shortages and stopped the flow of "A" and "B" rations so the troops had to rely upon less tasty and less filling "C" and "K" field rations. The only solution to this problem was to airdrop supplies and ammunition. Poor flying weather and limited airfield facilities made air transportation an iffy proposition, and airdrops were inefficient in terms of equipment, manpower, and loss rates, but there was simply no other choice. The multi-Service Combat Cargo Command accomplished airdrops. Marine transport planes joined those of the Air Force and the Navy to deliver supplies all across the front. The most unique air delivery was a single size 16 EEE combat shoe dropped over the 1st Marines headquarters from an OY light observation aircraft. This jocular package was addressed to Colonel Wilburt S. "Big Foot" Brown and included a note that the pilot did not have sufficient space in his small plane to carry two such gigantic "Boondockers" at the same time. This joke, however, must have tried Brown's patience because pilots in Nicaragua had first used it three decades earlier.

One of the most difficult logistics challenges was overland transportation. Gasoline and tire shortages often idled much-needed trucks, jeeps, and weapons carriers. The Marines were also constantly hampered by lack of vehicles; for example, in April the division was short 1 tracked landing vehicle, 13 tanks, 18 jeeps, and 59 trucks. Although the 1st Marine Division had been augmented with an extra motor transport battalion, there were still insufficient trucks to move men and supplies in a timely manner. Heavy demands, combat losses, accidents, and hard use all contributed to the problem. Pooling Marine resources and borrowing U.S. Army trucks sometimes addressed this concern, but

Marines line the rail as the attack transport General J. C. Breckinridge *(AP 176) docks in San Francisco. These veterans, some with more than six months of combat, were among the first Marines to return from Korea.*

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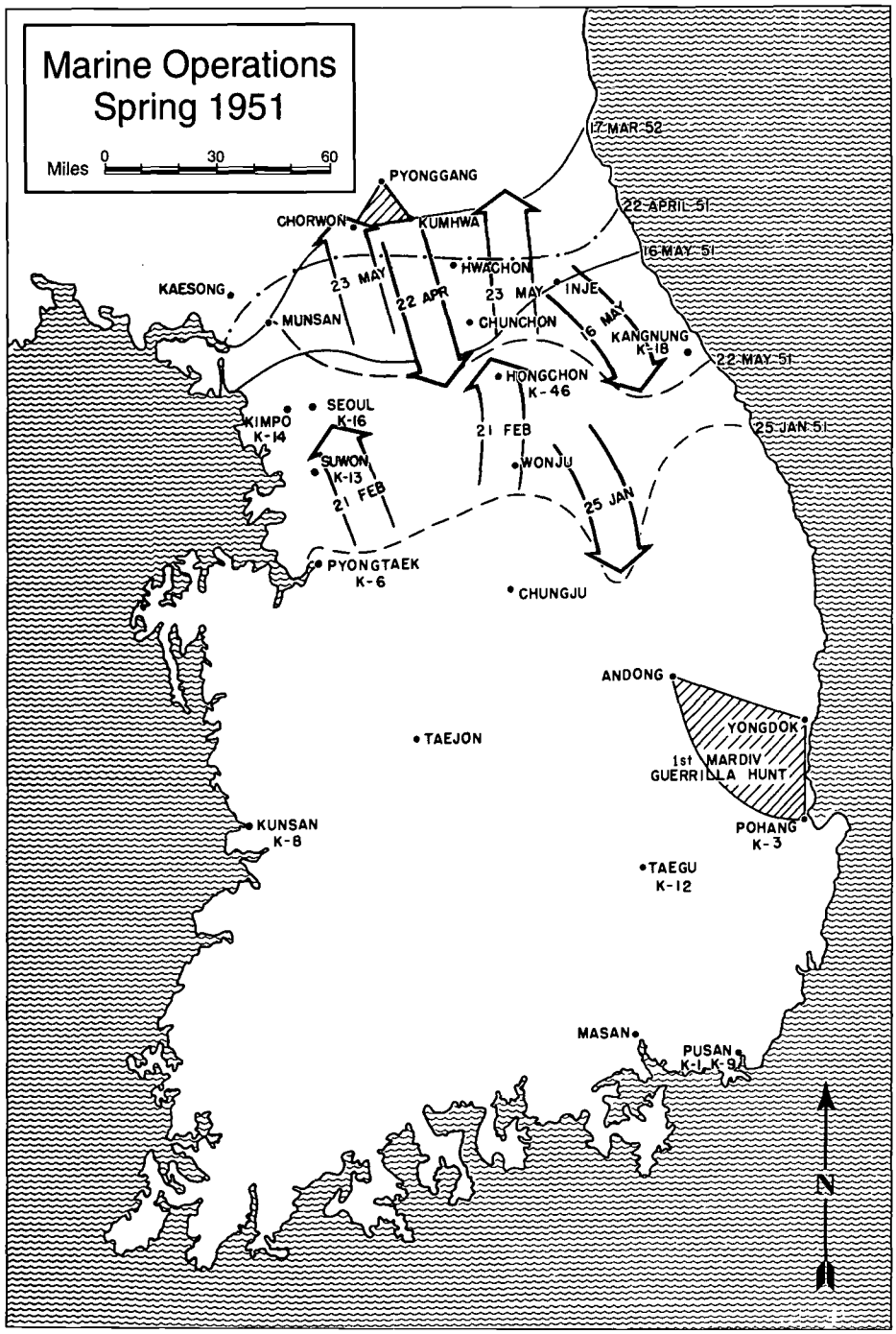


even additional vehicles could do nothing to alleviate the major transportation obstacle, the inadequate Korean transportation infrastructure.

Food, clothing, ammunition, and other necessities slowly made their way forward to regimental and battalion supply dumps in trucks, jeeps, and weapons carriers, but then most often had to be hand carried to the front lines. This was a labor-intensive process that few combat units could spare men for. The South Korean government, at the request of Eighth Army, organized a pair of quasi-military organizations—the Korean Service Corps and the Korean Transportation Corps—to fill this need. Members of the Korean National Guard and volunteers from refugee camps manned these organizations. The Korean Service Corps included "Yoboe" construction gangs, and the Transportation Corps comprised "cargodore" companies consisting of about 200 "Chiggy Bear" porters. The Korean government provided almost 300 laborers to the 1st Marine Division. Yoboes were used for roadwork and manual labor by combat and service support units. The Chiggy Bears were parceled out to each rifle regiment where they labored under the supervision of a senior Marine noncommissioned officer or junior lieutenant. Organized as a unit under a headman and a straw boss, these never-ending columns of porters, called "Mule Trains" after a popular song of the day, kept frontline Marines supplied under the most trying circumstances. There are no specific figures as to how many of these loyal workers were killed or wounded in action, but those numbers were undoubtedly high. Although sacrifices of the Chiggy Bears may have gone unrecorded, their tireless efforts were certainly not unappreciated by the cold, thirsty, hungry Marines at the front.

The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing's major engineering headaches were airfield renovation and upkeep. This was particularly difficult because the wing was almost constantly on the move. The wide dispersal of Marine air units located at air bases in Japan (Itami, Itazuke, and Bofu) and Korea—Pohang (K-3), Pusan (K-1 and K-9), Hoegsong (K-46), and Seoul (K-16). Marine Wing Service Squadron 1 (successively commanded by Chief Warrant Officer Aubrey D. Taylor, Lieutenant Colonel James C. Linsay, and Colonel Roger T. Carleson) was the unit charged to provide such support, but the overworked Marines often had to ask for help from Navy Seabee construction units as well as Army and Air Force engineers. When such support was not immediately

forthcoming, as it often was not, Marine technicians had to be pulled away from other jobs to pick up shovels. Fuel handling was also a problem. For example, Marine Aircraft Group 33 at K-3 (Pohang) had to rely upon tracked landing vehicles to haul fuel drums ashore, which then had to be hand pumped into 1,200-gallon fuel trucks. This slow, inefficient, labor-intensive process siphoned off men whose skills could have been put to better use. Additionally, vehicles designed to handle World War II ordnance were ill-suited to service modern aircraft. The primitive conditions in Korea also took a toll on wing motor transport. These problems required constant attention throughout the spring of 1951.

That operations only intermittently suffered for lack of service support is a tribute to Marine service and support personnel. The Marines faced seemingly insurmountable logistics challenges between January and May 1951, yet—despite a few hiccups—the only serious long-term supply shortfall was the lack of artillery ammunition caused by Eighth Army policies dictated from above over the strenuous objections of Marine commanders. That this was the case is a testament to the hard working, but too often unsung, Marines of the combat service support units.

The 1st Marine Division received two replacement drafts in December 1950, but was still short almost 3,000 men on New Year's Day. The initial personnel deficit was partially alleviated by the return to duty of 945 men, most of whom had been frostbite evacuations, and the arrival of 700 veteran Marines pulled from posts and stations in the Far East. Two replacement drafts were also formed at Camp Pendleton. The largest part of these drafts consisted of recalled reservists, but there were also some veteran regular Marines included. Freshly minted Marines from the recruit depots and "shiny-bar" second lieutenants just arrived from officer training filled out replacement rosters. Two hundred and thirty men with critical military occupational specialties were flown directly to the combat zone. The 4th Replacement Draft sailed for Korea on board the fast transport USNS *General William O. Darby* (AP 127) and was due in mid-January. The just-forming 5th Replacement Draft was assigned to the USS *General J. C. Breckinridge* (AP 176) and was slated to arrive in mid-February. Replacement drafts containing about 1,700 men each continued arriving on a monthly basis from then on. This personnel replacement system was adequate, but it was not perfect. The adoption of a combat rotation system primarily based upon time served meant that the most experienced Marines were constantly leaving Korea and their places taken by inexperienced replacements. The introduction of new men, as individuals rather than units, created cohesion problems in small units. Personnel shortages after major engagements remained a nagging problem throughout the spring of 1951.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A157778

Marine replacements come ashore from a Navy landing ship. Three replacement drafts were rushed to Korea after the Chosin campaign, and about one replacement draft with about 100 officers and more than 1,000 enlisted men arrived each month thereafter.

Extraordinary Heroism

The period from January to May 1951 encompassed three designated U.N. campaigns: Chinese Intervention from 3 November 1950 to 24 January 1951; the First U.N. Counteroffensive from 25 January to 21 April; and the CCF Spring Offensive from 22 April to 8 July 1951. It is ironic that the spring of 1951 is one of the most overlooked periods in American military history because that period featured some of the most intense

and hard-fought Marine actions of the Korean Conflict. The anonymous battles of that time were as desperate and bloody as those at the Pusan Perimeter, the Inchon landing, and the liberation of Seoul, yet they remain almost unknown except to those who fought there. Too often relegated to the dustbin of history is the fact that some Marine units suffered more casualties during the drive to the Punchbowl than they had during the legendary fighting at the Chosin Reservoir. Indeed, the events of that time might well be called the "Forgotten Campaigns" of what is now often termed the "Forgotten War." What should be remembered is the key role played by the Marines, both on the ground and in the air. The 1st Marine Division rendered ineffective one NKPA division at Pohang, spearheaded the United Nations' recapture of the Hwachon Reservoir during Operations Killer and Ripper, and stabilized the center of the U.N. line in the midst of the CCF Spring Offensive. The versatile 1st Marine Aircraft Wing flew a wide variety of missions; helicopters proved their utility in combat and Marine close air support was unsurpassed in efficiency. These accomplishments did not go unrecognized at the time; both the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing were awarded Presidential Unit Citations for their actions in the spring of 1951.

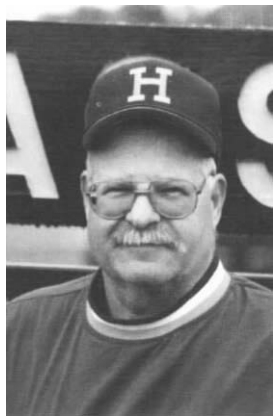
Luckily, the military lessons of the day were not forgotten. The Marines in Korea fought well, but they were not employed in accord with their envisioned inter-Service role. They, even more than their antecedents in World War I, became an integral part of a United States field army fighting far from the sea for an extended period. Instead of acting as a semi-independent combined arms team, as had been the case in 1950, in the spring of 1951 the 1st Marine Division was stripped of its direct air support and became just one more Eighth Army ground maneuver unit. Thus, contrary to the wishes of Marine commanders, the 1st Marine Division was used as a "second land army." The forced separation of the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and the lack of an in-theater Marine commander prompted the later creation of permanent Marine air-ground task forces.

Another factor that affected the future of the Marine Corps was the performance of the Marine Corps Reserve. Without the Reserve, it is doubtful that the Marines would have been able to deploy an entire division and aircraft wing to Korea. The character of the 1st Marine Division underwent a drastic change in the spring of 1951. When the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade arrived in Korea in August 1950 it was virtually an all-regular formation, by the time of the Chosin Reservoir campaign in November about one-third of the Marines were reservists, but by the end of May 1951 almost two-thirds of the U.S. Marines in Korea were reservists. There were very few regular officers below the rank of captain and almost no regular enlisted men other than staff noncommissioned officers by the time the 1st Marine Division reached the No Name Line. Similar figures also apply to the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. This proved that the Marine Corps could count on its Reserve when the chips were down. This lesson was validated in the Persian Gulf some 40 years later when Marine reservists once again answered the call to the colors during the Gulf War and acquitted themselves well.

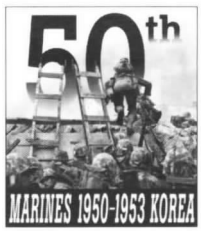
The period January to May 1951 was one of transition and tumult during which United Nations forces traveled from the brink of defeat to the edge of victory several times as fierce fighting ebbed and flowed across Korea's midlands. The enemy still remained a potent and dangerous foe after the spring of 1951, but the United Nations Command had become a seasoned force that was not about to be ejected from the peninsula. All talk of evacuating Korea due to enemy pressure was silenced by the recent stellar performance on the battlefield. This favorable reversal of fortunes in Korea between January and May has been characterized by the eminent military historian Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., USA, as "the single greatest feat of arms in American military history," and the Marines played a key role in that amazing reversal of fortune.

The impact of that stunning turnaround was, however, not realized on the home front. By mid-1951 many Americans were dissatisfied with "Truman's Police Action," and there was deeply felt sentiment across the country for an end to the fighting. The resulting political pressure led to a fundamental change in American foreign policy. A Joint Chiefs of Staff directive stated that the military objective was no longer to unify Korea, but "to repel aggression against South Korea." In fact, both sides unofficially accepted a mutual cessation of major offensive actions after the U.N. regained the modified Kansas Line in June. The Korean War then passed its first anniversary without fanfare or celebration, and not long after peace talks began. The United Nations Command briefly mounted a limited offensive after the talks broke down, but the Korean Conflict thereafter became a bloody stalemate marked by two more years of contentious negotiations and inconclusive fighting.

About the Author



Lieutenant Colonel Ronald J. Brown, USMCR (Ret), is a free-lance writer and scoring director for Measurement Incorporated, an educational testing firm. The author of two monographs in the Persian Gulf series and two official unit histories, he was also a contributing author for the best-selling book *The Marines*, and has been a frequent contributor to professional journals. He is working on a second Korean commemorative pamphlet on Marine helicopter operations. Lieutenant Colonel Brown served as an active duty infantry officer from 1968 to 1971 and saw combat in Vietnam. He joined MTU DC-7 at its inception in 1976 and served continuously with that unit until his retirement. He went to Korea during Exercise Team Spirit-84. Six years later he was activated during the Persian Gulf War and was assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force. After Operation Desert Storm, he became the Marine component historian for Combined Task Force Provide Comfort in northern Iraq. Lieutenant Colonel Brown, then commanding MTU DC-7, retired in 1996. In civilian life, Ronald Brown was a high school history teacher for three decades and is a nominee for the Michigan High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame.



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Sources

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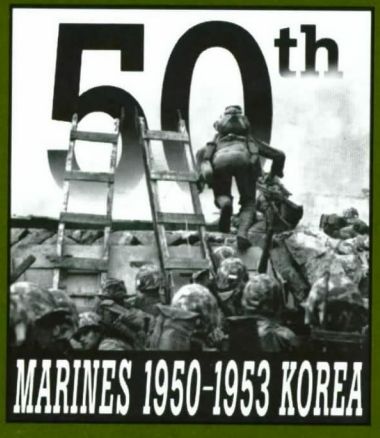
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