Operations in West Korea
Pat Meid and James M. Yingling

Chapter 2. Defending the Line
Defense of West and East Coast Korean Islands[3]

Just off the northwest Korean mainland a string of islands extends from the mouth of the Yalu River down around the peninsula to Pusan in the southeast. Most of these islands are tiny and are located south of the 38th Parallel. Only a few lie off the east coast, and these are clustered primarily in the North Korean harbor of Wonsan. By early 1951, UN forces exercised control over most of the Korean islands. Their tactical importance is shown from their diverse use as sites for UN Command intelligence activities, USAF radar installations, locations for the emergency landing strips used by Allied planes, bases for U.S. search and rescue operations, and as springboards for possible thrusts into enemy rear areas.[4]

Another reason for holding some of the islands had come to light during truce negotiations in December 1951. At that time, in an attempt to expedite the successful conclusion of the truce meetings, UN representatives had offered the Communists all the islands north of the 38th Parallel. Brushing aside the tactical value of the proposal, the enemy boasted that he could capture the islands at any time. In November 1951 the Communists had, in fact, seized two western islands near the mouth of the Yalu. The 1,000 defending guerrillas there—former North Koreans working for the UNC—had been unable to stem the assault. The UN Command promptly reviewed the island situation and on 6 January 1952 gave TF 95, the United Nations Blockading and Escort Force, responsibility for both overall defense and local ground defense for the 11 coastal islands north of the 38th Parallel and the 4 islands immediately south of this boundary. Two subordinate blockade task groups, one in the west and another in the east, were responsible for the defense of these islands.

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In the west, Task Group (TG) 95.1 was charged with the defense of six islands. (See Map 6.) Two of these, Sok-to and Cho-do, lie between the 38th and 39th Parallels; the four remaining islands, Paengyong-do, Taechong-do, Yongpyong-do, and Tokchok-to, are above the 37th Parallel. In the east, TG 95.2 was responsible for keeping nine islands north of the 38th Parallel in friendly hands. Situated in Wonsan harbor are Mo-do, Sin-do, So-do, Tae-do, Hwangto-do, Ung-do, and Yo-do, the largest. (See Map 7.) Another island, Yang-do, actually a two-island group further north in the area of the 41st Parallel, is 18 miles northeast of the coastal city of Songjin. The southernmost island, tiny Nan-do, is below Wonsan and the 39th Parallel and lies 10 miles northeast of Kojo, another coastal city.

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Ground defense of the islands had been, at best, a haphazard arrangement before TF 95 took over the responsibility. Many of the islands, especially those inhabited by friendly guerrillas, had neither plans for a proper defense nor commanders experienced in organizing resistance to enemy attack. Soon after the two islands near the mouth of the Yalu were taken, ROK Marines were rushed to those islands considered most strategic for South Korean defense. Late in 1951, U.S. Marines had been assigned to the area in an advisory capacity. By early 1952, Marine Corps detachments were in command of the island defense activities for both task groups. Korean Marines provided a majority of the actual defending forces.

Although the 1st Marine Division initially had supplied the officers and men for the island security missions, in January 1952 FMFPac took on direct responsibility for furnishing personnel and providing for their administrative and logistical support through the 1st Provisional Casual Company, FMFPac. Located at Otsu, Japan, the company was the administrative headquarters for seriously wounded Marine division and wing personnel recuperating in service hospitals in Japan. Recovered patients who volunteered for duty with the

offshore commands provided the bulk of the Marines used in this defense. Major responsibilities were to plan, organize, and conduct the defense of these islands off the Korean west and east coasts. A task element under each task group was created for this purpose.

With its headquarters at Paengyang-do, Task Element (TE) 95.15, the West Coast Island Defense Element (WCIDE), was organized early in January 1952. The following month, the initial complement of U.S. Marines arrived. Colonel William K. Davenport, Jr., element commander, assigned his 5 officers and 29 enlisted men to the 4 most critical islands and to his staff. Those islands garrisoned were Cho-do and Sok-to, north of the Parallel and both within range of enemy mainland guns, and Paengyang-do and Yongpyong-do, to the south. Taechong-do, near the command island, and Tokchok-to, southwest of Inchon, were both considered secure and not provided with U.S. Marine commanders. At each of the four occupied islands, Marines reconnoitered the terrain, drew up plans for preparation of defensive positions, organized and trained the troops available, and began the laborious task of constructing the defense. Protection against long-range hostile artillery fire was emphasized for the northern Sok-to and Cho-do garrisons.

Off the other long coast of Korea, TE 95.23, the East Coast Island Defense Element (ECIDE), commanded until early May 1952 by Colonel Frank M. Reinecke, had an almost entirely different situation. Eight of the nine islands in the vicinity of Wonsan Harbor or north of Songjin that ECIDE was responsible for were within range of Communist shore batteries and thus frequently fired upon. Even before the January 1952 decision, the U.S. Navy had been charged with the security of these east coast islands north of the 38th Parallel. For these reasons ECIDE defenses had to maintain a greater state of readiness and were more advanced than in the west. Fire support ships and land based U.S. Marine naval gunfire spotting teams from 1st ANGLICO (Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company), FMF, which also provided forward air controllers for the KMC regiment, stood by at all times to silence unfriendly artillery fire emanating from the mainland. The Marines had also trained Korean Marines to handle the spotting missions.

A number of events of major interest occurred during those first difficult weeks following organization of the two offshore island commands. On 19 and 20 February, elements of two North Korean infantry battalions launched an unsuccessful assault against the two Yang-do islands. The combined “action of the island garrison and UN surface forces”[5] repulsed the enemy attempt, which had been planned to gain intelligence and kill as many of the defenders as possible.[6] On the heels of this action, with the first enemy effort to take an east coast island, came an unexpected bonus in the form of a defector. Brigadier General Lee II, NKPA, came ashore on 21 February at Tae-do “in a stolen sampan with a briefcase full of top secret papers, a head full of top secret plans, and a strong desire to make himself useful.”[7] He was rushed immediately to Eighth Army intelligence officers.

The next day command personnel of the west coast TE 95.15 were treated to a surprise, though not so pleasant as the unforeseen defection of the NKPA general. Rear Admiral George C. Dyer, Commander Task Force (CTF) 95, and his staff were engaged in an inspection of the WCIDE islands. While the party was looking over the antiaircraft defenses at Paengyong-do:

“. . . an aircraft of VMA–312 made a pass at the CP, followed closely by a second plane. The second aircraft made a message drop and accidentally released a 500-pound bomb, which landed from 75–100 feet west of the CP, shattering all windows and blowing all the doors off their hinges. Personnel harbored within the CP were thrown to the floor by the concussion, a few sustaining minor cuts and bruises, but no fatalities were incurred . . . Commanding Officer, USS *Bairoko* [the carrier to which VMA–312 was assigned], sent a note of apology to CTE 95.15 and later followed up with material to repair the CP.”[8]

In March, CTG 95.1 directed the occupation of Ho-do, barely more than a speck of dirt 4,000 yards south of Sok-to and within 400 yards of the Communist mainland. Despite Colonel Davenport’s objection that the proposed action was beyond the defensive mission of his command and that the proximity of Ho-do to the enemy shore made the island untenable,[9] the task group commander would not rescind the directive. After a detailed

reconnaissance by First Lieutenant Wallace E. Jobusch, Colonel Davenport ordered a reinforced Korean Marine Corps platoon to occupy the island. This order was carried out, but during the night of 25–26 March the platoon lost its newly gained objective to a well-coordinated enemy amphibious attack. Not a single Korean Marine survivor could be accounted for at daylight. On 2 April, however, after the enemy force had departed Ho-do, six of the platoon turned up on Sok-to. They had survived by hiding out at Ho-do. None of the others were ever seen again. After the island was overrun, it was not reoccupied by Allied forces.

After this latest offensive action in the west, the Communists made no further attempts to seize any of the islands. U.S. and ROK Marines enjoyed a period of relative freedom from enemy harassment, except for frequent shore battery shelling directed against the east coast islands. For WCIDE command members the quiet island duty was interrupted only occasionally by hostile artillery fire although rumors of imminent enemy landings abounded. On 13 October, however, the enemy bombed Cho-do in the first air attack made against an island garrison since the U.S. Marines had been assigned the west coast island command responsibility. No casualties resulted from this raid. The lull in enemy activity that then ensued enabled island personnel to devote increased efforts towards improvement of their defenses.

Marines instructed, drilled, and conducted tactical exercises for the island forces. Island commanders supervised the construction and improvement of gun pits and other defense installations. At the ECIDE command island, Yo-do, a 2,700-foot airstrip (Briscoe Field) for emergency landings and intelligence flights had been completed by June. Since much of the labor was performed by Koreans, the language barrier sometimes created difficulties. In all these activities the Marines found that they were hampered but not unduly burdened by this problem.

One condition, however, did handicap operations of the island Marines. This was the supply situation which was prevented from becoming desperate only because the Marines were able to borrow and obtain necessities from other service activities. The inability of the island Marines to draw needed supplies from the responsible U.S. Army agency developed as a result of the slowness of the Marines in approving the task element tables of equipment (T/E),[10] and from insistence of the supplying activity that it would deal only with those units that had approved tables of equipment. The urgency of the situation was alleviated in May when weekly supply flights were begun by the 1st MAW. Even when surface ships did arrive with provisions, Marines frequently discovered that items which had been invoiced were missing.[11] Consumables, especially, had a high rate of disappearance.

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Chapter 2. Defending the Line
Marine Air Operations[12]

Close air support of ground troops remained an almost forgotten mission of Fifth Air Force tactical aircraft. When planes were allotted for close support, both their customary late arrival over the target area and pilot inefficiency left Marine ground commanders less than satisfied.[13] The particular concern of General Jerome, the new 1st MAW commander, was the continuing limited opportunity for his Marines to execute their normal primary mission—close air support of frontline troops. Although FAF assigned Marine pilots to support the 1st Marine Division whenever possible, the infrequent number of close air support missions performed under the existing sortie limit was beginning to detract from the quality of delivery. General Jerome set out to remedy this unfavorable situation.

Working with General Selden, the Marine wing commander prevailed upon the Air Force to permit close air support training of wing pilots and of forward air controllers with the Marine division. On 19 May, CG, FAF lifted the close air support restriction that he had imposed in front of General Selden's MLR. By agreement between the FAF and the two Marine commanders, Fifth Air Force would permit the scheduling of 12 close air support sorties daily for a one-month period, MAG–12 was given this training mission, to begin on 21 May.[14]

The objective of the CAS program, in addition to providing operational training and practice for Marine ground officers, air controllers, and pilots, was to inflict maximum casualties on Chinese troops and to increase the destruction and damage to their positions. Before assigning a pilot to the actual training flights, MAG–12 sent him on a tour of the front lines to become better familiarized with the topography, the restricted ("no-fly") areas, and probable enemy targets. Air strikes requested by the division went directly to MAG–12. Initially, a limitation of 12 sorties per day was established, but on 17 July—the program having already been extended beyond its original 30-day limit—a new ceiling of 20 daily sorties went into effect. The division was also allowed additional flights above this prescribed daily sortie number when air support was needed to repel a large-scale enemy attack or to assist in a major Marine ground assault.

Almost as soon as the Marines began to derive the benefit of the training program, the flights were terminated by FAF. On 3 August 1952, following a complaint by CG, Eighth Army that Marines were Fifth Air Force notified General Jerome that the special program getting a disproportionate share of the close air support sorties, the would end the next day. General Selden was instructed to request air support "in the same manner as other divisions on the Army front."[15] Despite the abrupt termination of the training program, the division had derived substantial benefits from the 12 weeks of Marine-type close air support. "Air attacks were the most useful weapon for dealing with enemy dug-in on the reverse slopes,"[16] according to an official analysis. One regimental commander reported that the 1,000-pound bombs were effective in destroying enemy bunkers and further noted that the strikes had produced good results in the "destruction or damaging of enemy artillery and mortar pieces."[17] Another senior officer commented that air overhead kept the Communists "buttoned up," which permitted Marines greater freedom of movement for tactical and logistical operations.[18]

A second type of Marine close air support aided the mission of Marine infantrymen in western Korea during the summer of 1952. This was controlled radar bombing, which permitted delivery of aviation ordnance at night or under other conditions of limited or poor visibility. The Air Force had introduced the concept into Korea in January 1951, had tested and evaluated it in combat, and shortly thereafter had put it to good use against the Communist spring offensives that year. Based on a concept oriented towards deep support of troops in extended land campaigns, the Air Force system made use of 20-ton vans to house its ground components.[19]

The Marine equipment, on the other hand, was more mobile since it was to be employed close to friendly lines. Referred to as the MPQ-14,[20] the Marine radar bombing system was designed so that the largest piece could be put into a one-ton trailer. Major ground items were a generator power supply, a tracking radar, and a computer; the last essential component, an automatic bombing control, was mounted in the aircraft.

Developed and hand built after World War II by Marines under Major Marion C. Dalby at the Naval Air Materiel Test Center, Point Mugu, California, the MPQ-14 was first used in Korea in September 1951. Initially, considerable mechanical difficulty was experienced with radar bombing, which affected the accuracy of the bombs, but later the system became sufficiently reliable to permit bomb drops within one mile of friendly lines. Subsequent use confirmed the tactical precision of the MPQ-14. By the middle of summer 1952, the Marines had obtained Fifth Air Force permission to use radar bombing, controlled by a forward observer on the ground, in a close support role.

Before this policy change took place another one, at a still higher command level, had occurred. On 23 June, FAF planes struck at eight North Korean hydroelectric plants in the central and northwestern part of the country. The attack represented a departure from the intense interdiction of enemy lines of communication (Operation STRANGLE) which, since May 1951, had characterized FAF support operations. The shift came about after a Far East Air Forces study on the effectiveness of the interdiction campaign had concluded, in part, that the program had been indecisive.[21]

For more than a year preceding the 23 June attack, the Fifth Air Force had concentrated its ground support efforts on the disruption of Communist communication lines so that the enemy would be unable “to contain a determined offensive . . . or to mount a sustained offensive himself.”[22] During the lifetime of the doctrine, no major offensive had been launched by the enemy, and on this fact was based the claim for success of the interdiction program. Opponents, however, pointed out that despite this maximum FAF air effort, the Communists had built up their strength, including support areas immediately to the rear of their front lines and resupply installations. As the recent UN commander, General Matthew B. Ridgway,[23] told members of the Senate Committee on Armed Services on 21 May 1952, the same month that FAF had begun to shift its air effort away from interdiction, “I think that the hostile forces opposing the Eighth Army . . . have a substantially greater offensive potential than at any time in the past. . . .”[24]

A number of factors contributed to the reduced emphasis on the interdiction strategy. Three, however, appear to have most influenced the inauguration of Operation PRESSURE, the name given the new policy of concentrating aerial attacks on major industrial targets considered of greatest value to the North Korean economy. Mounting FAF aircraft losses due to enemy flak (fire from ground-based antiaircraft weapons) and an insufficient number of replacements helped shape the new program. By April 1952 FEAF had received “only 131 replacement aircraft of the types engaged in rail interdiction against the 243 it had lost and the 290 major-damaged aircraft on interdiction sorties.”[25] These heavy losses had resulted from the increasing accuracy of Communist antiaircraft ground weapons, a capability Air Force planners had failed to consider sufficiently.[26]

Although significant, this loss factor was not the final consideration in executing PRESSURE attacks against the power plants. More directly responsible were two other recent developments. These were the decision of the new UN commander, General Mark W. Clark, to take forceful action to bring the Communists around to an armistice agreement and a top-level Defense Department change of policy that had removed a major North Korean hydroelectric facility from the restricted bombing list. This was the Suiho plant, fourth largest in the world. Adjacent to the Yalu River, about 75 miles northeast of its mouth, Suiho supplied approximately 25 percent of the electrical power used in nearby northeast China.[27]

Results of the PRESSURE strikes, carried on from 23-27 June, were highly successful. Marine, Navy, and Air Force planes flew 1,654 attack and escort sorties in these raids. Of the 13 target plants attacked during this period, 11 were put out of commission and 2 others were presumably destroyed. North Korea was almost

blacked out for two weeks. Chinese and Russian experts were rushed to North Korea to lend a hand in restoration. The hydroelectric strikes marked the first time that Marine, Navy, and Air Force pilots had flown a combined mission in Korea. The 23 June strike, moreover, was of particular significance to 1st MAW since it was also the first time that MAGs–12 and –33 were assigned group strikes at specific adjacent targets at the same time.

Led by Colonel Robert E. Galer, the new MAG–12 commander since 25 May, group pilots struck and leveled the single power complex, Chosin 3, in the 23–24 June runs. Colonel John P. Condon, who had taken over MAG–33 on 24 May, put 43 jets from VMFs–311 and –115 into the air during the two-day mission. The first time that its F9Fs had ever been massed for a strike of this type, the MAG–33 jets similarly destroyed the Chosin 4 plant, 11 miles northwest of Hamhung.

Although the jets carried a smaller payload than the Corsairs and ADs of MAG–12 (approximately 37 gross tons to more than 150 tons), the extremely precise bombing record made by the Grumman Panther jet pilots forever put to rest the doubts about jet accuracy that had been held by some in 1st MAW. As the group commander later recalled, “The capability of jet strike aircraft for extremely accurate bombing, an item of open discussion prior to this time, was never questioned in the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing after this mission.”[28] Another gratifying result was that flight personnel on all of the 150 Marine aircraft returned safely. In fact, of the total 1,645 FAF sorties, only 2 aircraft were downed; rescue aircraft successfully picked up these two pilots, both U.S. Navy officers.

It was the high probability of being rescued, if forced to abandon their aircraft, that not only eased the minds of pilots on missions north of the 38th Parallel but also permitted the fliers a greater degree of success. As the MAG–12 commander, Colonel Galer, who was shortly to escape imminent capture by the enemy, later declared, “I do know that every pilot flying in this theatre should have the highest possible morale with the knowledge that so many are ready and willing to risk so much to get them.”[29]

A Medal of Honor holder from World War II, Colonel Galer was leading a flight of 31 aircraft on 5 August. His objective was the supply area and tungsten mines in the mountainous northeastern part of North Korea, just below the 39th Parallel and 35 miles southwest of Wonsan. After several hits had killed his engine, the MAG–12 commander, preparing to parachute, climbed out over the side of his plane, but found that he had one foot stuck inside the cockpit, probably on the shoulder straps or the loop of the belt. He then pulled himself partially back towards the cockpit, freed his foot with a vigorous kick, cleared the plane, and headed in spread-eagle fashion towards the ground. Almost immediately the plane, falling in a nose dive, caught the descending pilot on the shoulder and pulled him into a spin. Colonel Galer recovered in time, however, to pull the ripcord and thus ease his impact onto enemy terrain. He landed within ten feet of his crashed AU.[30]

“Immediately upon getting free of the chute, I ran as rapidly as possible, staying low, down through a corn field.”[31]. At the end of the field, the Marine aviator paused momentarily to survey the terrain for an escape route. Spotting a dry stream bed nearby, Colonel Galer dashed toward it and quickly but cautiously moved up it some 100 yards. Then he halted to put into operation a small survivor radio to report his position. The message was received by the rescue air patrol orbiting overhead which relayed the information to pickup aircraft. The patrol advised the downed pilot that a rescue helicopter had already departed for the crash area.

Before breaking radio contact, Colonel Galer told the air patrol his planned movements in order to facilitate pickup. He then quickly left the area which was located too near the crashed aircraft for a rescue attempt. Evading detection by enemy soldiers and curious teenagers moving towards the wreckage, the Marine worked his way to higher ground, keeping the air patrol advised of his changing position. By 1845, a search of the area was underway. Of the events that followed, Colonel Galer wrote:

“At 1908 I heard the helicopter go down the next valley and saw it disappear. I called, told them to make a 180-degree turn since I was in the valley to the southwest and on the north slope. I did not get an answer but soon the helicopter came through a saddle in the ridge. . . . I immediately let the red smoke (day flare) go, and

came out of the bushes . . . calling the helicopter on the radio also. They apparently saw me immediately and came over and hovered. The mechanic leaned out and swung the hoisting sling back and forth. . . . Finally, I grabbed it and got in . . . and the pilot took off. . . . The mechanic pulled me up and into the helicopter as we crossed the valley."[32]

The colonel was not yet out of the woods. The trip to a rescue ship at Wonsan was marked by intermittent bursts of enemy antiaircraft fire. On one occasion the chopper was hit hard enough to spin it completely around. As the rescue craft neared the coast patches of fog added to the hazards of night flying. About this time the warning light indicating low fuel supply came on but "the pilot gambled on making the sea at the risk of having to autorotate through the overcast into the mountains."[33] It was a correct decision. The fuel lasted until the helicopter landed on the rescue vessel. It was then 2100.

Quite naturally the episode brought forth high praise for the rescue system, and particularly for those individuals whose skills, initiative, and courage made downed crew rescues of this type possible. But Colonel Galer also saw some weaknesses. He pointed out that rescue helicopter pilots should be kept up to date on changing enemy flak positions. The Marine group commander also stressed the need for rescue helicopters to establish and maintain a minimum safe fuel level which would depend largely upon the position of the downed aircraft. One final suggestion, not about the system but the aircraft itself, was that fixed-wing aircraft have ejection-type seats. Remembering his own difficulties, the MAG–12 commander further cautioned pilots to be certain they were free of all straps and cords before bailing out.

In addition to attack missions by tactical aircraft and rescue work by its helicopters, the Marine wing was also responsible for providing antiaircraft defense. It was not until July 1951, 13 months after the NKPA invasion of South Korea, that a formal air defense had been established for the country. Fifth Air Force was given the command responsibility of coordinating the aerial defense net for South Korea and its adjacent sea frontiers. In mid-November 1951, the FAF commander had revised the defensive system, dividing his area into a northern and southern sector, at a point exactly halfway between the 36th and 37th Parallels.

FAF commanded the northern air defense sector while the southern sector became the responsibility of CG, 1st MAW. In turn, these two sectors were further divided into subsectors. Each of these, through a tactical air direction center (TADC), maintained radar surveillance of its assigned area and performed plotting and identification functions. Each subsector was charged with being "directly responsible for sector air defense."[34]

Although the 1st MAW commander had been designated as the Air Defense Commander, Southern Sector, Korea, he was not actually given the means to carry out this responsibility. He still did not have command over his tactical squadrons, nor could he exercise control over operations of his tactical air coordination center (TACC) or TADC.[35] Moreover, his southern sector could not originate practice air warning messages. The wing commander had to obtain permission from JOC before he could begin practice intercepts for training his radar intercept controllers.

Several other deficiencies existed in the air defense system that the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing had inherited. There were no ground antiaircraft weapons at the Marine fields until a .50 caliber automatic weapons battery was detached from the 1st 90mm Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion, FMF, early in 1952 and sent to K–3, the home field of MAG–33. Other inadequacies were deficient equipment—a search radar limited to 30 miles out and 20,000 feet up—and lack of an interceptor aircraft capable of rising to meet the faster swept-wing jets the enemy was employing. Airfields housing Marine air groups did not have revetments for either aircraft parking areas or ordnance dumps.

Not all of these weaknesses were acquired with assumption of the air defense mission. There had been a general lack of concern about air defense throughout South Korea. This attitude had resulted from the air supremacy which the Fifth Air Force had quickly established. Camouflage was seldom practiced. Dispersal of aircraft, supply dumps, and servicing facilities was employed only rarely. In fact, at K–6, there was not sufficient

land to properly scatter installations and aircraft.

Defense of the southern sector was commanded from K–3 (Pohang), the site of the TACC (Major Fred A. Steel). Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron 1 (MGCIS–1) was set up on the west coast at K–8 and MGCIS–3 (Lieutenant Colonel Owen M. Hines), on the east coast, near Pohang. Each of these intercept units had an early warning detachment operating off the mainland. Antiaircraft artillery was provided by the 90mm AAA battalion, which was controlled, however, by EUSAK. The 1st MAW commander specified a ready alert status for two aircraft during daylight hours. Just before sunrise and sunset, four planes were put on strip alert. Aircraft for night alert were provided by VMF(N)–513 until April, when the requirement was withdrawn. By 30 June 1952, 1st MAW air defense operations had destroyed a total of five enemy planes. The F7F night fighters flown by VMF(N)–513, moreover, had frequently been scrambled to intercept hostile night intruders that had penetrated into the Seoul area, or northern sector.

This low kill rate did little to atone for the steadily increasing number of Marine aircraft lost to enemy flak. Although the number of friendly planes destroyed or damaged in air-to-air combat during the latter half of Korean hostilities diminished sharply compared to the early period, losses due to ground fire were reaching alarming proportions in early and mid-1952. In May 1952 Navy and Marine air losses to enemy action were twice the total for April, and the June figure was even higher. By June, the Communists had massed more than half of their antiaircraft artillery along communication routes that FAF struck nearly every day.

Remedial action was soon taken. Stress on flak evasion was emphasized in pilot briefings and debriefings. The MAG–33 intelligence section came up with a program that attempted to reduce losses by a detailed analysis of flak information. The originator of this system, First Lieutenant Kenneth S. Foley, based his method on:

". . . photo interpretation of an up-to-date flak map, scale 1:50,000, and an intelligent utilization of flak reports disseminated by the 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron of the 5th Air Force. Frequent briefings were given to each squadron on the enemy AA capabilities. Elaborate overlays were drawn up and displayed. Target maps, clearly showing AA positions and flak clocks [danger areas], were given to flight leaders to aid them in evading known AA guns in their target area. Through flak analysis, the safest route to the target area was determined and an actual attack and retirement route was suggested. These recommendations appeared in a flak summary presented at each combat briefing."[36]

Other measures attempted to reduce mounting losses of personnel and aircraft. In all Marine air units, evasion and escape tactics were stressed. In addition to the FAF de-emphasis on interdiction of communication routes that had come about, in part, due to heavy aircraft losses, Fifth Air Force decreed that beginning 3 June, "with the exception of the AD and F4U aircraft [1st MAW types] only one run will be made for each type of external ordnance carried and no strafing runs will be made."[37] CTF 77 ordered that in all attack runs, aircraft would pull out by the 3,000-foot altitude level. The Marines, combining their air and ground efforts, came up with a positive program of their own. It was to become the first known instance of Marine ground in support of Marine air.

Although the originator of the idea cannot be positively identified, the time that artillery flak suppression firing was first employed can be traced back to late 1951, when the division was still in East Korea.[38] It was not until June 1952, however, that a published procedure for conducting flak suppression firing appeared in Marine division records. That same month another type of flak suppression, this by an aircraft, was utilized by the 1st Marines, commanded at the time by Colonel Walter N. Flournoy. The procedure called for the FAC [forward air controller] to relay gun positions to friendly strike planes which temporarily diverted their attack to silence the located gun. Although the method "worked with good results,"[39] it was not destined to become the system adopted by the Marines.

The more frequently used flak suppression called for artillery to fire on hostile gun positions that could

impede the success of a friendly close air support strike. Several Marine officers appear to have had a major role in the development and employment of this technique. Among them were Brigadier General Frank H. Lamson-Scribner, Assistant Commanding General, 1st MAW; Colonel Henderson, the 11th Marines commander; and Lieutenant Colonel Gerald T. Armitage, 3/1 commander.

The 1st Marines battalion commander explained how the system operated in late spring 1952:

"I was in an outpost watching an air strike. I asked Captain Shoden [John C., the battalion forward air controller] to work out some idea of flak suppression. Shoden, G–2, and others worked two or three weeks to complete the first plot of antiaircraft positions. My idea was to have a plane start a run and then pull up before finishing the dive. The enemy antiaircraft gunners could not tell that the pilot was pulling out at an extremely high level. The batteries would fire and Marine observers would plot their positions from their fires. Then, the Marine artillery would lay a heavy barrage on these positions."[40]

While observing an air strike from the Marine division sector, General Lamson-Scribner noted that prior to the strike there had been no preparatory firing on enemy antiaircraft artillery positions. After the strike he discussed this matter with General Selden, who "directed me to discuss with his chief of staff what I had observed and my suggestions that division firepower for 'flak suppression' be coordinated with air strikes."[41] The shot of this was that the division chief of staff suggested that the 11th Marines regimental commander and his staff members develop an SOP[42] for using artillery flak suppression fires in support of close air support strikes. It was believed that proper utilization of these fires would reduce aircraft losses and further increase the opportunity for a successful close air support mission by destruction of enemy antiaircraft weapons.[43]

On 30 June 1952, the 11th Marines published the SOP. Since the objective was to prevent enemy fire from interfering with friendly strike planes, the key to the entire procedure was the precise coordination of artillery fire with the delivery of aircraft ordnance. As Colonel Henderson described the system:

"When the infantry regiment received word of an air strike, the air liaison officer plotted on the map . . . the target of the strike, the orbit point, the direction of approach, and the altitude . . . and direction of pullout. Then the artillery liaison officer, by looking at the map, could determine which of the Chinese positions could bring effective fire on the strike aircraft. The artillery battalion had prearranged code names and numbers for every antiaircraft position. All the artillery liaison officer had to do was pick up the phone and tell the F.D.C. [fire direction center] 'flak suppression' and read off what targets he wanted covered.

"These fires were then delivered on the request of a forward observer who was with the forward air controller . . . When there was a forward air controller up in the front lines controlling the strike, we would put a forward observer with him. When the planes were . . . ready to go, the F.O. [forward observer] got the word 'Batteries laid and loaded,' and he would tell them to fire. The minute the FO would get the word, 'On the way,' the forward air controller would tell the planes to start their run. As a result, we had cases where the planes were in their bombing run within 30 seconds after the flak suppression was fired, which meant that they were in on the target while the positions were still neutralized. The question of control and split second timing is of exceeding importance because the aircraft are going 300 to 400 miles an hour. . . ."[44]

Early in the program the MAG–12 commander reported that although the flak suppression procedure was not flawless, it was proving "very capable and workable."[45] An indication of the success of 1st Marine Division pioneering efforts in flak suppression is seen in the fact that shortly after it was put into operation "there was a steady stream of visitors to the 11th Marines CP to find out what [it was] and how we were doing it and to get copies of our SOP."[46] The procedure was eventually adopted by other Eighth Army units.

Marine air losses from hostile ground fire during CAS strikes immediately began to drop from the June peak and never again reached this level. In 124 close support sorties flown by 1st MAW on 13 August, not one plane was shot down and only four received minor damage from enemy flak. Although there were some complaints as to execution of the flak suppression program these would be corrected, in the main, by a revised

procedure which the 11th Marines would undertake in the winter of 1952.

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Chapter 2. Defending the Line
Spring 1952 on JAMESTOWN[47]

Earlier in the year the Marines had revised their estimate of enemy capabilities after the lengthening of the division MLR by I Corps and the subsequent heavy enemy attack. The re-evaluation placed the most likely course of Chinese action as defending their present positions with the 21 infantry battalions assigned and also cautioned that the Communists could mount a limited objective attack at any time of their choosing. Division intelligence estimated that the Chinese could muster up to "57 infantry battalions supported by 12 artillery battalions and 40 tanks and/or self-propelled guns" for a thrust into the Marine sector.[48]

The enemy, however, showed little disposition for any concerted ground attack during the remainder of April. But before the month ended, Marines, in conjunction with other I Corps divisions, had deluged the enemy with artillery and tank fire in Operation CLOBBER. The purpose of this shoot was to inflict maximum casualties and damage by employment of the element of tactical surprise. The reinforced 11th Marines, augmented for this occasion by Company D, 1st Tank Battalion and nine of the battalion's 105mm howitzer and flame tanks, blasted Chinese CPs, bivouac areas, artillery and mortar positions, and observation posts. Marine frontline regiments joined in with their organic mortars. Since most of the firing took place at night when results were unobserved, no estimate could be made as to the effect of the operation on the enemy.

A new Marine artillery tactic about this time was the counter-counterbattery program instituted by the 11th Marines. The regiment had developed this technique to counter superior enemy artillery strength. This situation, as well as the fact that I Corps artillery available to the division was considered inadequate for counter-battery support, led the Marine division to adopt the new program in May 1952. One provision required a battery in each battalion to select counter-counterbattery positions and occupy them for 24 consecutive hours each week. Another proviso of the program was the selection by each battalion of 10 roving gun positions that were to be occupied by a single weapon rotated to each place at least once weekly. By these tactics, the artillery regiment hoped not only to mislead the Chinese in their estimate of the strength and location of Marine artillery but also to dilute enemy counterbattery intelligence by causing him to fire into areas just vacated by friendly guns. "The effectiveness of the program was demonstrated on numerous occasions when the enemy fired counterbattery into unoccupied positions."[49] An added advantage was that of providing deeper supporting fires on target areas.[50]

Still another concept regarding the employment of artillery developed during the early days of the JAMESTOWN defense. The 11th Marines had advised the infantry regiments that it could effectively fire on enemy troops attacking friendly positions if the Marines had overhead cover. The idea was to use variable time (VT) fuzes[51] with the standard high explosive (HE) shells. Artillery battalions supporting the frontline regiments registered on positions occupied frequently by patrols going forward from JAMESTOWN.

According to the recollections of veteran artillery and infantrymen in the division, the first occasion that pre-planned artillery fire was placed on friendly positions occurred in May 1952.[52] The episode involved a 2/7 platoon patrol that late on 18 May was ordered to return to the MLR from an outpost on the former OPLR. Operating forward of the center regimental sector,[53] the platoon commander, Second Lieutenant Theodore H. Watson, directed that two of the three Marine squads return to the MLR. The remaining unit, surrounded by about 50 Chinese, engaged them in a brisk fire fight.

When the artillery fire to seal off the enemy and box-in the defensive position failed to discourage the hostile force, Lieutenant Watson ordered his men into the shelter of two nearby bunkers. He then requested the artillery to place VT directly over his positions.[54] The volleys of overhead fire and effective Marine small arms

fire then forced the enemy to call off his assault. Although the exact number of Chinese casualties could not be determined, the new fire technique fully accomplished its purpose—repelling the enemy force.

Initiating the infantry action in May was the 1st KMC Regiment, holding the division left flank, with its 2d and 1st Battalions on line. At dusk on 3 May a platoon-size raiding party, under Second Lieutenant Kim Young Ha, left an outpost forward of the 1st Battalion line on a prisoner-taking mission and headed for the objective, Hill 34, adjacent to the rail line to Kaesong and about a half-mile west of the Sachon River. When the platoon was within approximately 1,000 yards of its goal, a support squad was detached near a trail and stream juncture to ambush any enemy attempting to attack the raiders from the rear.[55] The remainder of the platoon, two assault squads, then continued towards the objective, moving cautiously and halting for an hour because of the bright moonlight.

After midnight the moon disappeared behind the clouds, and the Koreans again emerged. They advanced towards a village immediately south of the objective. After searching a few houses and not finding any enemy, the KMCs started on the last leg to Hill 34. As soon as the objective came into view the raiders deployed for the assault. At 0410 the two squads of Korean Marines charged the knoll, immediately drawing heavy Chinese small arms fire. When the raiders continued their assault, the enemy retreated to his trench-works and bunkers where he continued to fire on the KMCs. Since it now appeared to the patrol leader that the probability of taking a prisoner was unlikely, he prepared to return to friendly lines. He first arranged for artillery to cover the withdrawal of the patrol, and then broke off the 18-minute fire fight, taking his only casualty, a wounded rifleman, with him. The KMCs counted 12 enemy dead. No prisoners were taken. In the preliminary action, the support squad had also suffered three killed and seven wounded.

As the KMC raiders were making their way back to the MLR, a combat patrol from 1/5, the reserve battalion of the 5th Marines, prepared to move out. This patrol was one of many dispatched by the battalion during the first week of May in accordance with its mission of patrolling in front of the OPLR, between the MLR and the OPLR, and throughout the regimental sector. On this occasion, the patrol was to occupy the high ground south of former Outpost 3, which had become the focal point of activity in the center sector.[56] When used as a base of fire, this ground provided a position from which automatic weapons could readily cover enemy lines or tie in with adjacent friendly defenses. In addition, the 1/5 patrol was to drop off friendly snipers to cover the former OPLR position, to maintain surveillance, and to ascertain to what extent the Chinese were developing the outpost. The task went to a Company A platoon, which the unit commander, First Lieutenant Ernest S. Lee, reinforced with light and heavy machine guns.

At sunup the Marines crossed line JAMESTOWN and before 0900 had reached the high ground they were to occupy. Here the patrol leader set up his base of fire, then pushed on with the rest of his men to the outpost, receiving occasional mortar fire before reaching the old position. While organizing his men at the objective, Lieutenant Lee received word by radio that the Chinese were preparing to attack. Almost immediately, intense shelling struck the forward slope of the hill. A Marine aerial observer (AO) detected 60–70 Chinese advancing from the next hill, some 800 yards to the front of the Marines. The AO also reported that the enemy was firing mortars towards OP 3.

Shortly thereafter the Chinese fire ceased. Moments before it lifted, the patrol received a second warning that an enemy attack was imminent. Even as this message was being received, about 30 Chinese rushed the patrol. The Marines immediately took the hostile assault force under fire, killing 14 CCF with well-placed small arms fire. Overhead, four 1947-vintage Marine Corsair fighters (F4U-4Bs) struck at troublesome mortar positions previously located by the AO. At 1330 another aerial strike against Chinese mortars and enemy positions on the hill north of OP 3 was executed. These two air missions were credited with destroying six mortars, damaging two others and wrecking seven personnel bunkers. During the second strike the 1/5 patrol began its withdrawal.

On two occasions during the patrol’s return to its base the enemy attempted to ambush it. Each time the

attempt was thwarted, once by the patrol itself and the second time, with the help of friendly artillery. On the way back several loud explosions suddenly halted the patrol. Investigation revealed that the Marines, carrying their casualties of one dead and four wounded, had inadvertently stumbled onto a path not cleared of mines. Two members of the stretcher bearer detail were killed and three others wounded by the AP (anti-personnel) mines that had not been charted on friendly maps by the Marines' predecessors in the defense sector. A mine clearance team promptly disposed of the danger. With the aid of fires from a 2/5 patrol on the nose of a nearby hill, the 1/5 platoon was able to break contact. After pulling back several hundred yards, the patrol reached a forward medical aid station where jeeps picked up the more seriously wounded and took them to helicopters, which completed the evacuation. Patrol members reported 27 known enemy dead, including one that had been propelled into the air by a direct hit from an artillery round.

The next major Marine ground action soon involved the same Company A platoon, but this time as part of a larger force. Colonel Culhane, the regimental commander, directed his 1st Battalion to launch a new raid on the Outpost 3 area in an attempt to oust the Chinese and thereby deny the enemy use of the critical terrain. Inflicting casualties and capturing prisoners were additional tasks assigned. On 8 May Lieutenant Colonel Nihart issued Operation Order 12–52, calling for 1/5 to seize a series of three intermediate objectives (S, V and X) en route to OP 3 (Y). (See Map 8.) The combat patrol, reinforced by regimental elements, less Company B, was to be prepared to move north of OP 3 to occupy the next hill mass (Z), if necessary.

Click here to view map

Operational plans called for Lieutenant Lee's Company A to do most of the leg work as the assault unit. Captain Leland Graham's Company C, the diversionary force, was to make a feint against Hill 67, an enemy position southwest of OP 3, and to neutralize it by fire. Weapons Company, under First Lieutenant Ross L. Tipps, in support of the Company A force, was to set up a base of fire at a designated position (T), southeast of OP 3. Artillery support was to be furnished by 1/11, 4/11, and the attached 4.5-inch Rocket Battery. A section of regimental 4.2-inch mortars was also assigned. One platoon of Company B tanks was to assist the assault force by firing both on designated positions and targets of opportunity. Close air support flights were to be on station at two periods during the 9 May daylight operation.

In the early morning hours, under cover of darkness, all units moved into position. At 0430 the 1st Platoon of Company A crossed the line of departure heading for Objective S, a small ridge south and west of OP 3. The 2d Platoon followed and moved out on the right, while the 3d Platoon covered the rear. This hill, lightly defended, was quickly overrun by the Marines. The 1st Platoon then turned northeast towards the four peaks (designated as V, X, Y, and Z), its main objectives. These four positions were all situated at approximately the same elevation, 450 feet. A distance of some 1,300 yards separated the first and fourth hills in the north-south ridgeline.

As the 1/5 platoon neared Objective V, friendly rockets lashed the crest of the hill, which was held by a reinforced enemy platoon in mutually supporting fighting holes. Assisted by this fire, Marine two-man teams with rifles and grenades assaulted the fighting holes occupied by the Chinese. As the Marines proceeded to clear the objective, half of the Chinese were forced to retreat to safer ground. Marines estimated that 15 enemy were killed and a like number wounded. By this time, three hours after setting out on the raid, the platoon had seized one prisoner and sustained five wounded.

While reorganizing for the attack against Objectives X and Y, the 5th Marines patrol came under a heavy artillery and mortar barrage that killed one Marine and wounded three others. As the main body of the assault force advanced towards Objective X to support the attack, the lead elements of the company headed for OP 3. Throughout this maneuver, the company remained under heavy artillery fire.

Proceeding along the eastern slope of the ridgeline to assault knobs X and Y, the platoon had a good view of the effectiveness of their friendly supporting artillery fire. In fact, the combined rocket, howitzer, mortar,

tank, and machine gun fire threw up so much dust that at times it restricted the vision of the Marine assault team. As platoon members neared the summit of Objective X they encountered a heavy stream of defending fire. A strong counterattack from the front and left flank assailed the 1st Platoon, but the Marines repulsed the enemy with accurate small arms fire, killing six CCF. Infiltrators then attempted to envelop the Marine platoon and isolate it from the rest of the Company A assault force. Successive waves of Chinese, employing a wedge formation, tried to overrun the main body of the assault force. In repulsing this latest counterattack, Company A killed 12 and wounded 5 enemy.

Quickly sizing up the situation, the company commander ordered the 1st Platoon to rejoin the rest of the assault force. As the platoon began to pull back at 1435 the Chinese blanketed the route with a heavy barrage, firing "over four hundred rounds in a five minute period."[57] This intense shelling took the lives of three Marines, wounded a number of others, and halted the assault force just short of its final goal. Even though the Chinese had been driven from the three intermediate objectives, the devastating enemy mortar and artillery fire made the Marine position untenable. A third of the platoon moved back to Objective V; the rest worked their way along a route east of that objective. While the rest of Company A and Weapons Company elements occupied Hill T, the diversionary force, Company C, reinforced by other Weapons Company personnel, had remained at a strongpoint not far from Objective S. All supporting ground weapons assisted in the withdrawal. In addition to lending direct fire support, Marine tanks brought forward emergency supplies and evacuated casualties. By 1730, the assault force had returned to friendly lines, followed shortly by the rest of the battalion.

Although the battalion failed to seize and hold all of its objectives, that part of the mission calling for inflicting casualties and taking prisoners had been successfully executed.[58] Marines counted 35 enemy dead, 53 wounded, and 1 POW, and estimated that an additional 70 CCF had been killed and 105 wounded. Seven Marines were killed and 66 wounded in the action described by some observers as "the largest offensive effort the 1st Marine Division [has] made since last September."[59] The battalion fire support was well controlled and coordinated from an observation post on the MLR. Five air strikes, including one MPQ-14 mission, were credited with destroying three artillery pieces and an equal number of mortars, damaging two other mortars, and demolishing six personnel bunkers.

As the regiment noted, the earlier withdrawal of the OPLR had "altered to a considerable extent the tactics employed in this area. This is especially apparent in the number of patrol contacts close to the MLR and displayed the eagerness of the enemy to move in on any ground not held by friendly forces."[60] At the same time the increased number of troops made available for the MLR defense considerably strengthened the JAMESTOWN Line itself. Sector responsibility changed on 11 May. Colonel Russell E. Honsowetz' 7th Marines relieved the 5th Marines in the center regimental sector, with 2/7 and 1/7 occupying the left and right battalion positions, respectively.

When it took over the peace corridor sector the 7th Marines also assumed the responsibility for emergency rescue of the Allied truce delegates at Panmunjom.[61] The regiment advanced a mile nearer the objective when it moved the pick-up force's assembly area to within 400 yards of the line of departure. The 7th Marines also replaced the tanks in the force with M-39 personnel carriers, a U.S. Army-developed tracked vehicle similar in appearance to the Marine amphibian tractor. Another vehicle the 7th Marines retained in its task force was a medium tank equipped with additional radios. This armored communication and control vehicle was used as a radio relay station on the MLR to assist in liaison between moving infantry and tank units. Marine riflemen dubbed this command tank the porcupine, to describe the effect of many bristling antennas sticking out from its top. While the Marine division right sector, occupied by the 1st Marines, remained relatively quiet during the spring months on JAMESTOWN, the 7th Marines in the center MLR would shortly be involved in the division's major ground action in late May.

As part of the active defense of its JAMESTOWN line, Lieutenant Colonel Daughtry, commanding 1/7,

issued a directive on 26 May intended to deny to the enemy key terrain remaining on the old OPLR. Operation Plan 16-52 called for an attack to seize two parcels of high ground to the regiment's right front. At the same time, the battalion was to neutralize two Chinese positions west of the main objectives, Hill 104 (Objective 1) and the Tumae-ri Ridge (Objective 2), approximately a half-mile further north. The designated attack force, Captain Earl W. Thompson's Company A, was heavily reinforced. While Company A pursued its mission to the right, a Company C reinforced platoon under Second Lieutenant Howard L. Siers would conduct a feint on a pair of enemy positions to the left. Support for the operation would come from 2/11, two tank platoons, and from air, which was to be on call.

H-Hour was set for 0300 on 28 May. Attack and diversionary forces on schedule crossed the line of departure, a half-mile north of the MLR. Captain Thompson's main force advanced nearly to the base of Hill 104 before the Chinese, in estimated reinforced platoon strength, began to counterattack. The fight came to an abrupt end when Second Lieutenant John J. Donahue led his platoon to the top with bayonets fixed.[62] As the Marines dug in they came under heavy mortar and artillery fire from CCF strongholds to the north. On the left, meanwhile, Lieutenant Siers had received orders to seize the closer of his two objectives, former OPLR 5, instead of merely placing suppressive fire on it.

Moving forward from its base of fire, the platoon soon established contact with the enemy. At 0554 the platoon began its attack on the objective. Despite the close-in, hand-to-hand fighting, when it became apparent the assault could not be stopped the enemy gave way to Marine persistence in seizing the hill. By 0700 the Company C, 7th Marines platoon had secured its objectives and begun preparations for defense of the positions as well as continued support of the main attack force. Heavy casualties, however, forced Lieutenant Colonel Daughtry to recall the platoon and it returned to the lines by 0930.

Up on Hill 104, Company A, 1/7 faced practically the same situation. Taking Objective 1 had been costly and the advance through withering enemy fire was adding to the casualties. A reinforcing platoon was sent from the MLR to help the company disengage and return to friendly lines. Contact with the enemy was broken shortly after noon. With the aid of air and artillery, the company was able to make its way to the MLR by 1405.

Advancing only as far as it did, the attack, like the one earlier that month, failed to take all the designated objectives. Casualties to the 1/7 Marines were placed at 9 killed[63] and 107 wounded. Most of the latter were evacuated for further treatment. Forty-five of the enemy were counted dead and three wounded. Marines estimated another 40 enemy killed and 40 more wounded.[64] The action resulted in a casualty toll that was the highest to date for any Marine company in western Korea. All three Company A rifle platoon leaders—Second Lieutenants Donahue, Jules E. Gerding, and Kenneth A. Seal—were wounded. This battle also became the occasion for another unwelcomed record—4,053 rounds of enemy incoming, during a 24-hour period.

Following this late May offensive, a brief period of relative calm settled over the MLR. Marine and Chinese units continued the active defense of their respective sectors, with generally only a limited number of contacts. Fire fights between Marine patrols and CCF defenders lasted only a short time and usually ended when artillery fire caused the patrol to pull back. Even though this state of affairs remained essentially unchanged through June, several other events that month would affect Marine defense of the westernmost sector in I Corps.

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Chapter 2. Defending the Line
End of the Second Year of War[65]

A second realignment of the Marine-Commonwealth boundary along Line JAMESTOWN was made on 1 June. Part of the rear of the MLR was moved eastward to enable the Marine division to assume full responsibility for a key ridgetop. Prior to this date the hill mass had been divided along its crest, a factor that made it a potential trouble spot for both divisions. On 23 and 24 June, the 7th Marines MLR battalions relocated their positions towards the enemy along JAMESTOWN. This readjustment of the line varied from 1,300 yards in the center of the regimental sector to 400 yards near its right. The additional terrain strengthened the division front by placing the center regiment on improved and more defensible ground.

A week before this MLR change took place, there had been a shift in occupants in its far right sector. Colonel Culhane's 5th Marines replaced the 1st on line, which then went into division reserve. Manning the MLR were 2/5 on the left and 1/5 to the right.

In early June the recently appointed UN commander, General Clark, made his first visit to the 1st Marine Division front. During his briefing, General Selden reviewed the unusual combat difficulties confronting his Marines. In addition to the unfavorable terrain, the division commander noted the special operational restrictions caused by proximity to the truce talk site. Presence of a large number of uncharted minefields created another obstacle. Herculean efforts were required of the Marines to simultaneously man and construct defenses over 35 miles of JAMESTOWN. Adding to Marine problems were the facts that ground units were not receiving sufficient close air support and the capabilities of the Chinese were constantly increasing.

Chinese order of battle (OOB) information was fed into the division intelligence network by higher commands, I Corps and EUSAK, and adjacent units, but a large part of the data about Communist forces was produced by the division itself. Frontline units in contact with the enemy, by observation of his activities, supplied the bulk of intelligence about enemy defense tactics, employment of weapons, and combat characteristics. Supporting Marine division units, particularly artillery and armor, fed more facts into the system, mostly through identification of the caliber of enemy shells fired at the Marines. As a result of its missions forward of the line and actions in defense of it, the division reconnaissance company also contributed to the intelligence network. Individual Marines, performing as tactical air observers and artillery air observers, as well as the VMO and HMR pilots, were other important sources readily available to the 1st Marine Division.

G–2 directed the division intelligence effort, including processing of raw material and supplying of updated reports to 1st Division units. The G–2 section also maintained OOB and target identification data on Chinese units and their commanders. Members of the G–2 staff also assisted in interrogation of prisoners of war (POWs), screened the civilians apprehended in unauthorized areas, debriefed Marines exposed to enemy intelligence, and conducted inspections of division internal security. In areas where the 1st Marine Division had only a limited intelligence capability it turned to EUSAK for assistance.

Eighth Army teams augmented the division counterintelligence efforts and provided most of the translation service. In addition, three radio intercept units furnished information to the Marines. The critical importance of this service had been proven during several combat patrols in May when additional information was instantly radioed to a friendly unit under fire.

Other intelligence activities were less beneficial to the Marines. These operations were conducted by Tactical Liaison Officers (TLOs, friendly Koreans trained by U.S. intelligence teams), and members of a Higher Intelligence Detachment (HID), a Korean unit assigned from EUSAK. Both the TLO and HID proved of limited

value to the division, due to the generally poor educational background of the agents, their inadequate training, and frequent failure to return from assignments behind enemy lines. Some Marines believed the basic fault in these operatives lay in “an exaggerated opinion of their importance.”[66]

Several division intelligence Marines, in conjunction with training and shore party personnel, took part in an informational activity of a different type. These Marines reconnoitered several friendly islands off western Korea to determine their suitability for division landing exercises. The second one inspected, Tokchok-to, 30 miles southwest of Inchon, was selected. By early June planning had progressed to the point where a program had been developed for bimonthly battalion landing team exercises. The KPR maneuver force, appropriately reinforced, was designated as a participating unit. Landings were to employ boat teams, amphibian tractors, and helicopters. The entire program was designed to provide refresher training for Marines in carrying out their primary mission of amphibious assault. By the end of June, 3/5 and 3/1, in turn, had captured Tokchok-to.

Other training concentrated more on the task at hand. Division units in reserve rehearsed tactics for offensive and defensive warfare. Most ground units conducted extensive schooling in both mine and booby trap detection and clearance. Recognizing that patrolling was an important part of a Marine’s life on the MLR, the division included in its Noncommissioned Officers’ (NCO) Leadership School a thorough indoctrination in patrolling tactics.[67] More than 50 percent of the training at all levels was at night. In addition, an extensive orientation was conducted for newly arrived combat replacements, who could not be committed to action for 72 hours after joining the division.

A week after the division’s June replacements landed at Inchon, General Selden’s headquarters received a directive that would affect a number of these new Marines. On 10 June CG, EUSAK ordered his corps commanders to make continuous efforts to secure the identification and changes in the enemy order of battle. Two days later I Corps followed the Eighth Army order with a letter of instruction which called for each I Corps division to “prepare plans for launching swift, vigorous, and violent large-scale raids to capture prisoners, to gain intelligence, to destroy enemy positions and material and/or strong limited objective attacks to improve and strengthen Line JAMESTOWN.”[68] Large scale was defined as an “attacking force limited to battalion or regimental (brigade) size with appropriate armor and artillery support.”[69] Divisions were required to submit detailed proposals for future action by 21 June. Marine division plans for limited objective attacks during July by units of the 7th Marines and KMCs were subsequently prepared and forwarded to I Corps.

One operation conducted north of the 2/5 left battalion sector early on 22 June was not, however, in response to this enemy identification mission. Late the previous day, Company G had sent out a 16-man ambush. Before the Marines reached their destination, a small enemy force, itself lying in wait, began to pour a heavy volume of fire on the Marines. At this point the patrol was ordered to pull back. One group of 10 made it back to the MLR; the remaining Marines headed for a nearby combat outpost in friendly hands. Reports to the company revealed one Marine not accounted for. The outpost commander was directed to search the area for the missing Marine. This reconnaissance by a fire team failed, but a reinforced squad sent out later brought back the body of the Marine who had been killed by Chinese artillery.

While this rescue effort was in progress, another similar action was under way. Not long after its arrival on the MLR, Company E, 2/5 had spotted in the No-Man’s-Land between the two main defensive lines a figure that appeared to be the body of a Marine. Since one man had been reported missing from an earlier 1st Marines patrol, recovery of the body, which had been propped up against a mound of dirt in the open, was undertaken. A special Company E patrol left the main line shortly before dawn on the 22d and reached the recovery area at daybreak. After artillery had laid down smoke, the patrol moved in, quickly recovered the body, and set out for friendly territory. Before the Marines had advanced very far on their return trip, the Chinese interdicted their route with heavy mortar fire, which killed one member of the patrol and wounded another. When the 5th Marines patrol returned to JAMESTOWN shortly after 0700, it carried not only the body it had recovered but also that of the

Marine who had been killed on the recovery mission.

By the end of June, major command changes had taken place within the 1st Marine Division as well as in several other UNC components. On 13 June, Brigadier General Robert O. Bare took over the second spot from Brigadier General Twining. Both ADCs were graduates of the Naval Academy and both were native mid–Westerners (General Bare—Iowa, General Twining—Wisconsin). Before joining the 1st Marine Division in Korea General Bare had served at Camp Pendleton, California where most recently he had been commanding general of the Training and Replacement Command. His World War II experience included participation in both European and Pacific campaigns. He was the Staff Officer, Plans, in the U.S. Naval Section for the Allied naval group that planned the amphibious assault at Normandy, France. Later he served in the Peleliu and Okinawa campaigns and, with the ending of hostilities, had participated in the surrender and repatriation of the Japanese in north China.

The outgoing ADC, General Twining, was being reassigned to the Office of the Commandant, HQMC. For his outstanding service as assistant division commander from March through May 1952, he received a Gold Star in lieu of his second Legion of Merit with Combat "V."

Other high-level changes in command that had also recently taken place had included the UNC commander himself, General Ridgway, who had been succeeded in mid-May by General Clark. Major General Glenn O. Barcus, USAF, had assumed command of Fifth Air Force, replacing Lieutenant General Everest on 30 May. On 4 June, Vice Admiral Robert P. Briscoe had been named the new Commander, Naval Forces Far East to succeed Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy who had held the position since August 1949. And in I Corps, Major General Paul W. Kendall, USA, took over as corps commander on 29 June from Lieutenant General O'Daniel.

The end of the second year of the Korean fighting and the beginning of the third was observed by the Chinese with an attack against the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, manning JAMESTOWN positions to the left of the regimental sector. Commanded at that time by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Cross, 2/5 was new on line, having relieved 2/1 during the night of 15–16 June.

Late in the afternoon of 24 June, the enemy began registering his mortars and artillery on MLR company positions of 2/5 and a portion of the rear area occupied by the battalion 81mm mortars. Chinese incoming, sometimes intense, sometimes sporadic, continued until shortly after 2130. By this time the CCF were moving down their trenches toward a key outpost, Yoke, known also as Hill 159, which was still occupied on daytime basis by the Marines and lay north of the Company F Sector (Captain Harold C. Fuson). Moments later, the 34 men temporarily outposting Yoke saw the Chinese and opened with small arms fire, but the Marine positions were quickly enveloped by the Chinese. The Americans occupying the forward slopes of Yoke suffered many casualties from the intense fires supporting the enemy rush.

While the initial attack was in progress, the Chinese were able to position and fire machine guns from behind the outpost and in trenches on the forward slopes. Communist mortars interdicted the Marine supply routes to make normal withdrawal and reinforcement measures difficult. The Marines moved into bunkers, called down pre-planned fires, and continued the defense. Although the Chinese had overrun Yoke, they could not evict the Marines. At about 0300, the enemy withdrew. When the 2/5 troops followed to reoccupy the forward slopes of Yoke, the enemy renewed his attack and struck again. As before, the Marines took to bunkers and called in defensive artillery fires. These boxing fires fell around the outpost perimeter until first light when the attackers withdrew for the second time.

Four other outposts in the battalion area were involved in the anniversary attack, but the action around Yoke was by far the heaviest. It resulted in 10 Marines of 2/5 killed and 36 wounded. At Yoke alone, 9 were killed and 23 wounded. Enemy dead were 12 known and 50 estimated killed. Chinese wounded were estimated at 100. At one point during the attack on Yoke, the outpost commander reported that the enemy were wearing gas masks and using tear-gas grenades. Investigation revealed that the Chinese had carried and even worn the masks,

but that they had employed white phosphorus grenades rather than tear gas. This was the first instance Marine division personnel had ever encountered of CCF soldiers carrying gas masks in an attack and it was “believed part of the enemy’s hate campaign to impress their troops with the possible use by the UN Forces of CBR (Chemical, Biological and Radiological) warfare.”[70]

This violent eruption of enemy activity on the night of 24 June was followed by a brief period of greatly reduced ground action. Late on the 29th, however, the battlefront lull was broken when the 1st KMC Regiment sent out a raiding party to capture Chinese soldiers and their weapons and equipment, to inflict casualties, and to destroy positions. Second Lieutenant Kwak Sang In had his reinforced platoon from the 3d Company, 1st Battalion, equipped with rifles, carbines, machine guns, flamethrowers, and explosives. Target for the attack was an enemy outpost four miles south of Panmunjom that overlooked the Sachon River.

The patrol followed the general pattern of previous raids. It made use of supporting elements positioned on high ground in front of the objective. In this action the patrol struck from the rear, using artillery fire for both the assault and the withdrawal. Another similarity existed in that the results were nearly the same—no prisoners taken but fewer casualties to the attackers. One difference from earlier operations was that this patrol employed flamethrowers and TNT for destroying bunkers and inflicting casualties. Both weapons were credited in the killing of 12 and the wounding of 6 Chinese, in destroying 1 mortar and 7 bunkers, and in burning 3 other bunkers and numerous automatic weapons and rifles. Because of the heavy weight of a loaded flamethrower and the small size of the Korean Marines carrying these weapons, the flamethrower operators were fairly well exhausted by the end of the patrol.

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Chapter 2. Defending the Line

A Long Fourth of July[71]

The approach of the American Fourth of July holiday marking an earlier struggle for freedom was appropriately accompanied by ground action initiated by all of the mainland MLR regiments. In the KMC area, a 3 July raiding party struck at forward enemy positions before dawn, killing nine Chinese. In the center regimental sector Colonel Thomas C. Moore's[72] 7th Marines were also engaged in an active sector defense. In the left battalion spot 3/7, which had replaced 2/7 on line, dispatched raids on each of the first three nights of the month. Its Company G patrol on the night of 2–3 July was to be involved in one of the most costly small unit actions in the western Korea tour of duty for the Marine division.

Operational plans called for the platoon night raid on the 2d to be followed by a dawn attack the next morning. In both actions, the prisoner-taking aspect of the mission was considered a primary one. The early part of the operation was uneventful. One platoon moved forward toward the objective, Hill 159 (Yoke), 1,200 yards beyond combat outpost (COP) White, to the regimental left, without making contact with the enemy. The platoon then established a base of fire on favorable terrain from which the attack by the second platoon could be supported.

The second platoon passed through the forward position of the first shortly before 0630 and moved out into enemy terrain. It advanced less than 300 yards before its progress was halted by a Chinese force of battalion strength occupying the objective, Hill 159. Heavy enemy rifle and machine gun fire, hand grenades, mortar and artillery deluged the advancing Marines. Many of them quickly became casualties, but the operation continued, due in part to the determination and initiative of the NCOs. One of these was Staff Sergeant William E. Shuck, Jr., in charge of a machine gun squad. When the leader of one of the rifle squads became a casualty, Sergeant Shuck assumed command of that squad in addition to his own. Although wounded, he organized the two units and led them against the objective. Nearing the summit of the hill, the sergeant was hit a second time. Still he refused evacuation, remaining well forward in the lines to direct his assault force.

It was not until he had received orders to break contact with the enemy that the sergeant pulled back from the attack. During the withdrawal he looked after the other Marine casualties, making certain that all dead and wounded had been evacuated from the zone of action. While directing the last of the evacuation, Sergeant Shuck was struck by a sniper's bullet and killed by this third hit.[73] He was one of four Marines killed in the engagement. Forty others were wounded. Although no Chinese were captured, Marines estimated the enemy suffered losses of 50 killed and an additional 150 wounded.

To the east of the 7th Marines, the 5th Marines in the right MLR sector ordered a company-size patrol, also on the night of 2–3 July. Company A, 1/5 was directed to attack successively three outposts in the vicinity of the village of Samichon along the river bearing the same name and two miles beyond the point where the MLR crossed the river. After the reinforced company had taken the first two objectives, which were unoccupied, it received orders from division to return to the battalion area. Despite the fact the patrol had ventured far beyond the Marine lines, it did not come into contact with any Chinese forces.

A 2/5 combat patrol leaving the MLR just after dawn was successful in inflicting casualties on the enemy, taking prisoners, and destroying enemy field fortifications. The patrol made good progress until a Marine inadvertently set off an enemy mine. This mishap gave away the patrol's location and prompted reprisal by the Chinese. A one-hour fire fight followed. Then the patrol called in smoke and returned under its cover to JAMESTOWN. Marine casualties were 1 killed and 11 wounded. The second 2/5 patrol that same date was a

successful ambush completed 10 minutes before midnight. In the brief clash that developed, Marine ambushers killed 6 enemy and wounded 8 more. The Marine force suffered no casualties.

The ambush patrol returned 15 minutes after midnight on 4 July. Even at that early hour division artillerymen had already initiated an appropriate ceremony to mark the Fourth. On 2 July, I Corps had directed the massing of fires on 4 July on the most remunerative targets in each division area. All objectives in the corps sector were to be attacked simultaneously at specified times for a one-minute period by employing a firing technique known as time on target (TOT).[74] Normal daily fires were also to be carried out. Designated as Operation Firecracker, the shoot expended 3,202 rounds in the division sector. Light and medium battalions of the 11th Marines, plus its 4.5-inch Rocket Battery destroyed some enemy trenches, bunkers, mortar and artillery positions, and damaged others. The division reported that the special fires on 4 July had also resulted in 44 known CCF casualties, including 21 dead, and 12 more who were estimated to have been injured.

More casualties, however, resulted from the issuing of another I Corps directive, this one dealing with the conduct of raids to seize prisoners, obtain information about the enemy, and to destroy his positions, supplies, and equipment. Back in June, the Eusak commander had first stressed to his corps commanders the increased importance of combat raids to obtain additional intelligence during this period of stabilized conflict.

Although General Selden had submitted two division plans, he strongly believed that smaller patrols could accomplish the objective with fewer casualties and loss of life.[75] In particular, the division commander pointed out to I Corps that adequate defense of the 35-mile-long Marine division front did not permit the withdrawal of a sizable force for patrol missions without endangering the security of the entire Corps sector. The attack order was issued, however, on 3 July for the first large-scale raid to be conducted prior to 7 July. The code name BUCKSHOT 2B was assigned for this particular raid. As soon as he received the date of execution for the proposed operation, the Marine division commander advised I Corps that designation of 7 July as the cut-off date for the raid precluded proper rehearsal of attack plans. The operation would also conflict with rotation to the States of 2,651 Marines, whose replacements would not be available until 11 July. Corps turned a deaf ear; division then ordered a battalion-size attack for the night of 6–7 July.

Before dusk on 6 July, Lieutenant Colonel Daughtry's reinforced 1st Battalion, 7th Marines moved into position—on the left, a tank-infantry force, A/1/7 (still under Captain Thompson), to create a diversion; in the center, the main assault force, Company C (Captain Robert A. Owens); and on the right, a reinforced platoon from Company B (Captain Lyle S. Whitmore, Jr.) to support the attack by fire from positions close to the objective, Yoke. Earlier, three reinforced squads from Captain Thompson's unit had occupied combat outposts in the area of operations to deny the use of key terrain to the enemy and to provide additional fire support in the attack. At 2200, Captain Owens' Company C crossed the line of departure and set its course for Yoke, three-quarters of a mile northeast. Five minutes later the Company B support unit moved out to occupy the intermediate objective, COP Green, one-half mile southeast of Yoke. As it took up positions on COP Green, Captain Whitmore's Company B platoon discovered that no Chinese were in its vicinity; in fact, the platoon was not to encounter any enemy forces during BUCKSHOT.

Even though Company B failed to engage any Chinese, the remainder of the battalion encountered more than its share. About 450 yards southwest of the objective the Company C attack force was hit by an enemy ambush, which cut off Captain Owens' lead element. Although the Chinese directed strong efforts at halting the Marine advance, they were unsuccessful in this attempt. The Marines pressed the attack and seized Yoke 20 minutes after midnight.

On the left, the diversionary attack unit, Company A supported by the five tanks of the 2d Platoon, Company D, 1st Tank Battalion, and by a section of flame tanks from the armored battalion headquarters, began its mission at 2355. In three-quarters of an hour, the tank-infantry unit reached its objective, the first high ground southwest of Yoke. Tanks turned their 90mm guns on known Chinese positions on the hill to the north. During the

next hour, the big guns of the M–46 medium tanks sent 49 rounds into enemy emplacements. The Marine tanks ceased fire at 0113 when Captain Thompson was alerted to assist Company C. He left one rifle platoon with the tanks.

Over on the high ground to the north and east, the attack force was under heavy fire from Communist mortars and artillery and was also receiving a number of enemy small-unit probes. At 0200, Company A made contact with Company C. Captain Thompson found the main force somewhat disorganized as a result of the wounding of the company commander, Captain Owens, the loss of several key officers and NCOs, and the effects of the lead element of Company C being ambushed and cut off. After being briefed on the situation by Captain Owens and conducting a reconnaissance, Captain Thompson recommended to the battalion commander that the entire force be recalled before daylight. At 0310 the two companies at Yoke began to disengage, returning to the MLR by 0636 on the 7th, without further casualties.

The one platoon of Company A and seven tanks of the diversion unit were still in their forward positions on the left and had prepared to resume firing. At dawn the M–46s relaid their guns on targets that had become visible. Tank gunners destroyed two observation posts and three machine gun positions and damaged many feet of trenchlines. At one point in the firing, the tank platoon commander, Second Lieutenant Terry K. Donk, using a power scope, observed ". . . two officers in forest green uniforms without equipment. They were definitely giving orders to machine gunners and infantry."[76] These 2 were among the 19 counted casualties (10 wounded) that the tankers inflicted during BUCKSHOT.

With the return at 0645 of the tank-infantry diversion force, the special operation for obtaining prisoners and information ended. No Chinese had been captured and no data gleaned from Communist casualties, listed as the 19 reported by the tankers and an estimated 20 more wounded or killed. Marine casualties from the operation were out of proportion to the results achieved—12 dead, 85 wounded, and 5 missing. It had been a high price to pay for a venture of this type, particularly when the primary objectives went unaccomplished.

During the entire 4–7 July period, 22 Marines had lost their lives in combat operations. Division reported that 268 Marines had been wounded during the long Fourth of July. These figures were the highest since September 1951 when large scale attacks by UN forces had first been abolished in line with the new tactic of positional warfare that would be waged until the truce talks resulted in an armistice.

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Changes in the Lineup[77]

Division casualties were considerably higher during the first week in July than they were for the rest of the month. Once the pace of combat slowed, following the initial flurry of activity, the front again settled down to the patrol, raid, and ambush routine that had marked the static period of the Korean fighting. In accordance with the orders previously issued by higher authority the division placed continued emphasis on gathering all information it could about the enemy, his dispositions, and tactics. To assist in this effort, General Selden in July removed his reconnaissance company from defense of its small sector of JAMESTOWN and directed the unit to conduct training for its primary mission, obtaining intelligence about the enemy. Its place on the MLR was assumed by the two amphibian tractor companies then on line.

Another change of lineup took place on 14 July. At this time a battalion from the 15th Regiment, U.S. 3d Infantry Division took over the role of the maneuver element in the Kimpo Provisional Regiment, then held by 1/1, thereby releasing that battalion to its parent unit. With this change, the 1st Marine Division had a full regiment in reserve for the first time since its arrival in western Korea. A later shift in units occurred on 26 July when the 7th and 1st Marines traded places and missions. At that time the MLR, from west to east, was manned by the KPR, 1st AmTrac Bn, KMC, 1st Marines, and 5th Marines.

Opposing them in mid-July were an estimated 27 infantry battalions, whose primary missions were to defend the sectors assigned. The division credited these units with the capability of launching limited objective attacks at any time or of taking part in a major attack with a force of up to 57 infantry and 16 artillery battalions, augmented by 40 tanks or self-propelled guns. It was estimated also that the enemy could cross the Han in battalion strength in the vicinity of the northern shore of Kimpo Peninsula at any time and that Communist aircraft could attack anywhere in the division sector. Enemy forces identified at the end of July, from west to east, were the 193d, 195th, and 194th Divisions of the 65th CCF Army; the 189th Division of the 63d CCF Army; and the 118th Division, 40th CCF Army, which had recently moved from a position opposite the Commonwealth and U.S. 3d Infantry Divisions. Infantry strength of the Communists was established at 28,328.

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Replacement and Rotation[78]

Marine infantry strength at the end of July 1952 was little more than half of the Chinese total. The division personnel strength was maintained by the monthly replacement and rotation program of Marines to fill vacancies created by the return of Marine combat personnel to Conus (Continental United States) and combat losses. In the second quarter of 1952, the division rotated 433 officers and 6,280 enlisted men from Korea. In exchange, 506 officers and 7,359 enlisted men arrived from the States in replacement drafts. A new arrival could expect to stay with the division about 10 1/2 months.

In the late spring of 1952 many of the division's new replacements were "dental cripples"—Marines requiring dental treatment, even emergency care in some cases.[79] General Selden directed that contact teams be formed to meet the replacement drafts in Japan. During the last leg of the trip to Korea dental personnel screened the new combat Marines on shipboard. By the time the division area had been reached, the dentists knew what remedial work would be required by incoming troops. At the end of the summer the problem was well under control.

Even though the 1st Marine Division in July continued to be somewhat in excess of its authorized strength in total personnel, it had certain imbalances and was in rather short supply of certain ranks and specialists. While the normal tour for most infantry officers ranged from 9 to 12 months, an excess of company grade officers, particularly lieutenants, had resulted in a reduction of the Korean tour for them to just six months. This brief period of duty plus an intra-division rotation policy that caused a mass shifting of duty assignments every three-to-five months tended to reduce unit combat efficiency. On the other hand the change of assignments had a favorable effect in that it broadened the experience of individual Marines. Beginning in the summer of 1952, however, the division modified this policy to reduce its number of intra-division transfers.

Personnel shortages existed in both the artillery and tank MOSs (Military Occupational Speciality). Mass rotation of reservist company grade artillery officers had necessitated the transfer of infantry officers to the 11th Marines for training and reassignment within the regiment. During the time when the supply of artillery officers was limited, however, the quality of support rendered remained high.[80] The other major shortage in the division was that of qualified crewmen—both drivers and gunners—for the M–46 tanks. Neither tank driving nor gunnery for the M–46 was taught in the tank crewmen's course conducted at Camp Pendleton, California. General Selden requested of Lieutenant General Franklin A. Hart (CG, FMFPac) that "tank crewmen be thoroughly trained prior to leaving the U.S."[81]

Fundamental to the tank problem was a shortage of the M–46 itself. At the training facility, Training and Replacement Command, Camp Pendleton, M–46 engines had been available for maintenance instruction but no tanks for the training of gunners and drivers.[82] General Hart pointed out this deficiency to the Commandant, General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. On 13 August the Commandant directed the transfer of five tanks to the training installation from the 7th Tank Battalion,[83] also located at Camp Pendleton. At the same time General Shepherd ordered an increase in the school quota for tank crewmen. The first graduates would not reach the division in Korea, however, until the November draft.

The presence of not fully trained personnel in a combat zone was not limited to the division. In the summer and fall of 1952, a large number of volunteer reservists, both pilots and enlisted replacements with little experience since the end of World War II, joined the 1st MAW. It had not been possible for the Stateside training and tactical squadrons, themselves short of personnel and aircraft, to qualify all pilots as combat ready. It fell

upon the wing in Korea, therefore, to take the needed corrective action. The more experienced 1st MAW pilots, after completing their combat missions, flew instructional flights to help prepare the rusty fliers. Some reserve pilots, away from regular daily flying since 1945, found the adjustment too difficult and turned in their wings. MACG–2 operated “Pohang U,” a training course for forward air controllers. In practically every squadron, there were shortages of electronics personnel. Jet squadrons found mechanics hard to come by. There were never enough motor transport replacements. For unqualified enlisted Marines, squadrons operated on-the-job training programs.

To maintain a reasonable degree of unit proficiency, the wing limited the monthly turnover of pilots to 25 percent. Like the division, the wing employed split tours between an officer’s primary duty and staff work to broaden his experience. In some cases the amount of time required by administrative work as compared to a pitot’s actual flying time reduced his proficiency in the air. In June, Task Force 95 reported that the proportionately large number of take-off and landing accidents on the carrier *Bataan* was caused by the rapid turnover of pilots and their need for frequent carrier qualification.[84]

A Marine pilot joining the wing could expect his assignment to last for 6 to 9 months. Personnel in a nonflight status had longer tours of 10 months to a year. Wing replacements were made on an individual basis, although there were plans that by mid-1953 a new policy of at least partial squadron replacement would be in effect. That 1st MAW squadrons were able to operate effectively on an individual replacement system was attributable to the peculiarity of combat conditions in Korea. Absence of real enemy aerial opposition permitted the use of basic, parade-type flight formations and non-tactical approaches and attacks. An unusually high-level of experienced pilots in each of the two wing groups helped in the establishment of training programs and operational doctrine. The FAF limitation of four aircraft per flight eliminated the problem of large-scale, precombat squadron training as well as the difficulty of controlling and coordinating a large number of planes in a strike.

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Logistical Operations, Summer 1952[85]

Logistical support of the division and wing remained largely unchanged through July. Several modifications did take place, however, and these were:

(1) The change of responsibility for logistical support of ground-based units in Korea from Commanding General, 2d Logistical Command to the Commanding General, Korean Communication Zone (CG, KComZ).

(2) The opening of a pipeline system for resupply of aviation fuel at K-3, beginning in May.

(3) The beginning of increased support for airbase maintenance at those airfields housing Marine squadrons.

Resupply of common items used by both Marine and Army units was still being hampered by the Marines' limited knowledge of the Army supply system in effect and by their inability to obtain the catalogues, orders, and directives essential for requisitioning.

Two logistical operations, both of an engineering nature, took place between May and July 1952 in western Korea. One was Operation TIMBER, undertaken to provide lumber required to complete the bunker construction on the JAMESTOWN, WYOMING, and KANSAS lines. The division had estimated that three million linear feet of 4 x 8-inch timbers would be needed. Since lumber in this amount was not available through supply channels or standing timber in the division sector, Corps assigned the Marines a wooded area 50 miles to the east in the U.S. 45th Infantry Division sector. On 12 May a reinforced engineer platoon, under Second Lieutenant Roger E. Galliher, a truck platoon, and 500 Korean Service Corps (KSC) laborers,[86] began the cutting, processing, and hauling of timbers which were then trucked to the railhead. Between 500 and 1,000 logs were cut daily. When the operation ended in July a total of 35,194 sections of timber had been cut. This was still not enough lumber to complete the required construction. Eighth Army then made up the difference, mostly with 12 x 12-inch timbers 30 feet long; these the Marine engineers cut to 4 x 8s for standard bunker construction.[87]

Operation AMAZON, published by I Corps on 12 June, ordered that bridging preparations be made for the approaching summer flood season. The previous August at the Honker Bridge, the one nearest the railhead, the Imjin had crested some 27 feet above normal. One reason for the precautionary efforts taken to insure bridge security during the flood season was the potential damage the Chinese could cause. Since they controlled the upriver area of the Imjin, before it entered the division sector, they could introduce floatable debris or explosives into the swift running flood waters. Another major concern was the logistical problem that would be faced by forward MLR units in event the bridges became impassable and the enormous strain that would thus be placed on helicopter resupply operations.

The I Corps directive specified that its divisions maintain a transport capability that would enable medium tanks to pass safely over bridges spanning the major rivers in their I Corps sector. The order also called for the removal of debris that could cause damage to bridges. Removal of those bridges vulnerable to flood conditions and the erection of emergency river spans were also to take place on corps order.

To carry out the I Corps operational order, General Selden put the division's own AMAZON plan into effect on 1 July. On this date Companies A, B, and D of Lieutenant Colonel Harry D. Clarke's 1st Engineer Battalion began extensive preparations for debris removal from the four bridge sites in the division sector. Even before this, Marine engineers and shore party personnel had been trained at special schools to handle U.S. Army equipment provided for the AMAZON operation.[88]

Beginning 1 June, division engineers began blasting away at objects that flood waters could loosen and

carry into the bridge supports. Bridge approaches were improved and their supports strengthened. Each company had a detail living at the bridge site for which it was responsible. With the advent of heavy rains, these Marines were to operate 24-hour boat patrols to keep the river free of debris. The engineers were also to maintain a round-the-clock debris watch at the four division bridges—Freedom Gate, or the Munsan-ni Railroad Bridge in the left regimental sector; Honker and X-Ray in the center; and finally, Widgeon, very close to the Commonwealth boundary.

Heavy rains began on 27 July and continued until the 30th. On the first day the decking of Widgeon Bridge was completely submerged and Honker was removed to prevent its being carried away. Precipitation increased on 28 July and reached its peak on 29 July when 3.66 inches of rainfall were recorded. By the 30th, the rains had subsided but not before the overflowing Imjin had collapsed the X-Ray bridge. During the height of the four flood days, engineers fought the rains, flooding waters, and floating debris. The major effort took place downstream to save the Freedom Gate Bridge.

Assigned personnel removed debris from the bridge supports, guided large, dangerous pieces away with poles, while upriver the boat teams blasted still larger sections into manageable chunks that would pass between the bridge supports. These engineer efforts, in addition to regular repair and maintenance of the large road net, constituted the major ground activity in the 1st Marine Division sector in late July. August would bring more rains and emergency demands on the engineers, but the critical ground activity at that time would be directed against the Communists in the area around Bunker Hill.

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Chapter 3. The Battle of Bunker Hill

The Participants and the Battlefield[1]

THE TORRENTIAL RAINS that had fallen just before the end of July continued to affect ground operations into early August. Contacts between opposing forces were few and brief, and casualties remained correspondingly low. On 1 August, General Selden assigned the reserve regiment, the 7th Marines, the task of developing the secondary defense line, KANSAS, at the extreme right of the division sector. The 5th Marines, manning this regimental area and originally responsible for the construction, had been unable to reach the second line because bridging across the Imjin to the rear of the sector was washed out. By 3 July the division put a ferry service into operation at the site of the inoperable Honker Bridge for the purpose of feeding ammunition to combat units north of the Imjin. The critical resupply problem began to ease the next day when the waters overflowing the Widgeon Bridge further upstream receded sufficiently to permit restoration of normal vehicular crossings there.

Traffic in the air had, quite naturally, been less affected by the heavy rains and by the flooded, mucky terrain that was slowing ground movement throughout the entire division area. Flight operations during the first week of August produced a daily sortie rate that would approximate the monthly average. In fact, the month of August was to become the record one for 1st MAW attack and fighter pilots during 1952, with a total of 5,869 sorties flown.

While the air people in August were maintaining a good weather pace against the enemy following the July downpours, the Communist ground troops apparently found the going too difficult to mount any sustained attack. The enemy merely continued his active defense, with an average of two contacts daily, while busily engaged in advancing his OPLR by creeping tactics. Even the usually assiduous Chinese artillery was strangely quiet. With respect to the enemy's excellent artillery capability, the 1st Marine Division in July learned that the Chinese had introduced a 132mm Russian rocket in their combat operations. The presence of this truck-mounted launcher, the *Katusha*, which could fire 16 rockets simultaneously, was indicated by a POW who had been informed by "his platoon leader that there were two *Katusha* regiments in the CCF."[2] In addition to this new enemy weapon, the Marine division reported the same month that positive sightings had been made of self-propelled guns emplaced well forward, and that there was an "indication that these guns were being used to fire direct fire missions from frontline revetments."[3]

Communist forward positions were gradually encroaching on JAMESTOWN. Since April 1952 the division had noted every month that the enemy was continuing to extend his trenches in the direction of the Marine MLR. The Chinese technique was to occupy key, high terrain at night, prepare the ground during darkness by digging trenches and constructing bunkers, and then vacate the area before daybreak. After nightly repetitions of this process had produced a tenable position, the enemy moved in and occupied it. By means of these creeping tactics, the Chinese hoped to acquire the dominating terrain necessary for controlling access to Seoul. The ultimate goal of the Communist forces was believed to be the 750-foot-high Paekhak Hill,[4] the Marine high ground position also known as Hill 229, just over a mile east of the road leading to Panmunjom and Kaesong.

During the four months that the 1st Marine Division's mission had been to conduct an aggressive defense of the EUSAK left flank, Marines had become familiar with a number of Chinese small unit infantry tactics. Shortly after assignment of the division to western Korea, General Twining, the ADC, had observed that the Chinese first made a diversionary frontal assault while the main force maneuvered around UNC defenders to attack from the rear. Almost invariably the Chinese employed this envelopment technique. Occasionally the

enemy also used more passive measures, such as attempting to demoralize Marines in the front lines and subvert their allegiance by English language propaganda broadcasts. These attempts represented wasted effort. Not one Marine was swayed.

In some cases the Chinese were imaginative in changing their tactics or improvising new ones. This tendency had been noted as early as May by a 5th Marines battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Nihart, after 1/5 had engaged the enemy in a limited objective attack:

". . . when friendlies marked targets with WP [white phosphorus], the enemy would immediately drop rounds of WP between the target and friendly troops to conceal the target and to confuse friendly FOs [artillery forward observers]; the enemy tried very hard to take prisoners (rather than shoot a friendly, they would often attempt to knock him out with a concussion type grenade); counterattacks were made in waves of four to seven men deployed in a formation somewhat similar to the Marine Corps wedge; snipers were deployed in holes that were mutually supporting; concerted efforts were made to knock out automatic weapons; . . . for close-in fighting, the enemy used PPSH [Soviet-made 7.62mm submachine gun] guns and grenades rather than bayonets; the enemy attacked behind well coordinated mortar fire; some enemy snipers were observed to have bushes tied to their backs. . . ."[5]

On occasion 1st Division Marines found evidence that the enemy had infiltrated their lines. It appeared the most likely spot for line-crossers to make their way into the Marine rear area was from the far bank of the Imjin between the Sachon and Han Rivers where the enemy MLR was only a short distance from the sector held by the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion. Two enemy agents "armed with pistols of German manufacture, six hand grenades, and one set of field glasses"[6] had been apprehended here by a Marine reconnaissance company patrol. The prisoners had stated they were "part of a force of one thousand men who were infiltrating to form a guerrilla force somewhere in South Korea."[7] Six days later, after a brief fire fight between a small group of Chinese and a Marine outpost in the center of the division sector, the defenders discovered that two of the three enemy dead wore under their own clothing various articles of Marine uniforms. Neither of the Chinese had identification or any papers whatsoever. It was believed that both were enemy agents and that the attack on the outpost was a diversion "for the express purpose of detracting attention from infiltrators."[8]

Even though enemy tactics and attempts to penetrate Marine positions demonstrated a good deal of soldierly skills, his conduct of defensive operations was nothing short of masterful. This was especially true of Chinese construction of underground earthworks. It appeared that the Chinese had no single pattern for this type of field fortification. Like the Japanese in World War II, the Chinese Communists were experts in organizing the ground thoroughly and in utilizing a seemingly inexhaustible supply of manpower to hollow out tunnels, air-raid shelters, living quarters, storage spaces, and mess halls. Americans described the Chinese as industrious diggers, [9] who excavated quickly and deeply for protection against UN bombardments. From numerous reports of ground clashes in the 1st Marine Division sector and from observations made by Marine pilots, it became known that the enemy was quick to seek cover whenever he was exposed to sustained artillery bombardment or air attack.

What was not known, however, was the extent of these subterranean shelters. One Chinese account, allegedly written by a reconnaissance staff officer named Li Yo-Yang, described the protection of a CCF shelter to a recently captured UN prisoner as they were under Allied artillery bombardment. While shells exploded all around the position the enemy boasted: "There's no danger of being killed on a position fortified by the Chinese People's Volunteers . . . Don't you know it's impossible for your shells to penetrate our air-raid shelters?"[10] An American report on enemy field fortifications estimated that the amount of earth cover in Chinese air-raid shelters was as high as 20 feet, and in frontline defensive positions, up to 33 feet.[11]

Marine defensive installations carved out of the ground were not so extensive as those of the enemy opposing JAMESTOWN. "In spite of orders, instructions, and inspections many bunkers were only half dug in,

then built up above the ground with sandbags," observed one Marine battalion commander.[12] Back in April, just after the Marine division had settled in the west, its 1st Engineer Battalion, using U.S. Army drawings, had published bunker construction plans. Express instructions to frontline units were to "construct bunkers to provide simultaneously living and fighting space. Overhead cover on all bunkers will be such as to withstand direct hit from 105mm and to allow friendly VT fire over position."[13]

Some officers felt it was, perhaps, the work-during-light, patrol-at-night routine that resulted in the shallow draft Marine bunkers. Others suggested that the relatively limited defensive training received by the more offensive-minded Marines created a natural apathy to digging elaborate fighting positions.

It took a hole 12 feet square and 7 feet deep to house the Army, Lincoln-logs-type bunker the Marines first used in the spring of 1952. The fortification, using tree trunks up to eight inches in diameter, had a cover of seven to eight feet. This consisted of four feet of logs, and three-to-four more feet of rocks, sandbags, and earth fill. By the summer of 1952, the division developed its own style of bunker, a prefabricated timber structure designed to fit into a hole eight feet square and somewhat less than seven feet deep. This size fortification could accommodate a .50 caliber machine gun, crew members, or several riflemen. Provision was also made for the inclusion of a sleeping shelf in the rear of the bunker. Its construction required no saws, hammers, or nails, only shovels to excavate. The major drawback to erection of the prefab was the difficulty in manhandling the heavy roofing timbers, 11 feet long, 12 inches wide, and 4 inches thick. On top of this was placed a two-foot layer of sandbags, tarpaper covering, and a four feet high layer of earth that completed the structure and partly camouflaged it.

Battlefield construction was carried out by the infantry regiments to the limit of unit capabilities. The division engineers, one company per frontline regiment, augmented at times by shore party units, supplied the technical know-how and engineering materials and equipment. These combat support troops processed the lumber for bunker construction and built fortifications for forward medical treatment and one bunker for observation of battle action by civilian and military dignitaries, irreverently called VIPs (Very Important Persons), who frequently visited the division. Engineers also erected some of the barbed wire barriers in the forward areas and, when necessary, cleared firing lanes for weapons housed in bunkers.

The processing of timbers for easier and faster bunker-construction had begun on 28 July, but this was hardly in time for the most difficult fighting the division had faced thus far in western Korea. Given the name Bunker Hill,[14] this battle would take place in the center sector of the division line manned since 27 July by Colonel Walter F. Layer's 1st Marines.[15] On that date Lieutenant Colonel Armitage's battalion, 3/1, took over from the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines on the left, and 2/1 (Lieutenant Colonel Roy J. Batterton, Jr.) relieved the 2d Battalion of the 7th Marines on the right.[16]

Across No-Man's-Land, units of two Chinese divisions faced the 3,603 men of the 1st Marines. From west to east opposite the Marine regiment's frontline battalions were elements of the 580th Regiment, 194th Division, 65th CCF Army and of both the 352d and 354th Regiments, 118th Division, 40th CCF Army. The 352d Regiment held most of the area on which the battle would be fought.[17] Enemy combat efficiency was rated as excellent and his forward units were well-supplied. The Chinese conducted an active defense, using limited objective attacks, numerous small-size probes, and creeping tactics to extend their OPLR line. Communist soldiers offered well-coordinated and tenacious resistance to Marine patrols, raids, and attacks. Within enemy lines a 775-foot elevation, known as Taedok-san, was situated directly north of the Marine division center and commanded the entire Bunker Hill area.

On JAMESTOWN, the dominating height was Hill 201, 660 feet high[18] and immediately to the rear of the MLR in the left battalion sector. Southwest of this elevation was the Marine stronghold, Hill 229, just 23 feet lower than Taedok, and believed by the Marines to have been the objective of the August battle. Directly north of Hill 201 was Hill 122, adjacent to the enemy OPLR, and called Bunker Hill by the Marines. It was shortly to

become the scene of bitter fighting. The crest of Hill 122 was about 350 yards long. At a distance of about 700 yards, it generally paralleled the northeast-southwest direction of JAMESTOWN in the left of the 2/1 sector and adjoining 3/1 sector.

Southwest of Bunker and a little more than 200 yards from the Marine MLR was Hill 124. This Hill 124–122 axis, for tactical purposes, was known as the Bunker Ridge. The ridgeline, roughly "cashew" in shape almost anchored back into the MLR on the forward slopes of Hill 229. To the northeast of Bunker Hill and separated from it by a wide saddle[19] was another enemy position, Hill 120. (See Map 9, for outposts and key hill positions in the 1st Marines center regimental area in early August.)

Click here to view map

Approximately one mile east of Hill 124 was Hill 56A, or Samoa, the right flank limit of the immediate battlefield. It guarded the best avenue of approach into the Bunker Hill area, the Changdan Road. Another Marine position west of Samoa was Hill 58A, or Siberia, a sentinel overlooking a long draw running down the east sides of Hills 122 and 120. Both Samoa and Siberia were outposted by squads. Another 1st Marines squad occupied Hill 52, on the other side of Changdan Road and not quite a half-mile east of Samoa. The entire battlefield was cut up by numerous gullies and draws, most of which paralleled Bunker Hill.

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Chapter 3. The Battle of Bunker Hill
Preliminary Action on Siberia[20]

The first round in the battle of Bunker Hill began as the fight for Siberia, Hill 58A. Just slightly more than a quarter of a mile from JAMESTOWN, this squad-size outpost, the most western in the right battalion sector, had been occupied in June when the division moved its MLR forward. Since Siberia was located halfway between the Marine MLR and the Communist OPLR, the Marine seizure of Siberia prevented the Chinese from holding terrain suitable for employing 60mm mortars against Marine frontline troops.[21] Strong enemy outposts on Hills 120 to the north and 110 to the northeast constantly threatened the squad on 58A. From these two forward positions, Chinese troops early on 9 August 1952 streamed down to Siberia, launching in the process the Bunker Hill battle.

Just before 0100 an estimated four enemy squads fell upon Hill 58A, outposted by Company E Marines. Using assorted infantry weapons, the raiding party forced the outnumbered Siberia occupants to withdraw. By 0145 the outpost Marines returned to the MLR. At this time the JAMESTOWN sector south of the outpost, also held by Captain Jesse F. Thorpe's Company E, was under attack by approximately 50 Chinese.

After breaking up the enemy assault by well placed friendly mortar fire, the Marines enjoyed a brief respite from Chinese pressure and formulated plans to recapture Siberia. It was decided that a reinforced Company E platoon would counterattack to regain the outpost. At 0355, the 11th Marines fired a five-minute preparation against the objective. On schedule, the platoon crossed JAMESTOWN at 0400 and in the darkness headed towards the outpost. Advancing carefully to avoid detection as long as possible, the Marines reached the area near the base of the hill by 0525. Heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire again forced the Marines to withdraw, and the platoon returned to its company CP at 0545. So far, the 58A action had resulted in the wounding of 32 Marines and the killing of another.

It became evident that more preparation, by Marine air and artillery, would be required for the recapture of Siberia. At 0650, four Marine F9F jet fighters worked the hill over with napalm and 500-pound bombs. Three hours later, a flight of Air Force F-80 "Shooting Star" jets dropped eight 1,000-pound bombs on the same target. With the aerial attack complete, Marine artillery opened fire. Five minutes later another Marine reinforced platoon launched a second ground attack. This was made by a unit from Company A (Captain Robert W. Judson) of the regimental reserve battalion, supported by a Company E platoon. Again the Marines advanced to the open sector south of the hill before the enemy reacted. As before, the Chinese response was a devastating barrage from their supporting weapons. The stubborn Marine assault against Siberia brought down the full weight of Chinese firepower—rifle, machine gun, and hand grenades—but the attack force would not be beaten off. At 1103 the Siberia hill again belonged to the Marines. Quickly the Company A platoon began to organize a defense to repulse the Chinese counterattack, which was certain to come.

In anticipation of a prompt and violent retaliation by the Chinese, and to help the speedily improvised defense efforts, the 2/1 battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Batterton, had sent forward the supporting platoon from Company E. This reinforcing unit reached Siberia within seven minutes after the Marine attackers had gained possession of the objective. The new arrivals scarcely had time to dig in before a hail of mortar and artillery shells forced all the Marines to seek cover in a defiladed position on the southern side of the slope. From here, the 2/1 force directed counter mortar and artillery fire onto the top and far side of Siberia and unleashed their own assault weapons against the Chinese soldiers pressing for possession of Siberia. By midafternoon, with heavy enemy counterfire on the position and their casualties reaching nearly 75 percent, the Marines were forced to

withdraw and return to their own lines. The hill had changed hands twice and the enemy had employed 5,000 rounds of artillery in the contested ownership.

Badly mauled by two actions against Hill 58A, Company E came off the lines to reorganize, exchanging positions with Company A, of Lieutenant Colonel Louis N. King's 1st Battalion. About this time Company C, less one platoon, had moved from the 1/1 rear area forward to an assembly point behind 2/1 in preparation for a night counterattack to retake the now battle-scarred outpost. Without the customary artillery preparation, the attacking force at 2245 crossed the MLR at a point directly south of the former outpost Samoa, which had been abandoned earlier when Siberia fell. Working their way northwest towards Siberia, the Company C Marines, commanded by Captain Casimir C. Ksycewski, cautiously approached the assault line. Reaching it at 0105 on 10 August the force deployed immediately and rushed the objective.

At about this time the Chinese defenders opened fire but could not halt the assaulting Marines. The struggle to regain the Siberia objective was fierce; some of the Chinese refused to yield and fought to their death. Most, however, held their defense positions only briefly before retiring to the refuge offered by the reverse slope of the hill. Gaining the crest of Hill 58A at 0116, the Company C commander ordered a platoon to the other side of the objective to dispatch remaining elements of the enemy force. The resulting fire fight lasted nearly four hours. At daybreak, however, the enemy, in estimated company strength, strenuously renewed his counterfire and, for a third time, forced the 1st Marines to retire from the disputed hill and return to the main line.

Later that day, at the regimental CP, Colonel Layer called a staff conference to decide on the best course of action. Successive Marine withdrawals had been caused by the intense enemy shelling. The key to its effectiveness was the observation provided the Chinese from Hills 122 and 110. Heavy enemy fire had also caused most of the casualties, 17 killed and 243 wounded, in 1st Marine ranks. It was decided to shift the battle area to better restrict this enemy capability not only to observe Marine troop movements but also to call down accurate fire on friendly attacking units. Bunker Hill, an enemy outpost west of Siberia, was selected. In the eyes of 1st Marines tacticians, possession of Hill 122 instead of Hill 58A presented three major advantages:

Hill 122 offered excellent observation into the rear of enemy outposts;

Possession of Hill 122 would greatly strengthen the MLR in the regimental sector, effectively neutralize Siberia, provide dominating terrain that was more defensible than 58A; and

Bunker offered an excellent opportunity for an attack employing the element of surprise against the enemy.

To help preserve this tactical surprise, the plan for the Bunker Hill attack included a diversionary attack against Siberia. Making this secondary effort would be a reinforced rifle platoon and a composite unit of gun and flame tanks. For the main attack, Lieutenant Colonel Batterton's 2d Battalion would employ a reinforced rifle company with supporting artillery and armor, if needed. The operation was to be conducted at night, to further ensure the opportunity for tactical surprise. For the same reason, the attack was not to be preceded by artillery preparation on either objective. To the right of the 1st Marines, however, Colonel Culhane's 5th Marines would support the diversion by artillery and tank fire placed on enemy strongpoints in the Ungok area, about 1 1/4 miles northeast of Siberia. During daylight, air, artillery, and tanks attacked targets on both 122 and 58A. Priority of effort in the 1st Marines area went to units preparing for the Siberia-Bunker offensive.

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Chapter 3. The Battle of Bunker Hill

The Attack on Bunker Hill[22]

At dusk on 11 August, 1,000 yards behind the MLR in the western sector of the 2/1 line, the eight Company C tanks that were to provide much of the diversionary effort at Hill 58A moved out of their assembly area. Leading the column east of the MSR, Changdan Road, were four M–46 mediums, mounting 90mm guns. They were followed by an equal number of flame vehicles. Each M–46 was specially equipped with an 18-inch fighting light, actually a searchlight with a shutter over the lens, to be used for battlefield illumination. The flame vehicles, World War II M4A3E8 mediums, mounted a 105mm howitzer in addition to the flame tube. As the tanks reached the Changdan Road, they turned north, crossed the MLR, and proceeded to preselected positions. (See Map 10.)

Click here to view map

When the M-46 gun tanks were in position to fire on Siberia and its flanks, their powerful 90s opened up on the objective. At this time, 2110, the first section of flames (two tanks) made its way along the stream bed between the MLR and Hill 56A (Samoa). Lighting their way with very short bursts of flame, the two tanks advanced in this manner to the base of Hill 58A. There the vehicles paused momentarily, then began to move up the near slope, using longer spurts of flame to sear the ground and sparse vegetation to the crest of the position. The gun tanks, in the meantime, had shifted their fire from Siberia northeast to neutralize Hill 110. When the flame vehicles reached the top of Siberia, they lumbered down the far slope, firing then in shorter bursts and sweeping the area with machine guns to discourage any enemy infantry interference.

With some fuel reserved to light their way on the return trip, the flame section reversed its course from the far side of the objective, mounted the crest, and clanked back to the Changdan Road. When the first section had returned, the second departed, completing its mission in much the same manner. Tank personnel of both groups observed that the enemy artillery and mortar fire was medium to heavy on Siberia. Some rifle fire was also received. Gun tanks, firing from Changdan Road east of Siberia, experienced less fire from the Chinese.

Although the flame vehicles had completed their mission and were on their way home, the M-46s remained on position in support of the 3d Platoon, Company D which, at 2230, was advancing from the MLR to complete the infantry part of the diversion. Staying out of the low ground that the tanks had used, the platoon swept over Hill 56A at 2255 and immediately struck out for the further objective, Hill 58A. Gun tanks firing their 90s on the Chinese OPLR on Hill 110 and on Siberia illuminated the target area with their fighting lights, the shutter of which the tankers flicked open and closed during each five-second interval that the light remained on.

Less than an hour after crossing JAMESTOWN, the platoon from Captain George W. Campbell's Company D reported the capture of Siberia. The enemy quickly made his presence felt at the objective; a half hour before midnight, he assaulted the hill in reinforced platoon strength. Ten minutes later the Chinese withdrew and the Company D Marines, in accordance with their battle plan, did likewise. At about the same time the 5th Marines, having completed its part in the diversion, also secured from the operation.

Ten minutes after the diversionary infantry had cleared Samoa while enroute to Siberia, the main attack force, Company B, which had come under operational control of 2/1 at 1800, crossed the MLR, the line of departure. Moving at a fast pace to preserve the element of anticipated surprise, the attack force, commanded by Captain Sereno S. Scranton, Jr., soon deployed two squads of the lead platoon against the near side of the hill. By 2318 on 11 August the squads were moving up Bunker Hill and, 10 minutes later, one platoon had gained the top of the objective and one was at the base of the hill, both moving northward along the forward slope. As the

advancing units neared the end of their sweep forward, they began to come under small amounts of rifle fire from the front and left flank of the position.[23] The Company B platoons continued to advance, returning well-placed small arms fire.

Soon the intensity of Chinese small arms fire increased; at the same time enemy mortars and artillery opened up on the company. Marines attempting to assault the top of Hill 122 also came under a hail of hand grenades hurled by the staunch Chinese defenders. After a brief but vicious fight at point-blank range, the Chinese gave ground on the eastern side, heading uphill. Several Marines pursued the fleeing enemy to the summit, then joined the rest of the assault units of Company B in organizing a defense. By 0300, 12 August the battle had quieted down and for a short while all firing ceased. Then, as the Marines began to dig in, a bypassed pocket of enemy resistance came to life. Two fire teams in the 1st Platoon took these Chinese Communists under fire.

Even as the fighting continued, Marines and KSC personnel were hauling fortification materials towards Bunker to consolidate the precarious foothold. For a while, enemy mortars unleashed a heavy fire against the newly won position, but by 0230 Company B was able to report that enemy shelling had stopped and that the objective was in friendly hands. A new fire fight broke out at 0345 between a small force of enemy soldiers occupying a draw forward of Bunker Hill and Marines nearby. The exchange of fire continued for nearly two hours, but short of harassing the Marines on Bunker Hill the enemy did not launch a counterattack. Dawn on 12 August revealed that thus far in the Bunker Hill fighting 1 Marine of Company B had been killed and 22 were wounded. The earlier diversionary attack on Siberia had resulted in only one Marine casualty, the wounding of the platoon commander, Second Lieutenant James W. Dion.

Personnel losses were kept to a minimum by the well-organized medical support and the efficient service of medical and evacuation personnel. A forward aid station was established in the vicinity of the Company E CP. Casualties that were not ambulatory arrived at this two-bunker installation usually by hand litter, other wounded men were transported in armored personnel carriers, U.S. Army tracked vehicles similar in appearance to the Marine LVT, that had accompanied the diversionary unit and were part of the Panmunjom rescue force stationed in the area of COP 2 on the 3/1 left flank. Wounded Marines were examined immediately. Minor injury cases were treated and discharged; more seriously injured personnel were given emergency treatment and evacuated. Movement to the rear was accomplished by ambulance jeeps. Helicopters, landing only 30 yards from the station, flew out the critically wounded. A sand-bag-protected squad tent was used to house casualties waiting to be examined. This emergency aid station closed down on 13 August, when action in the right battalion sector diminished.

Even though the remainder of the morning of 12 August was practically free of any retaliatory attempts by the Chinese against Bunker Hill, the Marines occupying the new position were not idle, for they anticipated an immediate and severe reaction for capturing the hill. Quickly, but methodically, the company dug in. At noon, regiment passed to 3/1[24] the responsibility for Bunker Hill and operational control of Company B. Consolidation of Hill 122 continued until about 1500, when the Marines were forced to put down their entrenching tools and grab their rifles instead. The Chinese had suddenly launched an intense mortar and artillery attack against the hill. Defending Marines expected to see enemy soldiers start up the western slopes at any minute.

Actually, more than an hour elapsed before the Communists initiated their first main ground attack to regain Bunker. By that time, heavy casualties from the continued shelling had forced Company B to pull back from the ridge and take up positions on the reverse (eastern) slope of Bunker Hill. At this point, with reduced Company B forces and with no radio communication between Captain Scranton's unit and 3/1, Lieutenant Colonel Armitage sent 1/3/1,[25] under Captain Howard J. Connolly, forward from the MLR. Shortly before 1600, a force of more than 350 Chinese lunged out of the low ground of Hill 123, west of Bunker, to attack defensive positions along the ridge between Hills 124–122. Striking in rapid succession first the west side and

then the northern end of the Company B position to find a weak spot in the defense, the enemy counterattack finally concentrated on the southwestern part of the hill.

An intense exchange of fire raged here until 1715, when the defending fire of Company B plus the added weight of the Company I reinforcements combined to stall the enemy advance. Having failed to gain their objective, the Communists abruptly broke off their artillery and mortar fire and ordered their infantry to withdraw. They pulled back only to the far side of the hill, however. By 1740 the enemy was occupying his new post on the northern slope, while the Marines continued to hold their positions on the reverse slope of Bunker Ridge. Enemy supporting fires had lifted and a lull ensued in the fighting.

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Chapter 3. The Battle of Bunker Hill
Consolidating the Defense of Bunker Hill[26]

Even before the Chinese had made their coordinated attack against Hill 122 in the midafternoon of the 12th, the 1st Marines had implemented a plan of action to assure that the critical position would remain in Marine hands. In addition to the movement of Company I/3/1 to reinforce Bunker Hill and of Company I/3/7 as its relief on the MLR, a precautionary displacement was also made of the 3/1 reconnaissance platoon to Hill 124 to tie in that terrain feature with both Bunker and JAMESTOWN and thus consolidate the defense north of the MLR and west of Bunker. (See Map 11.)
Click here to view map

Other activities behind the line aimed at making the Marine position on the newly seized hill more tenable. As one step in this direction, General Selden shifted most of his reserve into the zone of action. Before the end of the day remaining units of 3/7 were placed under operational control of 3/1, and 2/7 was attached to Colonel Layer's reserve. The 7th Marines was directed to place its 4.2-inch mortars on call to the 1st Marines. Priority of artillery support went to the Bunker Hill regiment. Within the 1st Marines, the regimental commander moved two provisional platoons (118 Marines) of the reserve 1st Battalion to the 3d Battalion sector. All 81mm mortars in 1/1 were sent to the left battalion. The fire plan also called for employment of all the 60mm mortars that could bear on the crest of 124–122, with 81mm and artillery box-me-in barrage fires on the ridge and flanks.

Machine guns from the MLR were assigned missions on the crest of Bunker Ridge and 4.5-inch ripples were planned on the deep enemy approaches. Gun and flame tanks were to protect the right flank of Hill 122 where the steep draw between Bunker and the MLR offered the most dangerous approach into Bunker Hill. Supplies and fortification materials, meanwhile, were being carried forward and casualties taken to the rear by the relief party. Although 3/1 initially reported that the Bunker Hill fighting had resulted in 58 killed or wounded Marines, a later battalion count showed this number to be 34—5 killed and 29 wounded.

Most of the casualties had been caused by hostile shelling. Although the Hill 122 reverse slope afforded some cover from the Chinese artillery and mortars, the positions on the crest did not offer any protection, so Marines continued their trenchworks and other defensive preparations at a rapid pace and supporting fires were registered by 1900. The approach of night was certain to bring renewed Communist attempts to capture Bunker Hill.

At 2000, Lieutenant Colonel Armitage reported to division that his force on Hill 122 occupied the entire reverse slope and that the Marines of I/3/1 and B/1/1 were digging in and consolidating their scant defenses. Enemy shells were still falling on both Bunker and Hill 124. Company commanders forward of the MLR estimated that as many as 400 Chinese occupied the ridge on the other side of the slope from the Marines. Since the crest of the long Hill 124–122 ridgeline was fairly level, the gentle incline of the Bunker rear slope permitted defending Marine units excellent fields of fire to the ridge crest, a major consideration in the 3/1 battalion commander's decision to adopt a rear slope defense. Moreover, the top of the ridge could be swept with direct fire from the MLR as well as supporting weapons from the two nearest companies on JAMESTOWN. Opposing Marine and Chinese forces were thus lined up for a continuation of the battle for Bunker Hill.

It appeared that the Chinese wished to attempt a diversionary tactic of their own. To draw attention away from Hill 122 they engaged a Marine outpost east of Bunker and a KMC ambush far to the left before attacking Bunker again. In the KMC sector, shortly after 2300, an enemy infantry platoon walked into a trap near the eastern edge of the Sachon and 500 yards south of the Munsan-ni-Kaesong rail line. The brief fire fight lasted

only 10 minutes before the Chinese broke contact.

Perhaps the ambush was incidental to the forthcoming attack against the Bunker complex, but this same reasoning cannot be applied to the Communist-inspired action which broke out shortly at Hill 48A, Stromboli, another friendly outpost far to the east of Hill 122. Near the right limiting point of Colonel Layer's 1st Marines and the 5th Marines boundary, Stromboli was another Marine fire-team-by-day, squad-by-night position. It occupied a small rise 250 yards forward of the MLR and commanded the immediate sector in all directions. The entire MLR in the regimental right was dominated by the enemy-held Hill 104, a half-mile north of 48A.

Communist infantry opened the attack without benefit of any supporting arms preparation and rushed to seize Hill 48A early on the morning of 13 August, a few minutes after midnight. Defending Marines immediately responded with small arms and automatic weapons fire. By the time the outpost commander had informed battalion of the attack by radio, the far right sector of the 1st Marines line, held by Captain Clarence G. Moody, Jr.'s Company F, had also come under attack. Firing rifles and submachine guns and hurling hand grenades as they assaulted the main position, the Chinese attempted to penetrate the Jamestown defenses. In spite of the enemy's concerted efforts, the Marine line remained staunch.

At Stromboli, the Communists met with no greater success, although they did cause enough casualties to warrant the dispatch of a Company F reinforcing squad. When this unit left the MLR, at 0106 on 13 August, the Marine line was still under a heavy attack not only from Chinese infantry but from hostile artillery and mortars as well. Out at Hill 48A the outpost remained in comparative quiet until the approach of the reinforcing party. As the Company F squad neared the base of the hill, Chinese infantry that earlier had been assaulting the Marine MLR turned their rifle and machine gun fire from positions on the JAMESTOWN side of the outpost. A heavy rain of devastating mortar fire engulfed the reinforcing Marines. On order, they broke off the approach march and returned to the company rear area.

On the main line, meanwhile, Company F positions were still being bombarded by Chinese artillery and assaulted by their infantry. Casualties along the entire line forced Lieutenant Colonel Batterton to order his 1st Provisional Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 2/1, to the Company F command post. After the clutch unit departed the battalion area, at 0210, and approached Captain Moody's CP, enemy fires immediately intensified. A violent fight erupted to the left of the Company F sector, but the Marines there held. The Chinese then tried to punch holes in other parts of the company line, moving eastward along JAMESTOWN. Each failure to breach the line seemed to signal a decrease in the intensity of Chinese shelling.

This easing of Communist pressure against the main line enabled the Company F commander to put into operation a new attempt at the reinforcement and rescue of Stromboli. After the initial enemy assault in the early hours of 13 August had ended in failure, the Chinese made repeated attempts to capture the outpost. At one time it appeared that a company of Chinese had overrun the hill. Later, however, the Stromboli stronghold radioed that the enemy force, subsequently identified as only a platoon, had encircled the Marine position. To relieve enemy pressure at Hill 48A, Captain Moody employed a rifle platoon which set out for the outpost at 0325.

Simultaneously, as if their intelligence had advance knowledge of the 1st Marines recovery plan, the Chinese stepped up the tempo of their attack at Stromboli. A fresh assault by the enemy was stymied by Marine superiority in hand-to-hand combat. Thereafter, close-in defensive fires continued to ring the outpost and to discourage future assaults. The approach of the second Marine rescue party eliminated much of the pressure that Communist foot soldiers had maintained around the hill position. After a 90-minute exchange of fire with the enemy, the friendly platoon penetrated the encirclement and rushed to the besieged outpost at the hill crest. At this point the Chinese disengaged and withdrew towards the north.

After their diversion against Stromboli had approached the proportions of a full-scale attack, with the enemy having reinforced from platoon to company size, the Chinese then initiated their main thrust, an attempt to retake Bunker. Captain Connolly (I/3/1) had reported that shortly before 0100 Communist mortar fire had begun

falling on his positions on the southern slope of Bunker Hill. Simultaneously, Chinese artillery stepped up the rate of its barrage fires as did the assaulting close-in enemy infantry. Captain Connolly then requested the 11th Marines to place box-me-in fires around the Marine company positions on Hill 122. Artillery furnished these defensive fires almost immediately.

Shortly after 0130, the Marines in the center and right of the I/3/1 position observed a large number of Chinese, deployed into a skirmish line, headed directly for their part of the hill. The attack was accompanied by intense machine gun and rifle fire. It was countered by an equally heavy reply from Marines on Bunker. For nearly four hours the battle raged at Hill 122. Unsuccessful enemy frontal assaults were followed by attempts to dislodge the defenders from the rear. In their continuing thrust against the hill, the Chinese were repulsed by Marine coordinated support fires—tank, rocket, artillery, and mortar.

By firing on known or suspected assembly areas and Chinese infantry units advancing up the draws towards Hill 122, these Marine supporting weapons helped to preserve the status quo at Bunker. Repeated box-me-ins were also fired by the 11th Marines during the early-morning Communist attacks on 13 August. Exploding friendly mortar shells increased the effectiveness of the hill defense; nine rocket ripples[27] fired by the artillery regiment further supported Marines at the critical terrain position. Tanks unleashed their deadly fire on nearby enemy outposts to neutralize them; their 90mm guns, aided by the battlefield illumination from tank fighting lights, helped eliminate Chinese foot soldiers attempting to envelop Marine positions on Bunker.

It was in this direction that an enemy force, estimated at reinforced battalion strength, headed during the early morning fighting on Hill 122. At 0330, the struggle for possession of the height had reached the climax. For an hour the issue remained in doubt. Then, as the Chinese small arms fire decreased, the tempo of the enemy's artillery shelling increased. This, the division correctly deduced, announced the beginning of a temporary Communist withdrawal from Bunker Hill.

Although the immediate danger of the enemy onslaught had ended for the time being, Marines to the rear of the JAMESTOWN Line stepped up their defensive preparations. Division, regimental, and battalion operational plans were put into effect to prevent a Chinese victory. The seriousness of the situation on the 1st Marines right flank at Stromboli early on 13 August had resulted in the movement of one company of 5th Marines into blocking positions behind the MLR near the left regimental boundary. To the south of Bunker Hill, relief and replacement units from the division reserve, ordered into action late the previous day, maneuvered into position to strengthen the regimental front. One of these relief units, G/3/7, under command of Captain William M. Vanzuyen, had just deployed from its assembly area to pass through the ranks of an MLR company and take over the Bunker Hill positions. The Marines' situation on Hill 122 had deteriorated so rapidly, however, that the 3/1 commander rushed two reinforced squads forward from I/3/7, the nearest MLR unit.

The Company G reinforcement unit jumped off from JAMESTOWN and arrived at Bunker shortly after sunup, where it reinforced Captain Connolly's positions during the height of the battle for possession of Hill 122. Not long after, the Chinese initiated their withdrawal under cover of increased artillery and mortar barrages. As they left, the Communists policed the battlefield in their typically thorough manner. A Marine platoon that swept the northern slope of Bunker failed to find any enemy bodies in this area so recently abandoned by the Chinese, but did take under fire and kill seven enemy that had remained on Hill 122.

Before I/3/1 had sent one of its platoons to reconnoiter the far side of Bunker Hill, Lieutenant Colonel Armitage ordered H/3/7, under Captain John G. Demas, forward to relieve friendly forces at the contested height. The exchange of units was completed before noon of the 13th. By late afternoon, except for Company H, all 2d and 3d Battalions, 7th Marines units that had moved up to reinforce the 1st Marines were on their way back to the regimental reserve area. At this time the 1st Marines CO, Colonel Layer, reported to General Selden that the Bunker Hill action during 12–13 August had resulted in 24 Marines killed and 214 wounded. On the right, in the 2d Battalion sector, an additional 40 Marines were listed as casualties, including 7 killed in the Stromboli defense.

Chinese known dead numbered 210, plus an estimated 470 killed and 625 wounded.[28] Artillery and aerial observers reported that between 1500 on the 12th and 0600 the following morning an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 rounds of enemy fire had fallen on 1st Marines positions, the "heaviest incoming fires received by the Division since coming into the present sector."[29]

The number of casualties from the Bunker Hill action was to increase further that same day with a renewed attack on the outpost. Before the Chinese again engaged Hill 122, however, they made a diversionary attack on the western flank at the extreme left of the 3/1 sector. At dusk on 13 August, the enemy shelled the Company G Marines at COP 2, the critical height overlooking the Panmunjom peace corridor. The shelling caused several casualties and lasted 90 minutes. Towards the end, Communist infantrymen moved forward and fired on the outpost. At about the same time, Company H personnel emplaced on the MLR to the rear of COP 2 began to receive artillery rounds in preassault proportions.

A ground attack in this western end of the 3/1 sector did not materialize, however. Instead, the Chinese resumed their attack on Bunker Hill. Since their temporary withdrawal early on the 13th, the CCF had repeatedly sent mortar and artillery barrages against the bastion to harass its new occupants. On occasion these well-aimed mortar rounds found their mark. Mortars interdicting a trail used for resupply of the Hill 122 defenders did inflict some casualties on two groups rushing emergency supplies forward from the MLR.

At 2100, while continuing his shelling of the left end of the 3/1 sector, the enemy lifted his preparation on Hill 122 to permit a CCF reinforced company to make a new assault there on the Marine defenders. Captain Demas called for box-me-ins to seal off his positions and illumination shells to help locate the enemy force. Utilizing the draw to the east of Hill 58A, the Chinese proceeded west to Bunker where they pitted one platoon against the center of the Company H, 3/7 line and another against the right flank. Defensive fires momentarily held off the intruders, although some were able to break through to the Marines' fighting positions.

Those enemy troops who penetrated the Marine defenses were quickly eliminated by grenades and small arms fire. Unable to weaken the Marine defenses any further and by now sustaining sizable casualties from unrelenting Marine artillery and mortar concentrations, the Communists withdrew at 2215. Marine defenders estimated they had killed 175 enemy during this latest encounter; a firm count of 20 bodies were found on the shell-torn slopes. Company H casualties, all from enemy mortar and artillery fire, were 7 killed and 21 wounded.[30] Enemy incoming was again heavy during this period, with a reported 3,000 rounds falling in the sector.

In the 3d Battalion sector, Marine and KSC stretcher bearers brought casualties to the I/3/1 CP, several hundred yards to the rear of the front line. At the command post, the critically wounded were airlifted by helicopter to the rear. Less seriously wounded casualties were placed in jeep ambulances and carried to the battalion forward aid station, about two miles away. Here a team of doctors and corpsmen examined and treated patients, discharged a few, but prepared most for further evacuation. At the 1st Marines forward aid station, patients were reexamined and their wounds redressed when required; discharge or further evacuation was also accomplished. Most of the Marines brought to this forward facility had become exhausted from vigorous activity in the high temperature and humidity which characterized the South Korean summer. The regimental aid station treated these heat cases and then released them to their units.

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Company B Returns to Bunker Hill[31]

Division intelligence subsequently reported that the 2100 attack on 13 August had been made by an enemy battalion with a reinforced company in assault. This same unit again sent a small band of Chinese soldiers against Hill 122 at 0225 the following morning. This clash was to be the briefest of all offensives for control of Bunker Hill during the 11–17 August period. Prior to launching this four-minute fire fight, an enemy machine gun at Siberia had attempted to harass the Marines at Bunker Hill. In retaliation, Marine tanks illuminated this enemy weapon with their searchlights and immediately took it under fire with their 90mm guns, knocking it out of action. At the same time, enemy artillery attempted to shell friendly tanks. During this brief fire exchange, one tanker was wounded slightly and the lens of one fighting light was splintered by fragments from enemy shells bursting around the tanks. The inconsequential probe was made, Marines believed, not so much to seriously challenge Marines holding Hill 122 as it was to retrieve CCF dead and wounded from the major attack a few hours earlier that night.

Anticipating that a much heavier ground attack was close at hand, the 1st Marines ordered a reinforcement of the Bunker Hill position. Even before the heavy action on the 13th, this machinery had been set in motion. To this end, the 3d Battalion was to reinforce the Bunker defense by sending a 1/1 platoon to the hill and the 2d Battalion was instructed to return Company A (minus this platoon) to the reserve battalion. At 0415 on the 14th, Company E/2/1, led since 10 August by Captain Stanley T. Moak, took over from A/l/1 the responsibility for the 2d Battalion's MLR "Siberia sector," adjacent to the Bunker Hill area held by the 3d Battalion. The Company A reinforcing platoon arrived at Hill 122 just before dusk, preceding another CCF company attack by only a few hours.

At midnight the 1st Marines front was suspiciously quiet for a few minutes. Forward on Hill 122, there was no apparent enemy activity. Captain Demas sent out a two fire-team patrol from Bunker to reconnoiter northwest of Bunker towards the Chinese lines. Shortly after the eight Marines returned with a negative report of contact with the enemy, the regiment received a report about the outbreak of a small arms clash between defenders on the left flank of Bunker and an enemy unit farther west. At 0118 on 15 August what had initially appeared to be a minor contest suddenly erupted into a heated fire fight all along the 124–122 Bunker Ridge complex. At the request of Captain Dumas, Marine artillery fired protective boxes around the Bunker positions. This defensive maneuver held the attackers in check.

At this moment, Chinese infantrymen in the draw running alongside the 124–122–120 ridge system were massed for an assault on Bunker from the northeast. The plan might have been successful had not a fighting light from a tank on the main line intercepted the Communists in this state of their preparations. In a matter of moments, friendly artillery, mortar, and tank fire struck the Chinese and scattered the formation.

After discovering he could not successfully pull a sneak attack, the enemy reverted to his usual procedure, employing a preassault bombardment prior to his infantry assault. This preparation began at 0206; it reached the rate of approximately 100 rounds of 82 and 122mm mortar shells per minute. While supporting weapons pounded the Marines, the Chinese assault commander reorganized his attack force that the Marine shelling had scattered. Communist infantry then moved forward and fired on the Bunker Marines, who replied with rifles and machine guns and box-me-in fires. Unable to penetrate this protective mask around the positions, the Chinese gradually decreased their small arms and artillery fire until, at 0315, the rate of exploding shells at Hill 122 had dropped to only four or five per minute. Soon thereafter the small arms fire slacked off entirely and

by 0400 even the mortars had stopped. Across the entire 1st Marines front, all was quiet again.

During the Company H defense of the hill, enemy losses, caused mostly by friendly artillery and mortar fire, were placed at 350, including 40 counted dead. Captain Demas' Marines suffered 35 casualties, of whom 7 were killed. En route to the MLR after relief by B/3/1, the company suffered four more casualties, including two KIAs, all the victims of Chinese mortars.

It was not long before these weapons inflicted casualties on Company B, which had six of its men wounded even before the H/3/7 unit had reached Jamestown. Another Marine at Bunker was wounded by enemy mortars later that morning. At 1640 the Communists again probed Bunker Hill, this time in company strength. Striking in daylight during a thunderstorm and without any preparatory fires, the Chinese attackers failed to achieve any tactical surprise. The defenders fired both infantry and supporting weapons; some threw grenades at the few Communists who did manage to get close to the fighting positions. At 1750, the Chinese withdrew, this time leaving 35 of their dead in the attack area. Four Marines had been wounded; five others suffering from battle fatigue were later evacuated.

Exactly when the enemy would strike next at Bunker Hill was not known by the Marines. Most believed that the Communists would return but only speculated as to when. Although the battalion felt that "the enemy was not expected to attack again for some time,"[32] events were to prove otherwise. In any case, the battalion was prepared, having an adequate force on Bunker and sufficient local reserves to absorb an attack up to the strength of any received so far. Division supporting arms were readily available for commitment at critical points.

The Chinese soon put an end to the conjecture about the next attack. At 0040, 16 August, an enemy force, later estimated as a battalion, came out of positions to the west and north of Hill 122. Supported by mortars at first, and later on by artillery, the battalion sent one company against the Marine outpost. Several attacking elements were able to penetrate the defensive fires. These Chinese reached the crest of the hill and began using their rifles, automatic weapons, and hand grenades against the defenders. Captain Scranton called for reinforcements. A platoon from I/3/7 was dispatched promptly from the 3/1 sector. The reinforcements departed jamestown just as the fire fight on Bunker began to subside. By 0315, the enemy had begun his withdrawal, and another reinforcing element, 1/3/1, had moved forward, this time from regiment to Lieutenant Colonel Armitage's CP.

About two hours later a brief fire fight flared up in the Company B sector. No ground assault was made on Marine positions. The enemy force, of undertermined strength, never closed with the Marines and within 10 minutes, the firing stopped. No casualties to the Marines resulted during this exchange. The earlier clash had resulted in the death of 3 Marines and the wounding of 27. Enemy losses were estimated at 40 killed and 30 wounded.

Before it came off the hill, Company B was engaged by enemy fire three more times. At 1945, Chinese mortars (82mm) wounded two Marines. Later, heavier mortars placed 20 rounds on Hill 122, but these caused no casualties. There were some losses, however, early on the morning of the 17th when C/1/1 was relieving the Bunker defenders. Captain Scranton's Marines sustained five more wounded from automatic weapons, five during the relief.

The second relief of Company B on Bunker brought to a close the battle that had been waged for possession of the vital hill complex. During the Hill 122 tours of Company C and other 1st Marines units that followed in August, seven more ground actions tested the Bunker Hill defenses. Only one of them, during the night of 25–26 August, was of significant size. This attack also failed to dislodge the Marines from the hill.

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Chapter 3. The Battle of Bunker Hill
Supporting Arms at Bunker Hill[33]

It was quite natural that the flurry of ground activity during the battle of Bunker Hill created a need for increased participation from Marine supporting arms. The magnitude of infantry action during the contest for Hill 122 resulted in a monthly record to date in 1952 for the amount of air support received as well as the volume of both artillery and tank fires supporting the division. During this critical 9–16 August period, the 11th Marines played a part in every ground action except the feint attack on Siberia and the seizure of Bunker Hill, both of which were purposely executed without an artillery preparation. Medium tanks fired day and night missions during most of the infantry action. Close air support at times amounted to a strike every 20 minutes.

During the ground action around Bunker, Siberia, and Stromboli, the division received close air support in amounts unparalleled for JAMESTOWN Marines to that time. Marine and U.S. Air Force pilots flew a total of 458 missions (including 27 ground controlled MPQ-14 radar bombing attacks) during five of the most critical days, 9–13 August. On two of them, the 1st Marine Division received priority of close air support along the whole EUSAK front. Fifth Air Force assigned 1st MAW aircraft to Marine requests for close air support as long as Marine aircraft were available.

The initial air strike by Marines in the Bunker fighting was on 9 August in support of counterattack plans for Siberia. MAG–33 provided a morning and evening flight of four F9F jet fighters to destroy enemy forces and defensive works on 58A (Siberia). USAF fighter-bombers attacked Siberia and other outposts nearby and enemy artillery positions supporting the Chinese forward line. On the next day, air operations, concentrating on Siberia, were stepped up considerably against enemy outposts. Thirty-five aircraft in nine missions attacked 58A with bombs, rockets, and napalm. These strikes were carried out by MAG–12 and U.S. Air Force pilots at irregular intervals during daylight hours. Air controllers reported good results. Other aircraft hit known mortar locations capable of supporting the Chinese. During the morning, Marine Attack Squadron 121 (Lieutenant Colonel Philip "L" Crawford) bombed and burned Bunker Hill. Just before sunset, F–80 and–84 jets of the U.S. Air Force dropped 15 tons of bombs on mortar positions and troops on and around Hill 120. Four F–80s also participated with eight Marine AD–2 propeller-driven attack aircraft in the morning attack on Bunker.

Air activity in support of the 1st Marines continued unabated on 11 August. Before the diversionary ground attack just after dusk that day, Marine and Fifth Air Force fliers repeated the treatment that Hills 58A and 122 had received the previous day. During daylight, supporting weapons positions were hit by FAF fighter planes. At night, MAG–12 air attacks guided by the MPQ–14 radar bombing system destroyed hostile artillery and mortars. Also during the dark, the medium bombers of the FEAF Bomber Command struck deeper in the rear at heavy weapons locations.

These Air Force bombers conducted four more controlled-bombing attacks against Chinese artillery during the early hours of 12 August, when Company B was consolidating its positions and hastily organizing the defense of Bunker Hill. After daylight and until dusk, MAGs–12 and–33 and USAF squadrons provided four-plane flights to strike troop assembly areas, supporting weapons positions, and observation posts close to Hill 122. In late afternoon, Marine pilots in four F9F Panther jets and three ADs bombed and burned the enemy side of Bunker Hill during the shelling and subsequent ground attack against the Marines on the eastern slope.

Marines flew, on 13 August, all of the daylight close air support missions in support of the actions on both Bunker in the center and Stromboli in the right of the 1st Marines sector. On 13 August, a total of 94 aircraft were committed over the regimental sector to conduct strikes in support of ground operations. Enemy Hill 104,

commanding the 2/1 outpost on 48A (Stromboli), received four attacks. Fighter bombers (F4U propeller-driven Corsairs) carrying napalm, rockets, and 1,000-pound bombs, raided the hill mass at 0535. The other strikes against this key terrain-feature were made by attack and fighter aircraft during the afternoon. Other targets on the regimental right were weapons positions beyond Hill 104 and an enemy outpost one thousand yards west of Stromboli.

Most of the air support received by the 1st Marines on the 13th was directed against targets that were participating—or that were capable of taking part—in the battle on Bunker Hill. Against the enemy on the height itself, the Marines directed only three strikes, and these came late in the morning. A majority of the air attacks were dispatched against observation and command posts and the firing positions of both automatic and large caliber weapons. Chinese artillery and mortar fire had inflicted more casualties and punishment on the Marines than the enemy infantry assaults. As a consequence, the main effort of the close air support strikes was directed against these hostile supporting weapons.

After dark on the 13th, VMF(N)–513 commanded by Colonel Peter D. Lambrecht,[34] took up the air offensive against the heavy firing positions in the rear of the enemy line. The squadron conducted four attacks with its night fighters. Two of its attacks were made just before sunrise.

During the remainder of the battle of Bunker Hill, the ground fighting subsided and the requirement for close air support abated accordingly. On the 14th, only four daylight strikes were flown in the 1st Marines area. These, all by Marine squadrons, were against active artillery and mortars in the defilade of Hill 120 and others to the west on the far slope of Hill 123, and Chinese outpost positions, west of 48A, which had been pestering the Stromboli garrison. There were no flights after dark on the 14th, but on the following night, two MPQ missions were flown by VMF(N)–513. Each was a single plane flight against a reported artillery location. This was the final night air action in the battle for Bunker Hill. Daylight missions in support of Hill 122 defense after the sharp decrease of attacks on the 14th numbered only seven attacks, each by four planes. These, flown by Marines, continued to emphasize the destruction of enemy artillery.

Marine artillery continued its support of ground troops and air strikes. Cannoneers of the 11th Marines fired 21 flak suppression missions during the five days beginning on 11 August. This type of close coordination between Marine supporting arms further reduced combat losses of aircraft providing CAS to the division. The Marine artillerymen had played a vital part in the defense of the besieged outposts. Lieutenant Colonel Armitage credited the box-me-in fires with an important role in thwarting each enemy attack on Bunker.[35]

In the 24-hour period beginning at 1800 on 12 August, Marine artillery directly supporting the 1st Marines fired 10,652 rounds. Most of the ammunition was expended in support of the Bunker Hill defense; some was used in behalf of the Marines outposting Stromboli during the Communists' early morning diversion that day. On the 9th, the direct support battalion, 3/11 (Lieutenant Colonel Charles O. Rogers), had fired about one-fourth of the 12–13 August total. Many of the shells that first day of the Bunker battle were preparatory to counterattacks for regaining Siberia.

When the retaking of Hill 58A was discarded in favor of the surprise attack on 122, the amount of artillery support was reduced, during the 1st Marines infantry preparations on the 10th and 11th, in keeping with the fire support plan. Upon seizure of Bunker, Lieutenant Colonel Rogers' business immediately picked up and quickly reached a crescendo the following day, when the 10,652 shells fired became a Marine one-day battalion record for western Korea until the last stages of fighting in 1953. Other Marine artillery battalions fired reinforcing missions during the critical period as did the 4.5-inch Rocket Battery which fired a large number of on-call ripples. The regimental commander later recalled that "during some of the crises every gun that could bear on Bunker in the 11th Marines and reinforcing units was shooting there."[36]

After a sharp drop on the 14th, the artillery support gradually decreased in proportion to the amount and strength of the enemy's action against Hill 122. By 20 August, 3/11 was firing only 244 rounds a day. Only on the

26th, during a serious Chinese attempt to retake Bunker, did the number of artillery rounds match the intensity of the fire support rendered during the earlier part of the month.

It was not only the quantity of 11th Marines support that the infantry called for during the battle of Bunker Hill; quality was equally important. A majority of the more than 28,000 rounds that 3/11 fired during the eight days of Bunker Hill fell around the besieged outposts. Many rounds were fired in defense of MLR positions. In both of these types of protective fires, extreme accuracy and precision were required due to the proximity of enemy and friendly lines in order to prevent any "short" rounds from falling among Marine positions. Lieutenant Colonel Armitage recalled that during the height of the battle on the night of 12 August, "we did have a bad scare . . . when Captain Connolly reported that friendly mortar fire was falling short."[37] The battalion immediately ceased fire with its 60mms, 81mms, and 4.2s and each piece was checked; the culprit was quickly located and within 5–10 minutes 3/1 resumed fire.

During the August battle, artillery in general support of the entire division and I Corps artillery reinforcing the fires of Colonel Henderson's regiment, stepped up their efforts to destroy the distant and more difficult targets, including mortars and artillery. These continued to be the main cause of Marine casualties. Some of the labors of the 11th Marines gun crews did silence enemy heavy weapons, but personnel losses from enemy shellings still mounted, especially in the infantry units. To assist in the location and destruction of the enemy artillery, aerial observers spent considerable time in spotting and fixing Chinese weapons positions.

Besides these counterbattery efforts, the 11th Marines employed other artillery means to provide the additional support the 1st Marine Division requested during Bunker Hill. Two of these were the counter-counterbattery and the countermortar programs, the former being a passive defense-deception program to minimize Chinese counterbattery fires against 11th Marines weapons. Nearly every day C Battery, 17th Field Artillery Battalion, fired special request missions.[38] Another type of fire, flak suppression, aided the cause of close air support pilots delivering ordnance against those Chinese positions taking Bunker Hill and Stromboli under fire. At night, illumination shells helped outpost and frontline Marines in locating groups of enemy massing for assault on Hill 122.

Mortars (4.2-inch) of the 1st Marines contributed heavily to the defense of the outposts. Operations reached a peak on 12–13 August when, in a 24-hour period, Captain Carl H. Benson's mortar company fired 5,952 rounds—4,084 high explosive and 1,868 illuminating. In addition to their defensive fires, these hard-hitting weapons attacked Chinese mortars, automatic weapons, defensive positions, and troop formations with deadly accuracy.

No less precise and lethal were the fires of Captain Gene M. McCain's gun tanks (Company C, 1st Tank Battalion), and the battalion flame tanks. Three of the latter had fired their 105s in support of the KMC on the morning of the 9th before the vehicles received orders to move east to join Company C temporarily. On the next day, 90s fired on enemy bunkers, observation posts, and trenches in the vicinity of Siberia and Stromboli. During 11 August, two gun tanks blasted at targets immediately beyond Siberia and others to the west of that outpost.

Towards the end of the 11th, the critical part of Bunker battle began for the tankers also. Those elements of Lieutenant Colonel John I. Williamson's battalion supporting the diversion and the subsequent main attack pulled into positions south of Hill 122 on the MLR and to the right in the Company F sector. It was not until the next day that the tanks operating with the 1st Marines reached a peak in gun support for the Bunker fight. Beginning with the defense of Hill 122 from 1600 that day, and for the next 26 hours, the tankers placed 817 shells on targets effecting the Chinese capability of capturing Bunker and Stromboli. In addition to the heavy ammunition, the Company C tanks, augmented by the 1st Marines antitank platoon and five tanks from the division tank reserve, fired 32,000 rounds of .30 caliber machine gun ammunition.

Except on the 11th, most of the tank firing in the fight for Bunker Hill through 14 August was accomplished during the hours of darkness. On the latter date, the cannons and machine guns of the mediums

blasted directly at Chinese outposts opposite Colonel Layer's regiment. The number of rounds that day fell off considerably from the high on the 13th; on the 15th the tanks in the 1st Marines area did not fire at all. Heavy rain that had accompanied the late afternoon thundershower that day made movement forward to firing positions impractical. By the next day, however, the ground was solid enough to permit some maneuvering by the tracked vehicles. They fired 52 rounds of 90mm shells and 14,750 machine gun rounds at automatic weapons positions and bunkers on the western slope of Hill 122. This marked the final tank mission in support of the 1st Marines in the battle for Bunker Hill.

During the early part of the August fighting, tanks of the division were able to get the first real test of a technique of night support,[39] and at the same time experiment with a towing device to permit retrieval of disabled vehicles under fire without getting outside the tank. The use of the lights to support both the diversionary force and the defense of Hill 122 showed the value of these instruments. Lieutenant Colonel Williamson recommended that tanks be employed in pairs, one to spot and adjust fire and the other to fire. With respect to the towing device, he considered the new piece of equipment an improvement over the manual hook-up method, but noted that the device limited tank maneuverability and had a tendency when bouncing up and down over rough terrain to dig into the ground, impeding the forward progress of the vehicle.

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Chapter 3. The Battle of Bunker Hill
In Retrospect[40]

Whether the sacrifice of Siberia in favor of the seizure of Bunker justified the outcome can be determined, in part, by looking back to the division commander's reasons for this decision. He had cited three advantages in seizing and occupying Hill 122 instead of 58A. One, tactical surprise achieved by an attack on the former, was an unqualified success. That Bunker Hill would provide more defensible terrain and at the same time add strength to the main line were two sound judgments that the test of time would bear out. The third point, that observation into the enemy's outpost line would be increased from the higher hill, also proved to be correct.

Only the inability to neutralize Hill 58A effectively from Bunker cast any doubt on the considerations. At night the enemy could occupy Siberia both for firing positions and flank security to attack friendly forces moving down the corridor east of Hill 122. Action to counter these two enemy actions came mainly from MLR forces.

One measure of the results of the Bunker Hill fighting is seen in the price paid. Chinese losses were estimated by the 1st Marine Division at approximately 3,200, including more than 400 known dead. Marine casualties in the action were 48 killed and 313 seriously wounded. Several hundred additional wounded were treated at 1st Marines medical facilities and returned to duty shortly thereafter.

To replace combat losses in the infantry regiment, General Selden on 12 August directed that rear area service and support units fill the vacancies. Two hundred Marines, nearly all of them volunteers, were provided to Colonel Layer by the 14th. To offset other losses within the division, its commander similarly had requested on 12 August that the Commandant, General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., authorize an air-lifting of 500 enlisted Marine infantrymen to the 1st Marine Division as soon as possible. Pointing out that mounting battle casualties had reduced the effective strength of the division, General Selden also urged that each of the next two monthly replacement drafts scheduled for the division be increased by 500 more enlisted men. After some debate at the next senior administrative headquarters,[41] the request was granted by General Shepherd, and the emergency replacements were made available from the 3d Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, California. The initial replacement of 500 Marines arrived on 21 August.

More men to replace divisional combat losses might have been required had not the medical support been such an efficient operation. After the battle, the regimental surgeon, Lieutenant Robert E. Murto, called for a review of the medical facilities in effect during the Bunker, Siberia, and Stromboli fighting. In attendance were the battalion doctors and the division surgeon, Captain Lawrence E. Bach. Participants discussed both the major difficulties and routine procedures involved in medical care of the wounded. Problem areas were the high incidence of heat exhaustion, ground transportation of the wounded, enemy artillery fire that interfered with helicopter evacuations, and the need for increased medical support under battle conditions.

Regarding the last category, the surgeons noted that medical supplies during the heavy fighting of 9–16 August were never at a dangerously low level. The only shortage that had developed was in stretchers, due to the normal delay in transfer of stretchers from medical stations along the evacuation route to the company forward medical facilities. To help combat the Chinese artillery problem, medical officers had placed aid stations on the reverse slopes of hills. There was no available or known solution to hastening and easing the movement of battlefield casualties over the ground. The armored personnel carrier offered some protection from ground fire and a ride less painful than one in a truck, but the wheeled vehicles remained the most widely used.

There was little that could be done about the number of heat exhaustion cases. High temperature and humidity, vigorous activity, and the wearing of the armored vest (and to some degree, the steel helmet), combined

to produce the casualties. All the surgeons agreed that regardless of the number of heat casualties, the wearing of these two items must continue. Regimental doctors credited the armored vest with saving the lives of 17 Marines. Several other Marines, they noted, had received only slight head wounds from bullets that had spent most of their velocity penetrating the steel helmet.

Helicopter evacuation saved the lives of other Marines. The doctors credited the flying skills and bravery of the evacuation pilots for these rescues. Immediate response to day and night calls was instrumental in the recovery of numerous Marines. Rear Admiral Lamont Pugh, Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy, commented upon the value of the helicopter and on other reasons for success of medical support. After a Far East inspection trip, which included a visit to the 1st Marine Division during the battle of Bunker Hill, Admiral Pugh expressed the following opinion:

". . . [I] attributed the new low record '2% mortality' of those men wounded in action to the bullet resistant vest, to skillful frontline surgery with availability of whole blood, the utilization of helicopters for casualty evacuation direct to hospital ships and rear area hospitals, and the efficient manner in which the Hospital Corpsmen of the Navy fulfilled their mission with the Marines."[42]

In another logistical area, the performance was not quite as satisfactory, for the level of supply of one important item—illuminating shells—fell dangerously low during the Bunker fighting. On 16 August, 3/1 reported early in the morning that "artillery illumination was exhausted and 81mm mortar illumination was fast diminishing."[43] To replace the shell-produced light, the regiment used a flare plane.[44]

Ammunition supply appeared to be no problem to the Chinese. The rate and frequency of mortar and artillery fire proved that the enemy had a vast store of these shells. During the heavy fighting, the division observed that the enemy expended approximately 17,000 mortar and artillery rounds in the 11–16 August period of the battle. It was noted for the first time that the Chinese used mortars primarily in support of limited attacks.

About the enemy's reliance on mortars and the technique of their employment, the 1st Marine Division reported:

"This was particularly true of his 60 and 82mm mortars, which are easily displaced forward and shifted to alternate positions. These light mortars were difficult to locate by our observers mainly because of the small size and limited development of their positions, and the fact that they are moved frequently. A large number of enemy mortars were fired from bunkers deep in the ground with only a narrow aperture at the top through which to fire. There were some instances, during the Battle of Bunker Hill, when the enemy brought his 60mm mortars out from cover on the forward slope and set them up in the open near the crest of the ridge. After delivering several rounds, the mortars would then displace quickly back to a covered position. During August, mortar fire averaged between 50 and 60 percent of the total incoming received by the 1st Marine Division."[45]

Further information about the Chinese was also derived at this time, although not always directly associated with the battle. Deserters picked up in the left sectors of the 1st and 5th Marines on 12 and 13 August and papers taken from enemy dead on the 13th confirmed earlier-reported dispositions of Chinese units. One prisoner, from the artillery regiment of the 118th Division, the unit facing the major part of the 1st Marines line, indicated that another artillery regiment had been assigned to support his division. If true, this extra unit would account for both the increased Chinese fires in the Bunker area and the additional artillery emplacements that photo planes had spotted in the 118th Division sector. Infantry units of this division, the Marines observed, introduced no new techniques or equipment during the battle. Prior intelligence had provided the 1st Marines with typical enemy ground attack tactics. Neither the Chinese envelopment of Siberia, Stromboli, and Bunker nor the diversion against Hill 48A before the main attack on Hill 122 represented a departure from normal CCF practice.

Nor was the earlier Marine diversion new, but unlike the Chinese attempt, the 1st Marines tactic was successful. Just before the maneuver, the division pulled off another strategem, described by General Selden in a letter to General Shepherd:

"I worked a ruse that morning which proved to be very profitable. Throughout the Eighth Army front, it had been routine to put on a strike, this to be followed by smoke, then a good artillery barrage, with troops following for the assault. This was done with the exception that there were no troops. The enemy, thinking that there were troops, opened up with everything. The only damage inflicted was on their own forces . . . While they were firing on their own troops, we again opened fire with our artillery, just to help the situation along."[46]

One technique the Marines employed in the Bunker Hill battle was defense of the reverse (protected) side of the hill. Although counter to the usual American military practice, the reverse slope defense was required by the intense artillery and mortar fire massed upon the front slope defenders. As the 3/1 battalion commander later commented:

"It's true, we suffered from the heavy incoming—but had we had to work replacements, casualties, and supplies all the way up to the (forward) military crest of Bunker—the losses would have been prohibitive. With the weight of the incoming and our inability to get greater infantry mass onto the battlefield at one time, a conventional defense would have been far more costly . . . {after} the damage done to Baker Company in the {12 August} afternoon attack . . . had we not gone into a reverse slope defense, we could not {have held} with the strength at hand."[47]

On the other hand, a tactical weakness of the reverse slope defense, that "plagued us until the end of the battle,"[48] was the fact that the 1st Marines initial gain was not more fully exploited. As the battalion commander explained:

"To be successful, in a reverse slope defense, the defender must immediately counterattack, retake and reoccupy the *forward* slope of the position as soon as enemy pressure diminishes. Because of the incoming and primarily because of our overextension in regiment, we . . . {employed} piecemeal commitment . . . and fed units into the battle by company, where we should have employed our entire battalion in counterattacks to punish the withdrawing force and restore the forward slope. To the very end, lack of decisive strength prevented this. We stayed on the reverse slope all the way, except for brief forays to the forward-slope."[49]

Some officers felt, in retrospect, that a more feasible solution during the August battle might have been to move all three battalions on line—3/1, 1/1, and 2/1, with the reserve battalion (1/1) deployed on a narrow front. This would have provided decisive strength on Bunker and the MLR behind it to give greater depth counterattack capability, and better control at the point where needed.[50] Departure from standard doctrine by employment of the reverse slope defense furthered the existing controversy as to the best method of ground organization in the division sector. But it was to be some months before a change would be effected.[51]

Tank, artillery, air, and ground Marines participating in the battle of Bunker Hill gave up one outpost but took another, one that added strength not only to the outpost defense but also to the main line. A well thought-out plan and its skillful execution permitted Marines to take the critical terrain quickly without crippling casualties. Defense of the position on Hill 122 was complicated not so much by the Chinese infantry action but by the intensive mortar and artillery shelling. The Marines' capability to defend was enhanced by close coordination among artillery, air, and tank units. Chinese casualties, by estimate, were 500 percent more than the losses actually suffered by the Marines. The battle of Bunker Hill resulted in the first major Marine action and victory in West Korea. It ushered in two straight months of hard fighting, the most difficult ones yet for Marines on the western front.

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Chapter 4. Outpost Fighting Expanded From the Center Sector to the Right[1]

FOLLOWING THE progressively faltering Chinese attacks against Bunker Hill in mid-August, the 1st Marines in the center MLR sector witnessed a period of decreased enemy activity. By sun-up on the 17th, Captain Ksycewski's Company C, from Lieutenant Colonel King's 1st Battalion had relieved B/1/1, marking the second complete tour of duty at Hill 122 for Company B that month. In two days on the shell-torn crest, Company C received only a single enemy probe and only a few rounds of artillery and mortar fire. In the early morning hours of the 19th, D/2/1 assumed responsibility for Bunker and Hill 124. These new occupants of the disputed property almost immediately were subjected to larger and more frequent Chinese probes as well as increased fire from CCF supporting weapons.

Enemy ground action was directed against the Marine flank, especially the right. Four Chinese infantrymen attempted to infiltrate this corner of the Bunker Hill defenses just before sunrise on 23 August. One even made his way to the top of Hill 122 where he fired downhill at several Marine defenders, wounding one. A moment later this lone Chinese's reconnaissance efforts was rewarded by a fatal hit from a Marine sniper's rifle.

Captain Moody's Company F next took over the two-hill complex. That night, the 24th, the Chinese shelled the two hills and probed their defenses but again showed no inclination to press an attack. On the following night, however, the Chinese became more aggressive. At dusk, two squads charged the right flank of Bunker Hill, threw hand grenades, and fired their submachine guns briefly at the Marines. The enemy then retired, but about an hour afterwards, a force estimated at two-company strength assaulted the outpost defenses from the center to the right. At the same time, enemy shells began exploding around these Marine positions. Captain Moody called for artillery and tank fire on the attackers. Pushing forward, the Communist infantrymen forced a small opening in the defense perimeter; by this time, a standby platoon on the MLR was moving forward to strengthen the Bunker garrison. Upon arrival of the Marine reinforcements, at midnight, the Chinese soldiers withdrew. Simultaneously, the incoming artillery and mortar fire diminished, and in less than a half hour all firing had ceased.

After the enemy had pulled back, Company F sent its platoon out to reoccupy a forward listening position temporarily abandoned during the second attack. Chinese soldiers immediately contested this advance and, after a local fire fight, caused the Marines to retire once more. That action ended the significant Bunker Hill action in August. In the spirited infantry fighting and artillery dueling during the night of 25–26 August, Marines suffered 65 casualties, including 8 killed. The Chinese losses were estimated at 100 killed and 170 wounded. Supporting arms fire had contributed largely to the high casualty figures on both sides.

During August, whenever a lull had occurred in Colonel Layer's 1st Marines embattled sector, it almost invariably signaled a step-up of Chinese action elsewhere along the 1st Marine Division MLR. When frustrated in their attacks against the positions held by the 1st Marines, the enemy invariably turned his attention to the right of the line, manned since June by the 5th Marines. During August the Chinese seized three outposts forward of the 2/5[2] right battalion line, which it had been the Marine practice to man during daylight hours only. The trio, forming a diagonal line southwest to northeast, in front of the battalion sector were Elmer, Hilda, and Irene.

After dusk on 6 August the enemy had advanced to COP Elmer, on the far southwest end, and by skillful coordination of their infantry and supporting fires denied the position to the Marines approaching to reoccupy the outpost early the next morning. An hour before midnight on 11 August, another 2/5 patrol had attempted to temporarily occupy Hilda, in the center, during the diversionary fires supporting the Bunker Hill attack. As the

Marines neared the outpost, however, they discovered the Chinese had already occupied it. Enemy mortar and artillery fire drove the patrol back to its own lines.

A similar situation occurred at dawn on 17 August, when the Marine outpost detail moved forward to occupy Irene during daylight hours and found the Chinese already on the position. Enemy troops fired at the Marines, pinning them down.[3] Although two rescue units were dispatched to support the Marines, CCF fire interdicted their route of approach. When it became evident the second reinforcement party could not reach its objective, the outpost detail was ordered to pull back to the MLR. The Chinese continued to occupy Irene, the last outpost lost in August, for the remainder of the 2/5 tour on line.

For the remainder of August the Chinese were apparently content to hold what they had gained without immediately seeking additional positions. As a result, operations along the front were mostly limited to patrol action. Chinese infantry units, usually no larger than a squad, regularly fired on Marine patrols, engaging them for a short period from afar, and then quickly breaking off the contact. Seldom was this small unit action supported by artillery or mortars.

On two occasions late in the month, however, the Chinese showed more spirit. Both encounters took place during the early evening hours of 22 August when Chinese patrols came upon two different Company F ambushes operating forward of the 2/5 sector. Heavy casualties were suffered by both sides.

The next day a brief but heavy period of rainfall began with nine inches recorded between 23–25 August. Although the flooding conditions in the division sector were not so extensive as the July rains, they curtailed ground activity considerably and air action to a lesser degree. Division roads were badly damaged but not trenches and bunkers, strengthened as a result of the experience with the July floods. High waters made the ferry inoperable at the Honker Bridge site and also washed out Widgeon Bridge, where the Imjin crested to 42.5 feet. If the sudden flash floods wreaked havoc with some of the Marine division installations, the Chinese were the recipients of similar disfavors; intelligence indicated that damage to the CCF frontline positions was even more severe than to the JAMESTOWN defenses.[4]

The end of August saw the relief of General Selden as Commanding General, 1st Marine Division. He was succeeded on the 29th by Major General Edwin A. Pollock. A brief ceremony at division headquarters, attended by senior officers of EUSAK and KMC, marked the event. Earlier that month, in recognition of his services to the Korean defense, President of the Republic of Korea, Syngman Rhee, had awarded General Selden the Order of Military Merit, Taiguk, the highest Korean award.

The new division commander, General Pollock[5] had commanded the 2d Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina just prior to his Korean tour. He had more than 30 years of military experience. During World War II, he had participated in no fewer than five major campaigns in the Pacific, including the first at Guadalcanal, where he earned a Navy Cross, and one of the war's most costly battles, Iwo Jima. Following the war, he had served at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, in command and staff assignments, and later at Headquarters Marine Corps where in July 1949, he had received his first star.

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Chapter 4. Outpost Fighting Expanded

Early September Outpost Clashes[6]

The new division commander shortly received a first-hand demonstration of the ferocity and persistence of the Chinese Communists opposite his division. On 4 September, the enemy suddenly stepped up his activities which had recently been limited to sporadic probes and occasional artillery fire against Bunker Hill. At 2030 that date Captain Moak, E/2/1, commanding officer at the Bunker outpost, reported that an artillery preparation was falling on his positions. Ten minutes later he radioed 3/1[7] that an enemy platoon was vigorously probing his right flank. When Company E Marines returned a heavy volume of small arms fire, the enemy retired.

This Chinese withdrawal was only temporary, for the initial probe proved the forerunner of more serious activity. Again at 0100 on 5 September a heavy deluge of Chinese mortar and artillery began raining on Hill 122. The intense preparation had apparently convinced the Chinese attacking force that they had eliminated resistance at the Marine outpost, for their soldiers walked upright toward Marine positions, without bothering to make any attempts at concealment. After discovering that a stout defense was still being maintained at Bunker, the Chinese again withdrew and reorganized.

When they resumed the attack, the Chinese used considerably greater caution. This time, in addition to small arms, automatic weapons fire, and a hail of grenades, their assault was supported by artillery and mortars. The results of this concerted effort were not too rewarding, however. Assaults on the center of Hill 122 were repulsed and attempts to crack the left perimeter of Company E's defenses were even more speedily beaten back. A number of Chinese attempting to outflank the E/2/1 defenders inadvertently strayed too far to the right of the outpost and found themselves advancing against the MLR south of Hill 122.

When JAMESTOWN forces engaged these wanderers by fire, the latter quickly realized their mistake and wheeled left for a hasty retreat. They immediately came under fire of their own troops, some of whom had meanwhile penetrated 60 yards into the extreme right of the Bunker positions. At this point, Captain Moak's Company E launched a counterattack and restored its positions on the right. This action forced a general withdrawal of the Chinese force, which the Marines estimated at battalion strength. Lieutenant Colonel Sidney J. Altman[8] subsequently advised division headquarters that his men had killed 30 enemy soldiers and estimated that as many as 305 were probably wounded. This high rate of casualties was attributed, in part, to the enemy's mistaken sense of direction, their direct walking approach which had made them easy standing targets, and to the box-me-in artillery fires supporting the defenders. Marine losses were 12 killed and 40 wounded, caused mostly by Chinese mortars and artillery.

Although the left battalion area was the center of attention in the 1st Marines line early on 5 September, the far right sector was not entirely neglected either. Five minutes after their initial attack on Bunker, other Chinese units also lunged at the Hill 48A outpost, Stromboli. An estimated reinforced platoon, supported by three active machine guns on Hill 104, 850 yards to the north, employed submachine guns, rifles, and grenades in their attack. This battle lasted for nearly two hours, until the Chinese soldiers withdrew at 0240. There were no Marine losses. No tally or estimate was made on the number of enemy KIA or WIA. It was presumed that some of the Communists did become casualties since the three machine guns that had been chattering away to support the attacker's ground action suddenly went silent after Marines called down mortar and artillery fire on the Hill 104 positions.

The probes of 1st Marines positions at Bunker Hill and, to a lesser degree, at Stromboli were repeated in the 5th Marines right regimental sector. At almost exactly the same time Colonel Eustace R. Smoak's regiment[9]

was struck at five of its forward outposts. In the case of OP Gary, on the right, the enemy merely shelled the position for 40 minutes. Against the four other outposts, known as Allen, Bruce, Clarence, and Felix, the Chinese employed both fire and asault troops. (See Map 12.) At Felix the action had begun at 0130, a half hour later than at the adjacent outposts. The difference was probably due to a C/1/5 ambush[10] which had engaged an enemy force operating between Donald and Felix. After a brief five minute fire fight the Marines broke off the action, pulling back to Felix. The other three outposts, clustered to the left of the 3/5 sector, received the brunt of the enemy thrust which lasted for an hour and 20 minutes before the Communists withdrew.
Click here to view map

Employing a squad against both Allen and Clarence, and sending a reinforced company against Bruce, the enemy alternately assaulted and shelled the positions until 0420, after which the Communist units policed the battlefield for casualties and withdrew to the north.

Although there was no official estimate of enemy losses, one Marine at outpost Bruce was credited with inflicting approximately 200 casualties by fire from two machine guns, a carbine, and grenades. He was Private First Class Alford L. McLaughlin, of I/3/5, who was later to receive the Medal of Honor for “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity.” Another Marine from the same company was posthumously awarded the medal. Private First Class Fernando L. Garcia, although gravely wounded, had thrown himself on a hostile grenade to save the life of his platoon sergeant during the Chinese rush to take OP Bruce.

At daybreak the I/3/5 defenders at Bruce, commanded by Captain Edward Y. Holt, Jr., were confronted by an almost unbelievable scene of destruction. All of the bunkers on the forward side of the hill had been destroyed by Chinese mortar and artillery; on the reverse slope, only two had escaped ruination. Marine losses were 32 dead and wounded.[11] To restore the position the 3/5 commander, Lieutenant Colonel Oscar T. Jensen, Jr., directed replacements forward immediately. Carrying emergency supplies, including building materials, the relief element reached Bruce about 1000. Evacuation of casualties was the first task and at 1045 the relieved detail was on its way back to the MLR. Later that day a supply party reached the outpost, having been temporarily delayed by Chinese interdicting fire.

Reinforcement of Bruce and the repair of its defenses were considerably slowed by the continuous rain of enemy projectiles during daylight. Marine and USAF pilots bombed and napalmed enemy bunkers and troops north of JAMESTOWN in the 5th Marines sector. Ten air strikes were executed in support of the 5th Marines that day.

Early on 6 September, 10 minutes after midnight, long-range machine gun fire, buttressed by artillery and mortars, hit outpost Bruce. After 35 minutes the firing subsided, but again at 0305 the outpost experienced a heavy rate of incoming. At about this time, the Communist soldiers massed for an assault on the battered position. Marine defenders called down the artillery box, and the Chinese dispersed.

That evening, at 1915, the outpost commander reported that the Chinese had again resumed a steady shelling of the position. The bombardment continued for an hour. After these heavy preparatory fires, a wave of enemy infantry began scrambling up the sides of Bruce. At the same time, outpost Allen to the left came under long-range fire from enemy strongholds to the west and north. After the Chinese made their initial rush against Bruce, a second and third attack fared no better. Each was met and repulsed by the 5th Marines.

After the third abortive attack, a period of deathly stillness descended upon the contested hill. Occasionally, an enemy mortar round found its mark among the scattered, splintered bunker timbers and the caved-in trenches, which connected the sandbag and lumber positions. At 0145 on the 7th, the Chinese interrupted the uneasy peace that had settled upon Bruce with a brief, heavy preparatory fire.

Exactly an hour later, an estimated two Chinese companies advanced up the forward slopes, using demolitions to destroy any friendly bunkers their artillery and mortar had not earlier completely wrecked. By the time this newest assault had raged for 30 minutes, nearly every 3/5 defender had become a casualty. Still the

Marines refused to give ground, dealing first with the forward slope assault by the Chinese and later with those who attempted to envelop the Marines on the reverse side. On the MLR Marines first observed enemy flares falling between outpost Bruce and Line JAMESTOWN. Soon thereafter the Chinese policed the battlefield. By 0400 the Communists retired, and the fight for this key outpost had ended in failure.

During the 51-hour siege of Outpost Bruce, 19 Marines had been killed and 38 wounded. At the adjacent 5th Marines outposts, additional losses were 5 killed and 32 wounded. More than 200 enemy dead were counted. During the last eight hours of the vicious, close-in fighting at Bruce, it was estimated that another 200 Chinese had been wounded.

The Korean Marines, holding down the western flank of the three mainland regimental sectors in the 1st Marine Division line, also received a share of the enemy's attention. At dusk on 5 September, Chinese barrages began to smash Outpost 37,[12] the first of a trio of positions that would merit hostile attention for the next 22 hours. Throughout the following day the Chinese continued their mortar and artillery fire against Outposts 37 and 36, and the regimental observation post located on Hill 155 (also called Hill 167) to the rear of the MLR. (See Map 13.) The heaviest enemy fire was directed against OP 36, a small rise in the low land terrain midway between the Sachon River, on the west and the Munsan-ni-Kaesong rail line, 600 yards to the east.
Click here to view map

At 1605 a 50-round barrage struck OP 36. After this harassing fire there was a lull until 1810 when Chinese artillery and mortars again resumed a steady pounding of the three positions. One hour later enemy soldiers hit both outposts. Twice the attacking company assaulted OP 37 but neither effort represented, in the view of the defenders, a serious attempt at capture. Less than a mile south at OP 36, however, the enemy motive appeared to be quite different.

Crossing the Sachon just north of the Freedom Gate Bridge (also known as the highway bridge), the Communist infantry moved to assault positions on the west, north, and northeast sides of the outpost. At 1910, the Chinese began their first rush. It was repulsed, as was a second one. Another artillery barrage, joined this time by tank fire, preceded the third attempt. At this point communications went out at the besieged outpost. At 2150, a squad leader from OP 36 reached the 10th Company CP to report that his position had fallen. In 30 minutes a communications link was re-established with the outpost. The defending Koreans reported that although enemy troops had overrun much of the hill, they had subsequently withdrawn, apparently because their losses had been so heavy.

Casualties and damage were severe. The Korean regiment estimated that 110 enemy had been killed or wounded. An early morning KMC reconnaissance patrol counted 33 dead Chinese in the vicinity of OP 36. The attacking force had also left behind much equipment, including more than 100 grenades and several automatic weapons. No papers were found on the dead Communist soldiers, but many propaganda leaflets had been dropped around the outpost. Korean Marine losses at OP 36 were nine killed and seven wounded. At OP 37 there were four casualties; at the regimental CP, one Korean and two U.S. Marines had been killed by enemy artillery. Chinese incoming, estimated at 2,500 rounds during the two actions, had also caused major damage to part of the OP 36 defenses, but inflicted less harm to the other two positions. Repairs were begun before daylight.

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Korean COPS Hit Again[13]

After the stepped-up enemy ground activity in early September, both Chinese and Marine frontline units resumed their earlier pattern of combat patrols, probes, and ambushes. Possession of Bunker Hill remained the immediate objective of the enemy and his activities in the middle of the Marine line were directed to this goal. Once again on 9 September a marauding Chinese platoon, employing grenades and submachine guns, sounded out the Bunker defenses, now manned by G/3/1 (Captain William F. Whitbeck, Jr.). After a tentative investigation, the enemy withdrew. That same day, expanded patrol and raiding activities were undertaken by Marine line battalions.

These sharply increased offensive measures resulted, in part, from the Communist interest, as evinced during the summer truce negotiations, in certain forward positions held by UNC units. On 7 September, the CG, I Corps had alerted his division commanders to the fact that the enemy "may attempt to seize and hold certain key terrain features . . . over which there was extensive disagreement during [the 1952 summer truce] negotiations for the present line of demarcation."[14] Since much of the critical land was in his sector, Major General Kendall further warned his division commanders "to take the necessary action within your means to hold all terrain now occupied by your divisions."[15] Critical terrain features in the 1st Marine Division area of responsibility were Bunker Hill and the height on which COP Bruce had been established (Hill 148), in the center and right regimental sectors respectively.

Two days later, General Pollock amplified this directive by underscoring the necessity for holding these two positions, plus eight more he considered vital for sound tactical defense. These additional positions, from west to east, were Hills 86 and 37 in the KMC sector; Hills 56 and 48A in the center sector; and the outposts then known as Allen, Clarence, Felix, and Jill, all the responsibility of the right regiment.[16]

Although the eastern part of the division main line thus contained at this time more key hills than any other Marine sector, much of the increase in Marine patrol and ambush activity took place in No-Man's-Land forward of the middle frontline regiment. Of the two JAMESTOWN sectors manned by U.S. Marines, the one in the center of the division area offered better ground for infantry operations.

On the divisional western flank, the Korean Marines conducted frequent infantry-tank patrols during the second and third weeks of September, but the enemy opposite the KMCs initiated little ground activity. Instead, the Chinese relied upon their supporting weapons to provide the contact. For a seven-day period ending 19 September, a total of 2,375 enemy rounds had fallen in that regimental sector, an average of 339 per day. Nearly a third had been in the vicinity of Hill 36.

Before sunrise on the 19th, a Chinese infantry company had crossed the Sachon in the vicinity of the railroad bridge. Once on the east side, the enemy soldiers concealed themselves in caves and holes, remaining there until dusk. Then, when they came out of hiding, the Communists held a briefing and organized themselves into three attack groups. As these advance infantry elements approached their objective, OP 36, other reinforcing units were prepared to seize OP 37, to the east, and OPs 33 and 31, to the south. Artillery and mortar preparation supported these diversionary attacks.

The main assault was accompanied by even heavier shelling. As the three assault units reached the bottom of the hill at OP 36, artillery, mortars, and tanks had fired more than 400 rounds. Approaching from the north, east, and west, the Chinese scrambled up the hill, gaining control of the wrecked defenses by 2000. Sporadic exchanges of fire lasted until nearly midnight. At 0115 the Korean Marines attempted to retake the hill.

The counterattack was cut short, however, upon discovery of another enemy unit moving towards the outpost and then only one-half mile away. Three hours later the enemy came back in strength when a CCF platoon successfully overthrew the outpost at 0520. This new assault occurred without any warning and was so swiftly executed that a number of the KMC defenders found themselves encircled and trapped at their posts. Most managed to escape, but several were captured and later evacuated when the Chinese removed their own battle casualties.

Another attempt to regain the outpost was made by the Koreans at 1400, following artillery preparation and two air strikes. Three Marine attack squadrons, VMAs–323,–121, and–-212 blasted the Chinese on the front slope of OP 36. The contour of the far side of the hill had provided the enemy a defiladed position and safety from 1st Marine Division organic weapons. But the MAG–12 air sorties, destroying many CCF automatic weapons and mortars and breaking up a company strongpoint, helped the Koreans counterattack and overrun the dazed defenders. Two KMC platoons, supported by artillery, mortar, and tank fire, then carried the OP after overcoming token Chinese resistance. After the enemy vacated OP 36, he still continued to remain in the low area to the northwest, close to the east side of the Sachon River. No serious attempt was made by the enemy to occupy the position for the rest of the month.

The 20-hour clash for control of OP 36 was believed to have developed from the Chinese ambition to occupy the position and thereby eliminate the harassing fires from Hill 36 that had struck CCF mainline troops. The 19–20 September attempts to wrest the outpost from Korean control resulted in an estimated 150 Chinese casualties, including 20 counted dead. KMC losses were placed at 16 killed, 47 wounded, and 6 missing.

On the day that the second September battle for OP 36 had ended, the Commandant of the Marine Corps had also just concluded his three-day visit and inspection of General Pollock’s troops. Visiting every battalion in the division, General Shepherd was impressed by the morale and proficiency of the Marines, including the attached 1st KMC Regiment. During his visit to Korea, the Marine Corps Commandant was also presented the Order of Military Merit, Taiguk, by President Rhee. General Shepherd ended his Korean battlefront visit after a two-day inspection of 1st Marine Aircraft Wing units commanded by Major General Jerome (he had received his second star on 6 August).

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More Enemy Assaults in Late September[17]

Even though the enemy had concentrated his strongest infantry attack in late September against the Korean Marines, his most frequent probes were launched against center regimental positions held by Colonel Layer's 1st Marines. Here the enemy was more consistent in conducting his defense. Chinese troops doggedly held on to the northern slopes of several Marine outposts, notably Hills 124 and 122. In this center regimental sector, the enemy initiated several attacks, the most significant of these occuring on the 20th.

This action against the left sector manned by 2/1 centered about Hill 124, where Lieutenant Colonel Batterton's battalion had established a 24-hour, squad-size outpost three days earlier. At 0345, Marines on Hill 124 observed two green flares fired from a hill about 1,100 yards to their front. At the same time the men of 2/1 observed numerous figures moving about downhill from their own position. It soon became evident that four enemy groups were converging on Hill 124 and preparing to assault the Marine defenses which shortly came under fire from enemy submachine guns and rifles. The main probe was a frontal assault against Batterton's men; it was made by about 20 Chinese and lasted only five minutes. Afterwards, all four assault groups withdrew but continued firing intermittently at the Marine squad. Nearly every Marine on the hill suffered wounds, most of these minor. Enemy losses for the action were placed at 22.

In this same sector Marines in late September attacked the northern slope of Hill 122, where the enemy still maintained a foothold. The proximity of Marine defenses at Bunker Hill to enemy positions, separated in some places by as little as 30 yards, was the cause of frequent contact and clashes. Marines raided the enemy side of Bunker, using demolitions and portable flamethrowers to destroy trenches and bunkers, and their occupants. Tanks and artillery assisted in these brief offensive actions, usually undertaken at night. Flares were used frequently to aid in identifying and striking targets and in assessing the results.

It became routine during the last days of September for the Chinese to probe the Marine defenses at the Hills 124–122 axis. There did not appear to be a serious or determined assault to take either outpost, however. The Marines considered the infantry probes as just another form of harassment, although perhaps more personal and direct than the Chinese shelling, which inflicted daily losses. On the division right, Colonel Moore's 7th Marines, which had moved into this sector on 7 September, found enemy activities about the same. Artillery rounds caused the greatest number of casualties, although these attacks were not particularly spirited. Many enemy contacts occurred during the Marine combat patrols that largely characterized frontline operations at the end of September.

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Chinese Intensify Their Outpost Attacks[18]

With the beginning of October, the 1st Marine Division became aware of certain changes that were occurring to its front. In the center sector, for the first time in two weeks there was no significant enemy ground activity, yet across the entire Marine front there was a build-up of enemy shelling. Part of the increased bombardment was directed at Hill 86 in the KMC sector, one of the positions recently cited as integral to the defense line in this area. Beginning at 2000 on 1 October, the Chinese broadcast a warning that they would knock down the outpost bunkers there unless the Korean Marines surrendered. When the KMCs manning the position did not, of course, surrender in reaction to this blatant propaganda tactic, the Chinese began showering Hill 86 with artillery rounds. During the next 20 hours, 145 rounds fell on and around the outpost. This incident marked the first time that the Chinese mainline forces had carried out an announced threat.

This type of operational tactic—first to warn, then to carry out the threat—was not, however, the reason for the increased Chinese shelling. Rather, as it turned out, the enemy was about to embark on a series of limited objective attacks against the division flanks, starting first with major outposts guarding the most critical terrain on the MLR. The artillery and mortar fire of the 1st had been but an initial step. At 1830 on 2 October, Communist direct fire weapons opened up from an area 2,800 yards northwest of OP 36, lashing all the KMC outposts within range. A tank platoon, dispatched to counter the fire, returned at 1915 without having located the hostile emplacements. Shortly after the tanks returned, an extremely heavy artillery barrage again fell upon all of the KMC regimental outposts. Ten minutes later, seemingly on the signal of one red and one green flare, the enemy guns lifted their preparatory fires to permit an infantry attack. The ground action simultaneously struck OPs 37, 36, and 86, the forward positions closest to the Sachon River.

At OP 37, the defending Korean Marine platoon fought valiantly for more than an hour against the assault of two enemy platoons, each of which required a company-size reinforcement before the Korean Marines were finally ousted. Although temporarily dislodged, they reorganized at the base of the position for a counterattack. Two counterattacks were made the next day, the second one carrying the Koreans to the top of the hill. Fierce enemy mortar and artillery shelling forced them to seek the shelter of the reverse slope before again renewing their assault. On 4–5 October, the outpost changed hands four times. At 1340 on the latter date, a heavy enemy artillery and ground attack compelled the KMCs to abandon their ravaged outpost; this withdrawal ended friendly control of OP 37 for the rest of the month.

Nearby OP 36 was also lost. In the course of the night the Korean Marines on OP 36 turned back two Communist assaults, but fell under the weight of the third. By sunup on 3 October, the exhausted Korean Marines were forced to give ground; the Chinese immediately occupied OP 36 and held it.

One more KMC outpost was to fall during the first week. OP 86 guarded the southwestern two-thirds of the regimental sector and freuently was the target of artillery shelling and ground attacks. This position was also the most distant from the main line and the closest to the Sachon River.

The heaviest Communist attack on 2 October was against the KMC platoons defending Hill 86. Nearly a battalion of Chinese took part in this action, finally overpowering the outpost just before midnight. The defenders withdrew south to the bottom of the hill, where they were comparatively safe from enemy fire. Resting, receiving reinforcements, and regrouping during the early morning hours of the 3d, the Korean Marine force observed friendly artillery and air pound the outpost preparatory to their counterattack. It was made at 1015 and succeeded, after two hours fighting, in routing the Chinese from the outpost.

While the enemy was counteracting the ground loss with artillery and mortars, Marine air flushed out the Chinese, who had retreated only a short distance from the outpost. From atop the hill, Korean Marines witnessed many of the enemy hurriedly leaving the area under attack. This scattering of the enemy force prevented the Chinese from launching an immediate counterattack for control of OP 86 and gave the Korean Marines additional time in which to prepare their defenses. At 2200 on 6 October, an enemy force of undetermined size assaulted the position and wrested it from the Koreans before the end of the day. Early the next morning a KMC counterattack was successful, but at 0640 the Koreans were again compelled to withdraw, due to devastating blows from Chinese artillery. Loss of the third key outpost during the first week of October, ended for a time the flare-up of outpost fighting in the left regimental sector of the division front.

The middle part of the MLR, held in early October by the 1st Marines, received the least enemy attention in this period. Although frequent contacts were made with the enemy during the first part of the month, no outposts were lost. Most of the action was minor, i.e., patrol engagements and Communist probes centered around Bunker Hill and Hill 124. Late on 5 October, a combat patrol from H/3/1 became involved in the most important ground action in Colonel Layer's area during early October. These Marines were surprised by a larger Chinese force lying in wait. The ambushers held their fire until the Marine combat patrol had cleared a small hilltop. At 2230, after a 20-minute fire fight, the patrol withdrew to the reverse slope of the rise, called in 81mm mortar fire, then broke contact, and returned to the MLR. There were 4 Marine casualties, and by count, 13 dead Chinese.

By far the greatest number of personal losses at this time occurred in the right area held by the 7th Marines, where the Chinese began a series of limited objective attacks against outposts guarding the division right flank. These offensives to obtain critical terrain in this sector, and others manned by the 1st Marine Division, would continue intermittently right up to the brink of the cease-fire, in July 1953.

In early October, Colonel Moore's troops manned nine permanent combat outposts. (See Map 14.) Seven of these had been taken over when the regiment relieved the 5th Marines in September. Two additional ones—Frisco and Verdun—had been established by the 7th Marines on the 14th and 26th, respectively. Of these nine forward positions, the Communists chose to concentrate on four, which formed a diagonal line roughly paralleling the center sector of the MLR at an average distance of about 450 yards. This quartet—Detroit, Frisco, Seattle, and Warsaw—together with Verdun,[19] at the 1st Commonwealth boundary, comprised the easternmost permanent outposts of the division. The first four positions were, on the average, slightly lower in elevation than the COPs in the regimental area to the west.

Click here to view map

The frontline contest began with little forewarning other than a slight increase in enemy artillery and machine gun fire against Frisco and a light probe against Detroit. At 1836 on 2 October, the Communists launched a heavy artillery and mortar barrage against Seattle and Warsaw, and that part of the MLR nearest Seattle. Exactly one hour later, the preparation on the outposts lifted, permitting the enemy attack force to strike. Not less than a company assaulted the reinforced platoon on Warsaw, while a squad moved against the Seattle defenders. Warsaw fell in about 45 minutes,[20] Seattle held out five minutes longer.

Immediately, plans for the recapture of both were made. At 2047, Captain John H. Thomas dispatched a platoon from his company, I/3/7, from the MLR to counterattack Warsaw. The platoon quickly took the position, for the enemy had withdrawn. At Seattle, the result was different. On 3 October, two squads from Company I departed JAMESTOWN at 0340, but came under enemy artillery fire en route to the objective. The squads worked their way forward nevertheless, but were unable to take the outpost. Captain Thomas then recalled the force, which reached JAMESTOWN at dawn. Later that day, just before dusk, air and artillery placed a smoke screen on Seattle while two squads advanced toward the outpost. When the counterattack met stiff resistance, a squad-size reinforcement[21] was sent from the MLR. Together the three units attempted to retake the position, but were forced to pull back because of heavy casualties. As the infantry again regrouped, Lieutenant Colonel

Bert Davis, Jr.'s 2/11 fired preparatory barrages on the Chinese occupying Seattle. At 2225 the Marines assaulted the outpost again; as before, overpowering Chinese artillery and grenades inflicted such high casualties that the counterattackers were compelled to withdraw.

By this time, action at the two outposts had resulted in 101 Marine casualties, including 13 killed. By sundown on 3 October, the regiment had been forced off the two COPs and had been able to retake only one of them. Against Warsaw, the one that the Marines had recaptured, the Chinese immediately launched a counterattack. At 0145 on 4 October a platoon struck the position. This time the Warsaw garrison held, inflicting losses on the CCF and receiving none. The Chinese made an unsuccessful attempt against Frisco at 2300 on 5 October, when a squad attempted to drive the Marines from the outpost.

The enemy's repeated attacks and apparent determination to seize commanding terrain, plus the heavy casualties suffered by 3/7, led the 7th Marines to reinforce its MLR at 1200 on 5 October. At this time the right battalion sector then held by 3/7, was split into two sectors and the regimental reserve, 1/7 (Lieutenant Colonel Leo J. Dulacki) took over the far right of the 3/7 line, assuming responsibility for Warsaw and Verdun.[22] The 7th Marines thus had all three of its battalions on line with the regimental front manned, from the left, by 2/7, 3/7, and 1/7.

During the next 30 hours, the Communists launched a series of strong probing actions against the regimental outposts of the 7th Marines. Although the numerical strength used in these widespread limited objective attacks did not exceed that employed in previous large-scale outpost offensives, the scope of the operation on 6 and 7 October and the well-coordinated attacks indicated careful and detailed planning. Each move against the five outposts and two MLR positions attacked was preceded by unusually close attention to artillery and mortar preparation. This was to a degree unprecedented even when measured against those massive concentrations that had characterized Communist operations since the Chinese intervention in the war late in 1950.

Prior to the Communist general attack, the Marines made another attempt to retake Seattle. Leaving JAMESTOWN at 0600 on 6 October, a C/1/7 reinforced platoon was halted by solid resistance in the form of exploding artillery and mortar rounds. The forces returned to the MLR, reorganized, and jumped off again. At 0815, a two-squad reinforcement was dispatched from the main line. Meanwhile, the enemy, estimated at platoon reinforced strength, doubled his garrison, using troops from his outpost line. By 0900, a heavy fire fight was in progress, supported by artillery and mortars on both sides. Marines called on air in support of the attack, but the combined air and infantry action was unable to penetrate enemy defenses. Finally, at 1100, after five hours of close heavy fighting, the Marines broke contact and retired, bringing with them 12 dead and 44 wounded. Estimates of enemy losses totaled 71.

That evening, at dusk, artillery and mortar fire began falling on outpost positions across the entire regimental front and at two locations on the MLR. At the same time an estimated Chinese reinforced battalion in a coordinated effort advanced toward the Marine line and at 1930 assaulted the seven positions that had just been under artillery preparation. By midnight an estimated 4,300 rounds of artillery fire and 104 rounds of counterbattery fire had fallen on Marine positions. In the regimental left manned by 2/7 (Lieutenant Colonel Caputo) the attacks appeared to be more of a diversion—merely probes by small units, which showed little inclination to press the attack. Carson, the most western COP held by the regiment, reported that the enemy soldiers withdrew at 2050. Two hours later Reno, the next outpost to the east, radioed to the MLR that the Chinese had just ceased their attacks at that forward post. A total of 12 Marines were wounded in these two actions.

On the far right, in Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki's sector, a reinforced CCF platoon poured over the Warsaw defenses at 1930. Immediately the outpost Marines called for the friendly artillery box. As these protective fires were being delivered all communication at the outpost was severed by hostile fire. Enemy artillery

continued at a heavy rate. By 2000, however, communication was reestablished between the COP and MLR. The first message from the besieged outpost was a request for more artillery. With additional fire support and continued stiff outpost resistance, the Chinese at 2055 relinquished their quest to regain Warsaw.

The enemy's most determined assaults on the night of 6–7 October were made upon a pair of outposts, Detroit and Frisco, manned by the middle battalion, 3/7 (Lieutenant Colonel Gerald F. Russell). Two JAMESTOWN areas in this sector were also attacked, but only briefly. The assault against the outposts was executed by a Chinese battalion which sent one company against Detroit and another against Frisco, east of Detroit. Both outposts were manned by two squads of Marines.

At Detroit, the Company G Marines reported that the initial attack made at 1940 on 6 October by a Chinese company had been rebuffed. The enemy did succeed, however, in advancing to the outpost trenchline. Strong defensive fires prevented him from exploiting this initial gain by occupying any of the bunkers, and the attackers were forced to pull back. After regrouping, the Chinese returned at 2100 and again were able to secure a foothold at the main trench.

Marine artillery assisted the outpost defenders in repulsing this new attack, but not before Chinese interdictory fires had disrupted all communications between the COP and its MLR support company. Some Chinese had also moved south in the vicinity of the MLR, but these attacks were neither persistent nor heavily supported. At 2115 the last of the enemy intruders had withdrawn from the MLR. At about this same time, 3/7 heard Detroit request overhead VT fires, but shortly after this the battalion again lost contact with the outpost.

Two squads were then sent out to reinforce the position. They were stopped, however, by heavy Chinese artillery barrages. At the outpost, Marine artillery fires had forced the Chinese to retreat, but at 0015 the enemy reappeared at the trenchline. The artillery regiment once again applied the overhead fire remedy, but with less success—the Chinese, neither retreating nor advancing, took cover in the trenches. During the long night, attempts to re–establish communications with Detroit had proved fruitless, although battalion radio operators reported that they had heard Chinese language coming over one of the Marine radio nets used by the COP. A six-man reconnaissance detail was sent forward to investigate. It returned at 0355 with the information that Detroit was now held by the enemy. Two wounded Marines had escaped; the rest of the Detroit garrison had fallen to the enemy. At 0630 the Marines withdrew after heavy fighting that had lasted more than 10 hours.

During the earlier part of the night, while the battle for outpost control raged at Detroit, reinforcements had also been dispatched to Frisco to help stabilize the situation at this adjacent Company H/3/7 outpost. Like Detroit, it had been attacked by a Chinese company, beginning about 2000. An hour and a half later some of the enemy had made their way into the trenchline, but were repulsed with the help of friendly artillery VT. Shortly after midnight the enemy again probed Frisco and reached the trenchline. At 0115, two squads jumped off from JAMESTOWN, but a rain of Chinese artillery interrupted their progress. Throughout the early morning hours of 7 October, Company H and I units were sent out from the MLR to buttress the Frisco defense and stem the enemy attack. At 0510, a reinforced platoon from the reserve company was sent to renew the counterattack. It was this Company I unit that finally restored control of the COP to the Marines.[23] Another reinforcing platoon arrived at the outpost just as the Marines there had evicted the remaining Chinese assault forces. At 0715, 7 October, Frisco was declared secure.

Its precarious position, however, demanded either an investment of more outpost troops to retain possession of it or else its abandonment, in conjunction with other measures to neutralize loss of the position. At 1804 that day the latter course was instituted. The 7th Marines reported that the enemy had suffered an estimated 200 KIA and unknown WIA as a result of the bitterly contested outpost attacks on 6–7 October. Marine casualties were listed as 10 killed, 22 missing, 105 wounded and evacuated, and 23 not-seriously wounded.

In all, during the first week in October, the 1st Marine Division gave up six outposts, or forward positions, that had been sited on some of the commanding ground in the Marine area. On the division left, COPs

37, 36, and 86 were the ones most removed from the Korean MLR and thus easily susceptible to being overrun by the enemy at will and to his early reinforcement.[24] The division theorized that near winter and the subsequent freezing of the Sachon would facilitate the movement of Chinese troops and supplies across the river to new positions. The enemy was now able to operate patrols east of the river without interference. At the opposite side of the division MLR, on its right flank, Detroit, Frisco, and Seattle had been lost. By gaining this string of outposts, the enemy was better able to exert pressure against other Marine positions forward of the line and the critical ground on JAMESTOWN.

To counter this threat, General Pollock strengthened the outposts close to the MLR and increased his patrolling requirements. It was decided that in some cases the mission of the COP—that of providing early warning of impending attack and slowing it down—could be accomplished as effectively by using patrols and listening posts at night.

By these activities, the Marines hoped to minimize the Chinese gains and prevent the launching of new attacks against either division COPs or JAMESTOWN. The serious situation on the outposts was compounded by existing political considerations, which prevented the Marines from initiating any real offensive campaigns. Moreover, any hill taken was invariably backed up by a still higher one, controlled by the enemy. The key factor was not so much holding an individual outpost as it was to insure that the enemy was unable to penetrate the JAMESTOWN line.

Operations in West Korea

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Chapter 4. Outpost Fighting Expanded
More PRESSURE, More CAS, More Accomplishments[25]

Some of the enemy ground pressure against the outposts in September and October had been relieved by the increase in the number of air strikes received by the 1st Marine Division. De-emphasis of the Air Force interdiction strategy in favor of striking the enemy wherever (and whenever) it hurt him most had made available more aircraft for close support of ground operations.[26] The UN commander, General Clark, who had given the green light to the shift in USAF policy and targets, followed the giant hydroelectric strike in June with a mass attack the next month on 30 military targets located near the North Korean Capital. During a year's freedom from air attack (July 1951–July 1952) Pyongyang had become not only the major logistics center for combat equipment and personnel but also the focal point for command and control of Communist ground and air defense efforts.

Designated Operation PRESSURE PUMP, the 11 July strike against Pyongyang called for three separate attacks during daylight and a fourth at night. This extended time over the target would give enemy fighters more than ample time to take to the skies in defense of the Capital. Because Pyongyang "was defended by 48 guns and more than 100 automatic weapons, making it one of the worst 'flak traps' in Korea,"[27] there was considerable hazard in the operation. Added danger to the pilots resulted from the decision to forewarn the North Korean civilian population of the air assault. General Clark explained the reason for dropping warning leaflets prior to the attack on Pyongyang:

"The objective was in part humanitarian and in part practical. We had to hit Pyongyang because the Communists had made it a major military headquarters and stockpile area. We wanted to warn the people away from danger areas. By warning them away we disrupted their daily lives and made it difficult for the Communists to maintain any kind of schedules in their work in the city."[28]

Results indicated that both the destructive and the psychological aspects of the mission were successful. American, British, and ROK planes completely destroyed 3 of the 30 military targets attacked. Of the rest, only two escaped major damage:

"According to . . . reports, the North Korean Ministry of Industry's underground offices were destroyed and a direct hit on another shelter was said to have killed 400 to 500 Communist officials. Off the air for two days, Radio Pyongyang finally announced that the 'brutal' strikes had destroyed 1,500 buildings and had inflicted 7,000 casualties."[29]

Of the far-reaching effect of the leaflets, the UN commander later wrote:

"The warning leaflets, coupled with the bombing, hurt North Korean civilian morale badly. The very audacity of the United Nations in warning the Communists where bombers would strike hurt morale because it emphasized to the North Koreans just how complete was UN mastery of the air. Contrarily, it made them see even more clearly that the Communists were ineffectual in their efforts to ward off our air blows. . . .

"As a result of the warnings, the bombings, the failure of the Communists to provide protection, and the refusal of the Communists to permit evacuation of the clearly defined target areas, civilian resentment was channeled away from the UNC bombers and towards the Communist rulers."[30]

The record set by the 1,254 sorties flown in this 11 July operation was to last only seven weeks. On 29 August, 1,403 sorties were employed in a new strike against the Capital. The massed raids against military targets in Pyongyang, known as the "All United Nations Air Effort" turned out to be the largest one-day air assault during the entire three years of the Korean War. Again attacking at four-hour intervals three times during daylight, Allied aircraft blasted a list of targets that "read like a guide to public offices in Pyongyang and included

such points of interest as the Ministry of Rail Transportation, the Munitions Bureau, Radio Pyongyang, plus many factories, warehouses, and troop billets."[31] Of the 45 military targets in the city, 31 received moderate-to-severe damage according to post-strike photographs.

Substitution of the previous interdiction strategy by PRESSURE attacks brought increased close air support to frontline troops. As a result of this expanded number of CAS sorties, wing pilots and ground forward air controllers greatly increased their operational proficiency.[32] The Marines were still not satisfied with the close support picture, however, and neither were a number of U.S. Army commanders. Some of the latter regarded General Clark as the champion of more extensive close air support missions for frontline units, but he quickly dispelled this view. Instead, he cautioned these supporters of Marine-type close air support to accept the existing procedures, which were derived from the "vast reservoir of experience . . . [representing] the composite view of senior members of the Armed Forces [with] the longest and most responsible experience in close support during World War II."[33] At the same time the UN commander, on 11 August 1952, had advised his force commanders to study the factors affecting the close air support situation in Korea and comment on certain UNC proposals for improving the CAS system.

In the close air support picture for the Marines, October was a bright month. In the outpost battles of early October, the 1st MAW put 319 sorties in the air during both day and night to strike, strafe, bomb, and burn enemy positions and troops facing General Pollock's division. A new level of achievement had been reached during the Bunker Hill battle in August. That month nearly 1,000 aircraft, predominantly Marine, loosed ordnance at targets on and near the Chinese MLR and OPLR.

During the first six months of Marine ground operations in defense of JAMESTOWN, wing squadrons and pilots had made major contributions to the U.S. air effort in Korea. On 7 June 1952, First Lieutenant John W. Andre, VMF(N)–513, piloting a World War II model Corsair on a night armed reconnaissance mission over the west coast of North Korea, shot down an enemy piston-driven Yak fighter. It was the first time that a Russian-built plane of that model had been knocked out of the skies at night by another plane. This aircraft was also the fifth kill for the lieutenant, making him the first Marine nightfighter ace in Korea.[34]

Nearly three months after that record, another one emerged: the first Marine to down an enemy jet with a propeller-driven aircraft. Late on the afternoon of 10 September, Captain Jesse G. Folmar and First Lieutenant Willie L. Daniels, both of VMA–312, had taken off from the *Sicily* to attack an enemy troop concentration reported to be south of Chinnampo, on the west coast just below the 39th Parallel. Shortly after reaching the vicinity of the target, the Marine Corsairs were jumped by a pair of MIG–15s. Two more Russian-made jets tore into the fight. During a fast exchange of cannon and machine gun fire, the Marine captain was able to score lethal hits on one of the MIGs. When four more of them picked up the chase, the vastly outnumbered Marines broke for home, heading westward in a diving turn.

Captain Folmar's return to the *Sicily* was delayed almost immediately:

"I had just started picking up good diving speed when I saw balls of tracer ammo passing on my left and at the same instant felt a severe explosion in my left wing . . . I saw that the left aileron and four feet of my left wing were gone."[35]

This damage caused the plane to rapidly go out of control. While still able to maneuver, the Marine aviator headed for the sea and as he neared it, bailed out of his Corsair and parachuted into the ocean. A rescue plane out of Cho-do picked him up and returned the captain, who had sustained a slight shoulder injury, to the carrier. Lieutenant Daniels, who had alerted the rescue force, circled his descending flight leader until he hit the water. After ascertaining that the waterborne flier's condition was satisfactory, the lieutenant turned his plane towards the *Sicily*. In a short while he was safely home.

In late September, Major Alexander J. Gillis, VMF–311, assigned earlier that summer to the Air Force's 335th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, 4th Fighter Group, as an exchange pilot,[36] distinguished himself by

becoming not only the first naval aviator to destroy three enemy aircraft in Korea but also the second one to get a multiple killing in a single day.[37] Flying in a four-plane Sabrejet formation near the vicinity of the mouth of the Yalu on 28 September, Major Gillis led another plane after two MIG–15s. By superior pilot technique and aggressive tactics, he forced one of the enemy to crash during a low altitude chase. Later on during the sortie, the Marine initiated an attack on a solo MIG, closing on it and scoring hits that caused the plane to become uncontrollable and the pilot to eject. Major Gillis also had to eject from his F-86 after it became disabled by the MIG. The incident had occurred on the Marine aviator's 50th combat mission with the Air Force. He spent nearly four hours in the Yellow Sea before a rescue helicopter picked him up.

Another feat, this one a study in determination and perseverance, had occurred early in the summer. On 22 July, the VMJ–1 commander, Lieutenant Colonel Vernon O. Ullman, had taken to the air for a photo mission over North Korea in the vicinity of Sinanju, located near the Yellow Sea 40 miles above Pyongyang. During the first of seven scheduled flights, he encountered heavy flak but nevertheless completed his first mapping run in the area. Further, the Marine flier decided that the antiaircraft menace was not going to force him to abandon the remaining part of his task. He continued. On the second of his seven runs, some 40 enemy jets (MIG–15s) appeared on the scene. These were dissuaded from close-in interference, however, by the photo escort of 24 USAF single-engine Sabrejet fighters. Thereafter, the Russian-made aircraft disappeared; Lieutenant Colonel Ullman continued, despite the intense, accurate enemy antiaircraft fire, until he concluded his mission.

The type of determination displayed by Lieutenant Colonel Ullman helped Marine tactical squadrons achieve some kind of distinction nearly every month from late spring to the fall of 1952. In May, VMF–323 ("the Death Rattlers"), then commanded by Major William A. Weir, established a squadron one-month record for number of combat sorties, 1,160, and total combat hours, 2,362.7. A high percentage of aircraft availability, 95.6, helped make this mark possible. On 1 June, VMA–312 received the congratulations of CTF 95 for its "outstanding performance under difficult conditions" during the spring months. During this period the squadron, based on board the USS *Bataan*, had been particularly hampered by excessive turn-over of key squadron officers and flight leaders. This continual squadron rotation resulted in considerable variation in pilot indoctrination and need for field carrier landing qualification, due to the "close tolerances in pilot skill required by carrier operations."[38] Despite these difficulties, VMA–312 had scored an impressive 80-sortie mission, flown by 24 aircraft, on 18 April.

Additional recognition of professional excellence was conferred upon Marine squadrons in July. On the 17th, the senior advisor to the ROK I Corps expressed the gratitude of the corps commander for the magnificent support the 1st MAW pilots had provided during the second week of the month. All four attack squadrons in MAG–12 and both fighter units in MAG–33 had taken part in these CAS missions. A week later, eight planes from Lieutenant Colonel Henry S. Miller's VMA–323, (which, along with Lieutenant Colonel Graham H. Benson's VMA–212, had been redesignated from fighter to attack squadrons the previous month), completed an unusually successful interdiction mission at Hago.

Located 25 miles northwest of Kaesong, the village reportedly was the site of heavy troop concentrations, active mortar positions, and antitank weapons. Leaving K–6 at 1725, the eight Marine VMA–323 pilots were soon over the target. Comprising the Death Rattler's flight were Majors John M. Dufford, Raymond C. Holben, William H. Irvin, Jr., and Curtis E. Knudson; Captain John Church, Jr.; First Lieutenant William A. Poe, Jr.; and Second Lieutenants Stuart L. Spurlock and James S. Thompson. At 1810 their attacks were launched, using 1,000-pound bombs, napalm, rockets, and 20mm ammuniton. The strike was over almost as soon as it had started, and when the Marines departed, not one building remained in useful condition. But it was not until several days later that the final results of the strike were known. Intelligence sources reported that the raid had caught the enemy troops at the evening meal; more than 500 had been killed by the Corsairs, aptly called "Whistling Death" by the Japanese in World War II.

For the remainder of the summer and into the fall Marine groups and squadrons continued their record-breaking and efficient support of ground troops and naval forces. With four squadrons (two day, one night-fighter, and one photo), MAG–33 sent 141 sorties against the enemy on 6 August. This one-day group record occurred just before the departure of Colonel Condon, who turned over the reins of the organization to Colonel Herbert H. Williamson on the 11th, and then took command of MAG–12.

Shortly before Colonel Condon relinquished command, he was particularly pleased by the success of a four-plane strike by VMF–311 (Major William J. Sims) in support of the U.S. 25th Infantry Division commanded by Brigadier General Samuel T. Williams. Major Johnnie C. Vance, Jr., strike leader, was accompanied in this flight by Captain George R. Brier and Second Lieutenants Charles E. Pangburn and Whitlock N. Sharpe. Up until this time the infantry had been particularly harassed by several enemy frontline fortifications and supporting artillery. The four pilots destroyed three bunkers and two heavy guns and also caved in approximately 50 feet of trenchline on the 7 August strike. Upon learning of the success of the Marine pilots and the conditions under which the attacks were carried out—dangerous terrain and constant ground fire directed towards the planes—the general dispatched a letter, commending the "skill, courage, and determination displayed by these pilots. . . ."[39]

Another congratulatory message was received in September, this one from General Pollock for the excellent support given by MAG–12 on the 20th. With three attack squadrons participating, Colonel Condon's group had neutralized Chinese weapons and troops at OP 36 to help prevent a takeover of the Korean position. The pilots reported well over 100 Chinese casualties. Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth R. Chamberlain's VMA–323 contributed most of the 23 Marine sorties. The other attacking squadrons were VMA–121 (Lieutenant Colonel Wayne M. Cargill, who 10 days earlier had relieved Lieutenant Colonel Crawford), and VMA–212, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Maurice W. Fletcher.

September was a month of mixed fortunes in the air war over Korea. The successful CAS strikes of the 20th followed only a few days after another high point set on 14 September, when Lieutenant Colonel Cargill's attack squadron flew its 5,000th combat sortie since arrival in the Korean theater in October 1951. Then on 15 September, General Jerome commissioned a new kind of unit in the wing, Marine Composite Squadron 1 (VMC–1), whose mission was to provide electronic counter-measures (ECM) for UN aircraft. Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence F. Fox headed the squadron, the only one in the naval service with an ECM primary mission in Korea.

Three days after the commissioning, a strange incident transpired. North of the UN line and at an altitude of 9,500 feet, a F–84 Thunderjet fighter, with U.S. Air Force markings and insignia, attacked a propeller-driven Air Force trainer. The slower plane immediately began defensive maneuvering, flying in tight circles. After making five turns, the trainer pilot saw the supposedly friendly jet fly off.

It was believed that such a paradoxical occurrence was due to the substantial number of F–84 losses and the enemy's ability to piece together and fly an aircraft of that model. A few similar episodes—attacks by apparently friendly aircraft on UN planes—had previously taken place. In each case, the impostor was a model of U.S. aircraft that had suffered particularly heavy losses.

Another incident in September had dire consequences. On the 10th, MAG–33 dispatched 22 fighter aircraft from VMF–115 (Lieutenant Colonel Royce W. Coln) to attack reported troop concentrations near Sariwon, 35 miles directly south of Pyongyang. The F9F Panther jets had completed the strike and were returning to their K–3 base when they were diverted to land at K–2, Taegu, where the weather was better. Fog had suddenly swept over the field at K–3, reducing visibility to zero. Sixteen Panthers landed safely at K–2, 45 miles southwest of the Marine field at Pohang. The remaining six, piloted by Majors Raymond E. Demers and Donald F. Givens, First Lieutenant Alvin R. Bourgeois, and by Second Lieutenants John W. Hill, Jr., Carl R. Lafleur, and Richard L. Roth, flying in formation in poor weather, crashed into the side of a 3,000-foot mountain while descending.[40] They would have required only an additional 600 feet of altitude to clear the summit.

Losses of Marine pilots and aircraft had been of growing concern to the wing command. The initial

success of the flak suppression fires had eliminated the one successful Communist source of air defense, accurate antiaircraft firing. One result was that noncombat accidents for a while during the summer became the principal cause of pilot and plane attrition. To help reduce these operational accidents as well as the combat losses, the two Marine air groups instituted squadron training programs and also directed the adoption of several new corrective procedures. In MAG–12, for example, a study of results from the FAF policy that limited bombing runs to one for interdiction and two for CAS targets revealed a sharp reduction in hits from flak. Tactical squadron commanders in MAG–12 drew up a syllabus during September to test proposed defensive tactics for their propeller aircraft to employ against enemy jets. The carrier squadron, VMA–312, began that same month the additional practice of field carrier landing qualification at K–6 for new pilots before permitting them to operate from the carriers.

In spite of these efforts, pilot losses spiralled alarmingly in October. For the rest of 1952, the monthly totals remained near that month's level. On the other hand, aircraft losses during October dropped sharply to 10 from the September total of 22. This lower figure was not to be exceeded until May 1953. These remedial procedures were considered at least partially responsible for the substantial decrease in aircraft losses.

In another area, a mid-October landing at Kojo, on the east coast immediately south of the 39th Parallel, did not work out as planned. The amphibious operation was in reality a feint intended to draw troops away from frontline positions and expose them to naval air and gunfire as they rushed in reinforcements. The enemy failed to rise to the bait, and actually only a few Communist troops were sighted. VMA–312 provided armed reconnaissance, tactical air operation, and naval gunfire spotting during the feint. Although they made little enemy contact, the Marine "Checkerboard" pilots operating off the *Sicily* gained much experience in landings and take-offs under the adverse conditions of rough seas and high winds.

Operations in West Korea

Pat Meid and James M. Yingling

Chapter 4. Outpost Fighting Expanded
Rockets, Resupply, and Radios[41]

Through October 1952, operational control of Korean based Marine fighter and attack squadrons was still vested in commanders other than General Jerome. Tactical squadrons continued to be directed by the FAF or Navy in their missions; the observation and helicopter squadrons were under operational control of the 1st Marine Division and utilized, as before, at its discretion.

HMR–161, commanded since 8 August by Lieutenant Colonel John F. Carey, continued its primary mission of evaluating rotary wing aircraft and their methods of employment. One tactical innovation, movement of elements of the 4.5-inch Rocket Battery, was undertaken during August soon after the Bunker Hill battle. With ground-fired rockets, the problem of a tell-tale cloud of dust and brilliant flash of the rockets after each salvo had always plagued the artillerymen. This seldom went unnoticed by the enemy, who often showered the marked area with counterbattery fire. On 19 and 20 August, in Operation RIPPLE, HMR-161 and the rocket battery proved that these two units could successfully shoot and scoot to a new location and fire effectively again without drawing an enemy reprisal. This Marine Corps innovation in air mobility—the first displacement of field artillery under combat conditions—offered a major time-saving advantage. Whereas previously it took approximately a half-hour for rocket launchers to move from their bivouac area to firing position,[42] deployment by helicopter could be made in a matter of minutes, a time factor that could be critical in event of an enemy attempted breakthrough.

The operation demonstrated that helicopters not only could transport rocket crews with weapons and ammunition to firing areas far more rapidly than conventional wheeled vehicles, but that the rotary craft could airlift these weapons into places inaccessible by road. The nature of the mountainous terrain proved advantageous in that hills and valleys provided defiladed areas for loading and firing the weapons as well as protected routes for helicopter movements. An observation made by pilots for operations in other types of environment, not offering as much cover and concealment, was that the shiny blue paint on their birds would make detection easy in most surroundings and that camouflage paint would lessen the risk from enemy AA.

Transport helicopters of HMR–161 continued to augment those of VMO–6 in casualty evacuation and ferrying Marines and other frontline troops. The observation squadron maintained its policy and outstanding record of emergency flights of the wounded under any weather conditions except dense fog (electronic navigational aids still were not available). In August, various mechanical failures developed among the newly received HO5S–1 Sikorsky helicopters. These three-place observation aircraft were underpowered but superior in many flight characteristics to the HTL–4 helicopters then in the squadron. Mechanical difficulties with the newer aircraft increased until it became necessary to ground them late in October until replacement parts became available in the supply system.

Employment of transport helicopters for logistical support contined to be a principal use of such rotary wing aircraft as the end of 1952 approached. Tests earlier in the year had proved the theory that this versatile aircraft could resupply a battalion manning the MLR. The next step was to determine if the logistical support for an entire combat regiment could be accomplished by helicopter. Operation HAYLIFT, conducted during 22–26 September, the last of five operations that month for HMR–161, was to test and evaluate helicopter resupply of Colonel Moore's 7th Marines. Plans called for delivering all Class I, III, and V items and such Class II and IV items as could be accommodated. Two loading and four unloading sites were prescribed. All but extremely valuable cargo, such as mail was to be carried externally in slings or wire baskets.

HAYLIFT did show that at least for a short period of time—five days—a helicopter squadron, utilizing 40 percent of its aircraft, could sustain a MLR regiment. Following the general procedures employed previously with the battalion, HMR–161 found that no great changes were necessary for resupply of the regiment. Two recommendations emerged from an evaluation of HAYLIFT. One stressed the need for establishment of an operations center manned by representatives of each unit participating in the exercise. The second called for development of a more flexible loading system, one that would permit rapid weight increases or decreases of 50 pound increments, as the situation demanded. Such a method would make possible a more efficient payload for each lift.[43]

Transport on a larger scale in the 1st MAW was accomplished by General Jerome's few transport aircraft reinforced by the eight R5Ds from the VMR–152 detachment. In June, the passenger-carrying operations reached the peak for the entire Korean War; that month, 17,490 troops and military-associated civilians utilized the reinforced wing transport aircraft. June 1952 was also the second busiest month in freight transportation (7,397,824 pounds, nearly double the figure for June 1951).

Squadrons that were unable to better their performance records in some cases could trace their trouble to the inability to get all of their planes off the ground. Several models were subject to spare parts shortages.[44] New aircraft, the F3D–2s and the AU–1s received in June by VMF(N)–513 and VMA–212, respectively, had preceded an adequate stocking of normal replacements for worn out or defective parts. The night fighter squadron was handicapped also by introduction into the supply system of inadequate radio tubes, which burned out rapidly. The most critical shortage, however, was parts for starter units of jet engines. This deficiency was not corrected until summer. One problem never quite eliminated was the confusion of supply orders intended for the helicopters in HMR–161 and VMO–6. It was believed that the close resemblance of Sikorsky HRS and HO5S part numbers and nomenclatures had caused the improperly-marked requisitions and mix-up.

The 1st Marine Division logistical situation during the summer and fall of 1952 was generally excellent. General Pollock's units did not suffer from the shortage of spare parts experienced by the 1st MAW whose aircraft sometimes had to be grounded because of a missing spare part. U.S. Army support in the replacement of worn-out Marine vehicles for new Army ones proved satisfactory. No major problems arose in engineer support. Medical evacuation and treatment and the level of supplies in the five companies of the 1st Medical Battalion remained excellent.

There were two significant changes in the logistical support provided the Marine division early in the fall. One dealt with employment of the division's 1st and 7th Motor Transport Battalions, located in the rear support areas. Beginning in September, the companies were placed in direct support of the four infantry regiments, with liaison by Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth E. Martin, division motor transport officer. It was believed this decentralization would have the following advantages:

1. Decreased vehicle mileage and therefore less driver fatigue and prolonged vehicle life.

2. Increased dispersal as a safeguard against loss of wheeled vehicle support in event of an unexpected and successful enemy attack.

The other change was a shift in the emphasis of support rendered by the Korean Service Corps. During October, each of the three frontline regiments received 300 more laborers, raising the total to 800. Rear area units paid for the increase, since the KSCs were detached from support units and sent forward to the MLR.

Logistical support from the 1st Signal Battalion left little to be desired. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John E. Morris[45] when the Marines moved to western Korea, the signalmen helped establish and maintain an extensive communications net, with 5,200 miles of wire within the division and several vital links to adjacent and higher commands.[46] Wiremen worked around the clock to lay and maintain the telephone lines, which suffered considerable damage from the artillery and mortar barrages. When possible, the signalmen raised the wires off the ground. The battalion set in more than 1,400 telephone poles. After the system had been installed

and was working efficiently, the July floods washed away part of the major communications. By improvising and by setting up emergency equipment, the battalion was able to maintain the flow of communications traffic at a satisfactory level. Replacement items were provided by the U.S. Army on a reimbursable basis in accordance with existing directives.

In September it became apparent that the signal equipment used to maintain division communications was no longer equal to the demands placed upon it. The extensive ground area plus the number and size of reinforcing units had not only put a heavy burden on radio, telephone, and teletype equipment but also caused the depletion of reserve stocks. With the spare equipment in use, there was no pool to draw upon when units turned in defective equipment for repair. Neither were there available replacements for materiel destroyed by enemy action. Items most urgently needed were flown in from the States. Other critical parts came from Army sources in Japan and Korea. By the end of October, the communication resupply had returned to a more normal condition.

Before the month ended a different type of critical situation was to confront the division. It appeared that the enemy's success in seizing a half-dozen outposts earlier in October had only whetted his appetite for more. Chinese eyes were turned towards positions that held still more potential value than the stepping-stones just acquired. The extreme right battalion in the division front held by the 7th Marines was the focal point of the new effort.

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Chapter 5. The Hook

Before the Battle[1]

After The Heavy Fighting in early October, there was a change in the 1st Marine Division dispositions. On the 12th, the 5th Marines relieved the 1st in the center sector and the latter regiment went into reserve. For the next two weeks the lull that prevailed across the regimental front was in sharp contrast to the intense fighting there earlier in the month. On the division left, the Korean Marines, not engaged in any sizable Communist action, conducted frequent tank-infantry reconnaissance patrols and ambushes forward of their MLR. In the center of the division line the 5th Marines, too, found their Chinese opponent seemingly reluctant to pursue any combat offensives, though his harassment of the Bunker Hill area represented the strongest action against the Marine division at this time. The 7th Marines, holding down the right sector, similarly encountered the enemy for only brief periods, these contacts during patrol actions lasting no more than 15 to 30 minutes.

Upon its relief from the MLR, the 1st Marines took over the division rear area. There the regiment continued the improvement of the secondary defensive lines, conducted extensive training, and dispatched numerous security patrols throughout the regimental area. These routine reserve roles were in addition to the primary mission of augmenting units on the Marine MLR in order to counterattack and defeat any attempted penetration of JAMESTOWN in the division area. As part of its counterattack mission, the divisional reserve regiment was to be prepared for employment anywhere in the I Corps sector to block an enemy advance.

On the division right, the 7th Marines remained on position in defense of JAMESTOWN. Following the bitter outpost contests on 6 October, Colonel Moore continued to retain all three battalions on line: 2/7 on the left, 3/7 in the center, and 1/7 on the right. The regimental commander had found it necessary to commit his three battalions on line due to the vastly overextended six-mile front, the rugged terrain, and the very real possibility of a major Communist attack anywhere along the MLR. With all battalions forward, Colonel Moore was left with a very small reserve, one company from 3/7. This battalion had to use as its reserve what had become known as “clutch platoons”—units composed of cooks, bakers, clerks, motor transport, and other Marine headquarters personnel. These local reserves, and even the reserve company from 3/7, could be employed only with the regimental commander’s approval.

Line JAMESTOWN, in the 7th Marines area, meandered from the vicinity of the burned-out village of Toryom, on the left, to the Hook salient in the right battalion sector and from there southeast to the Samichon River, the boundary with the 1st Commonwealth Division. From the left battalion sector to the right, the terrain gradually grew more rugged until the hills finally spilled over into the Samichon Valley. To the rear of the MLR, the ground was less jagged; forward of the line, the hills were more precipitous in character. The steepest heights were in the right battalion sector. The highest terrain feature along Colonel Moore’s MLR was Hill 146, located not far from the Hook. Throughout the 7th Marines sector rice paddies covered the narrow valley floors between the hills. Vegetation was sparse. A series of dirt roads and trails served the regimental area.

Combat outposts varied greatly as to their distance forth JAMESTOWN. Farthest from the line were the three in the left battalion sector, manned by Lieutenant Colonel Caputo’s 2/7. This trio, Carson, Reno, and Vegas, were approximately 1,000 yards forward of the MLR. Berlin and East Berlin (a new outpost established on 13 October) were the forward positions in the center line outposted by Lieutenant Colonel Charles D. Barrett’s[2] Marines. To the right Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki’s 1/7 sector held three COPs—Ronson, Warsaw, and Verdun, the latter near the Commonwealth border.

Ronson was the outpost nearest to the Hook, a major defensive position of the regiment. The importance

of this part of the MLR, in the extreme eastern sector, lay not in its strength but rather in its weakness. Jutting as it did towards the Communist lines, the salient formed a J-shaped bulge in the main line, which not only gave the Hook its nickname but also established the vulnerability of the position. Its susceptibility to capture derived both from violation of a defensive axiom that the "MLR should not have sharp angles and salients"[3] and to the fact that the ridgeline on which the Hook was located continued northwest into Communist-held territory. Seattle, which the Chinese had seized on 2 October, lay only about 500 yards northwest of the Hook.

In spite of its vulnerability, the Hook could not be abandoned. There was no other terrain feature held by the Marines that could command the critical Samichon Valley, a major avenue of approach from the northeast directly to Seoul. The salient also dominated the entire nearby area of the Imjin River to the south. Possession of the Hook and adjoining ridge would give the Communists observation of a substantial portion of the Marine rear areas beyond the Imjin, as well as the vital river crossings. In the opinion of Major General M. M. Austin-Roberts-West, whose 1st Commonwealth Division was soon to take over the Hook sector, had the salient been lost, "a withdrawal of 4,000 yards would have been necessary."[4]

At the beginning of October, this vital area had been protected by COPs Seattle and Warsaw. When the former was overrun, it became necessary to establish a new position. This was directed by Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki, and on 16 October Ronson was established 200 yards southeast of Seattle and 275 yards west of the Hook. About 600 yards northeast of the salient the remaining position, COP Warsaw, commanded the lowlands to the east and the narrow, east-west oriented valley of a Samichon tributary immediately to the front.

Opposite the three MLR battalions of the 7th Marines were the 356th and 357th Regiments of the 119th Division, 40th CCF Army. In addition to these infantry units, numbering close to 7,000, an estimated 10 battalions (120 guns) of Chinese artillery[5] were facing Colonel Moore's regiment. Personnel strength of the American unit consisted of 3,844 Marines, 11 medical officers and 133 corpsmen, 3 U.S. Army communicators, and 764 Koreans (746 KSCs and 18 interpreters).

During the summer and early fall, the 7th Marines had amassed considerable information about the enemy, including Chinese strength and composition of forces and many of their combat characteristics. Encroachment on Marine ground positions by steadily creeping the CCF trenchline forward continued to be the enemy's major ground-gaining tactic. In fact, the Chinese units facing the Marine division concentrated their digging during the fall of 1952 in the sector north of the 7th Marines MLR. (See Map 15.) Other intelligence, however, seemed open to question. For example, there was the reported frontline presence of women among the 90 Chinese who had engaged a 2/1 patrol on 5 October as well as the sighting in the KMC sector on the 17th of enemy "super soldiers" far taller than the ordinary Chinese. Many in the division found it difficult to believe the statements of enemy prisoners. During interrogation they invariably maintained that the mission of Chinese Communist Forces in Korea was a "defensive" one.

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The static battle situation encouraged the use of psychological warfare. In attempting to influence the minds of their opponents and weaken morale, the Chinese depended upon loudspeakers to carry their propaganda barrage across No-Man's-Land. Enemy employment of this technique was especially heavy during October. To Marines, for example, Chinese directed pleas of "Go home and have peace," "Surrender, we treat POWs well," "Leave Korea," "Marines, come and get your buddies bodies," and the like, often to the accompaniment of music. On occasion, Chinese patrols left propaganda pamphlets behind them in the KMC sector. Infrequently, the enemy displayed signs along patrol routes urging Marines to surrender. Most of the Chinese psychological efforts were directed against the Korean Marines.

In enemy employment of artillery, Marine frontline units and division intelligence had become well aware of the vast improvements the Communists had made in recent months. Aided by a plentiful supply of ammunition, enemy guns and howitzers, including the heavy 152mm weapon, frequently delivered concentrated

fires on critical positions in the division area. Marines felt the effects of how well the Chinese had learned to mass their fires against a single target for maximum destructive power. From the Marines, moreover, the enemy had picked up the artillery box tactic, employing it for the first time in their sector opposite Colonel Moore's regiment during the early October outpost battles.

During those same clashes, the 11th Marines had observed how the Chinese displaced some of their batteries well forward for more effective artillery support of their attacking infantry. One enemy artillery innovation had been noted the previous month by a Marine AO; on 19 September a Chinese artillery piece was detected firing in the open. Previous observations had indicated that the Chinese generally used wooded areas or extensive bunker-type positions to conceal their supporting weapons.

By the middle of October, 62.5 percent of the Chinese artillery opposing General Pollock's division was located in positions north of the 7th Marines. The importance the enemy put on the principle of massed artillery fire and the improvement of their ammunition supply can be seen in a remark attributed to a Chinese division commander:

"The enemy had organized an attack of two-battalion strength on our first-line platoon. As the enemy were getting into their assembly area I directed several volleys of rapid fire against them with a total expenditure of about 120 rounds. That very evening the army commander rang me up and said disapprovingly, 'You've expended a bit too much ammunition today!' It seemed as though the army commander had detected precisely what was in my mind. There was an instant change in his voice as he said: 'Oh, comrade, it really could not be accounted as waste, but you must know we are short of supplies.'

"Scarcely two years had passed but the situation was completely altered. In the present we had emplaced 120 guns to each kilometre of front line so that in a rapid-fire bombardment of 25 minutes more than 20,000 rounds of ammunition could be hurled against the enemy positions. If the fire used in supporting attacks and in repulsing enemy counter-attacks were taken into account the total would reach 70,000 rounds."[6]

Exaggerated as the numbers of guns and rounds may be, the basic massing technique was in line with U.S. intelligence estimates at the time. The remark also pointed to the importance the Chinese had learned to place on employment of artillery, a shift in emphasis that Colonel Moore's regiment was soon to experience in unprecedented volume.

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Chapter 5. The Hook
Preparations for Attack and Defense[7]

Before the Hook battle erupted, the defensive fires that the 7th Marines could draw upon were not overpowering in terms of numbers of units available. Only one battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Bert Davis' 2/11, was in direct support of Colonel Moore's regiment. In this mission, the 2/11 fires were reinforced by those of 1/11 (Lieutenant Colonel David S. Randall). In addition to these organic units, the batteries of the 623d Field Artillery Battalion (155mm howitzers) and one platoon of C Battery, 17th Field Artillery Battalion (8-inch self-propelled howitzers) were readily available to the 7th Marines. In all, 38 light, medium, and heavy pieces constituted the artillery support of the right sector.[8] General support was available from Lieutenant Colonel Raymond D. Wright's 4/11 and from the 4.2-inch Rocket Battery (Captain Donald G. Frier). The 159th Field Artillery Battalion (155mm howitzers) and B Battery, 204th Field Artillery Battalion (155mm guns), like the other Army units positioned in the Marine Division sector, reinforced the fires of division artillery. Fire support from 1st Commonwealth Division weapons within range of the Hook area could also be depended upon.

Although the Army artillery units satisfied the heavy punch requirement of the 11th Marines, commanded since 21 September by Colonel Harry N. Shea, there was one basic element the regiment lacked. This missing ingredient was a sufficient amount of ammunition for the howitzers. Defense of outposts and mainline positions along the EUSAK front in early and mid-October 1952 consumed a great deal of this type of ammunition. This heavy expenditure was brought to the attention of the corps commanders by Eighth Army. General Van Fleet pointed out that ammunition consumption rates for both the 105mm and 155mm howitzers during these two critical weeks in October not only exceeded the expenditures of the massive Communist spring offensive in 1951 but also the UN counterstroke that followed.[9]

To help remedy the situation, the EUSAK commander urged "continuous command supervision to insure the maximum return for all ammunition expended."[10] The general made it plain that he was not changing his policy of exacting a heavy toll whenever the enemy began an attack. This course had been followed by the 1st Marine Division, but the Marines' ability to both restrict the enemy's creeping tactics and simultaneously fight a siege-type war was noticeably impeded.[11]

As the end of October approached, the shortage of ammunition was becoming a subject of increased concern to the frontline Marine units. Daily allowances established for the last 11 days of the month were 20 rounds of 105mm high explosive (HE) and 4.3 rounds of 155mm high explosive for each tube.[12] With such small quantities to fire and further restricted by an equally critical shortage of both hand grenades and 81mm mortar rounds, Colonel Moore was almost powerless to spike the Chinese preparations for assault of the Hook.[13] Artillery fires were reserved for only the most urgent situations or for large bodies of troops. It was one observer's opinion that the "enemy could show himself almost at will without receiving fire, and that it was impossible either to harass or neutralize his continual fortification activity, let alone embark upon systematic destructive fires of the kind he was carrying out."[14]

As a means of compensating for the shortage of 81mm mortar and 105mm howitzer ammunition, the Marines reverted to a former method of using machine guns. This technique, employed during the trench warfare days of World War I but seldom thereafter, was considered a useful expedient to discourage enemy defensive creeping tactics as well as to deter his preparations for objective attacks. The system required emplacing heavy machine guns both on and to the rear of the MLR to fire into areas that troops used for assembly or as check points. If the target was visible to the machine gunner, he could take it under direct fire. At night, when the enemy

operated under cover of darkness, the machine guns fired into zones which had already been registered in the daytime. Colonel Moore directed his units on 23 October to resort to this expedient.

A 1st Marine Division daily intelligence report covering the 24-hour period beginning at 1800 on 24 October noted that there was "a marked increase in enemy artillery and mortar fire with an estimated twelve hundred rounds falling in the CT 1010 area of the 7th Marines sector."[15] According to the division PIR there was also an increased number of enemy troops observed that same day in locations west and northwest of the Hook. Most of the fire was directed against the Hook area of the MLR and on the two sentinels, Ronson and Warsaw. Efforts by Marines and some 250 KSCs to repair the damaged or destroyed bunkers, trenches, communications lines, and tactical wire, during brief periods of relief from the artillery deluges, were wiped out again by subsequent shellings.

It would not be correct to say that 1/7 remained entirely passive at this time. Battalion weapons replied, though in faint voices barely audible in the din created by Chinese firing. Regimental mortars chimed in and so did 2/11, which fired 416 rounds in the 24 hours ending at 1800 on the 24th. For that same period, tanks expended 137 rounds at active weapon positions firing on the Hook. One air strike was directed against the enemy opposing the Hook battalion. This attack by a quartet of Marine F9Fs from VMF–311 (Lieutenant Colonel Arthur H. Adams) bombed and napalmed a troublesome group of Chinese entrenched on the enemy MLR 750 yards east of the Hook.

During the next 48 hours, the enemy continued his preparations for an attack, concentrating his artillery fire on the Hook area. Colonel Moore's battalions received approximately 2,850 artillery and mortar rounds, most of which rained down on 1/7 to the right. There, the heavy and continuous fire slowed Marine efforts to restore their wrecked bunkers and trenches. Late on the 25th there was some relief from the artillery bombardment, but by that time many of the prophets on the line and in the rear area were uncertain only as to the precise time of the unexpected Chinese attack.

Colonel Clarence A. Barninger, the division intelligence officer, had himself alerted General Pollock to the implications of "the intensification and character of enemy fires"[16] being received in the 1/7 sector. The intelligence evaluation was not based only on recent events. A detailed study of Chinese capabilities and possible courses of action had just been completed by the G–2 and his staff. In its discussion of the early October outpost attacks in the division right, the report concluded that Chinese interests lay in gaining the "terrain dominating the Samichon Valley. . . ."[17]

Since 5 October when 1/7 had been moved into the line as the regiment's third MLR battalion, the enemy had begun a regular shelling of 1/7 positions adjacent to the Hook. Incoming rounds had increased almost daily. "Troops, vehicles, and tanks moving in daylight even behind the MLR almost invariably brought down enemy artillery or mortars upon them. It was apparent that the enemy was making preparation for a large scale assault in this portion of the MLR,"[18] the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki, later recalled. Matters took an even more ominous turn about 23 October when the Chinese "began a deliberate, deadly accurate precision fire aimed at destruction of the major fortifications in the Hook's system of dug-in defense."[19] As the tempo of this fire stepped up daily, the destruction of the battalion's carefully prepared defenses exceeded the Marines' ability to repair the damage. The artillery build-up was believed preparatory to an attempt to either seize or breach the MLR.

In late October, Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki had two companies on the MLR to protect this important area. On the 23d, Captain Frederick C. McLaughlin's Company A was assigned the left part of the battalion sector, which included the Hook. A squad outposted Ronson and a reinforced platoon was stationed at Warsaw. At 0200 on the 26th, Company C (Captain Paul B. Byrum) departed the battalion reserve area to take over responsibility as the left MLR company. Relief of Company A was completed at 0410.[20] Holding down the right flank of the main line during this time was Company B (Captain Dexter E. Evans). This area was larger but

somewhat less rugged than the western part of the 1/7 sector.

In the two days immediately preceding the Chinese attack of 26 October, 1/7 received a limited amount of support intended to harass the enemy and throw him off balance, if possible. Tanks fired their 90s at bunkers, caves, trenches, and direct fire weapons in the enemy sector. On the 25th, Company A of the 1st Tank Battalion blasted away 54 times at these targets; on the next day, Captain Clyde W. Hunter's gunners more than tripled their previous day's output, firing 173 high explosive shells. Artillery, in the meantime, stepped up its rate of fire on the 25th, when Lieutenant Colonel Davis' 2/11 fired 575 rounds, followed by 506 more the next day. The division general support battalion, 4/11, fired a total of 195 rounds on these two days.[21] Nearly half were to assist the 7th Marines. On both days the regiment received the benefit of 4.5-inch rocket ripples.

Air support just prior to the attack was increased slightly, but only two strikes were flown for the Hook battalion. At 1535 on the 25th, two Corsair fighters and a pair of AUs, the attack version of the Corsair, dive-bombed a section of Chinese trench that housed a number of weapons bothersome to the Marines nearby.[22] The four VMA–323 aircraft claimed destruction of 40 yards of trench and damage to 35 yards more. The target was 1,000 yards southwest of the Hook. Next morning the squadron sent three of its famed fighters against bunker positions on a hill 900 yards west of the 1/7 salient. This mission had been prebriefed to attack enemy artillery positions opposite the KMC line. Instead, the flight was diverted to take on the bunkers, which represented, at that time, more of a menace to the division. The attack destroyed one bunker, damaged another, and produced an estimated seven casualties.

Hidden nearby the area of this air strike in the early morning hours of 26 October was the Chinese infantry unit which later that same day would attack the Hook. Before daybreak the 3d Battalion, 357th Regiment, had moved from an area nearly two miles west of the Hook. The forward elements, two companies, with two day's rations for each man, halted about a mile from their objective. There the Chinese remained throughout most of the 26th, carefully concealing themselves from observation by friendly forces.[23] While the enemy troops were lying low, their mortars and artillery began the final preparatory fires.

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Chapter 5. The Hook
Attack on the Hook[24]

On the morning of 26 October, Chinese artillery and mortar fire striking the MLR slackened a bit but was still sufficiently heavy in the vicinity of the Hook to prevent visitors in the area any direct observation from the salient. During his inspection of Hook defenses that morning, Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki was knocked to the ground by the concussion of an enemy artillery round exploding nearby.[25] In the afternoon, enemy shelling continued at a steady pace, but towards the end of the day intense mixed artillery and mortar fire increased to preattack proportions. Dusk brought no relief from the enemy's supporting weapons.

Out at the flanking positions, Ronson and Warsaw, there was little change in the intensity of the enemy shelling for the remainder of the afternoon. Bunkers and trenches were caved in, just as they were on the Hook [26] from the preparatory fires that had been building up over a period of days. (For a sketch of the Hook battle area on 26 October, see Map 16.) Enemy shelling had also produced a number of casualties. Marines at Ronson were the first to experience the enemy's ground assault. At 1810 the outpost reported an increased rate of mortar and artillery rounds exploding on the position. Two groups of enemy soldiers were seen moving towards the outpost, one from the east and the other from the west. Ronson Marines took these advancing soldiers under fire immediately.

Click here to view map

Initially, the radio messages from Ronson reported that the attacking force was a company, but a later estimate of approximately 50 Chinese appeared to be more nearly correct. Communist infantry made their way through the defensive artillery barrages requested by the COP garrison and into the rifle and machine gun fire of the Marines. By 1838 the enemy had overrun the squad of Marines and was in possession of Ronson. No one had escaped from the outpost.

At this time, 800 yards northeast, the 9th Company, 357th Battalion was working its way towards Warsaw. Striking at the COP from both east and west, the enemy company was momentarily halted by extremely heavy Marine mortar and artillery fire. By 1820, the platoon at Warsaw had requested the protective box around its position; this fire the 11th Marines delivered promptly. Still the Chinese continued to besiege the position and Company A defending Marines, under outpost commander Second Lieutenant John Babson, Jr., were locked in a hand-to-hand struggle. As a platoon was being readied to reinforce Warsaw the outpost reported, at 1907, that enemy soldiers had reached the Marine bunkers and that the defenders were using bayonets, pistols, hand grenades, and both ends of their rifles to repel the Communist invaders.

Three minutes later came the word, "We're being overrun." With this message all communication from the outpost temporarily ceased, but at 1944, Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki's CP heard Warsaw report heavy fighting still in progress there. The outpost first stated that enemy soldiers were on top of the bunkers; then called for "VT on own position" which the 11th Marines furnished.

The seriousness of the situation was immediately apparent at higher commands. One outpost had been lost; a second was in jeopardy. At about this time, a veritable avalanche of enemy artillery and mortar fire began to blanket the Hook. Colonel Moore released Captain McLaughlin's company to 1/7. The 7th Marines commander also ordered regimental ammunition supplies be allotted to Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki's area. Shortly after that, division lifted ammunition restrictions on 1/7.

To counter the impending ground attack, at 1859 Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki ordered Captain McLaughlin's Company A forward to reinforce the Hook sector and to assist Company C in containing the enemy

attack. One platoon, the 1st, departed immediately for the MLR. As the remainder of the company prepared to move out, the enemy struck in estimated battalion strength. By 1938 some of the CCF infantry had advanced to the main trenches immediately south of the Hook. Within a few minutes, a second wave of Communist soldiers, following closely the preparatory barrages, hit JAMESTOWN just east of the 1/7 salient and frontally at the Hook itself. It appeared that the Communists had come to stay, for many cargo carriers—Chinese with construction materials for bunkers and trenches—accompanied the attacking infantry.

Fire fights raged during the early phase of the struggle, with continuous support furnished the assault troops by Chinese artillery and mortars. The momentum of the enemy's three-pronged attack, aided by heavy rear area fire support, enabled the Chinese to overrun the trenches and push on along the crest of the ridge, its slope near the spine, and across the segments formed by the spurs that jutted south from the crest. Marine defenders pulled back while a small rear guard covered their movement with fire. Along the MLR, about 400 yards south of the Hook, the Chinese had slipped around the flanks of the COP and at 2030 forced a penetration in the C/1/7 line. Second Lieutenant John W. Meikle (1st Platoon, Company C) organized the Marines into a perimeter defense adjacent to the MLR. At 2130, remaining elements of the company formed another defense blocking area 550 yards east of the Hook near the crest of the ridge.

Between these two positions small groups of Marines continued the heavy close fight to repulse the enemy while inching their way forward to tie-in with the rest of the unit. (See Map 17 for penetration limits during the Hook battle.) To the northeast, the platoon at Warsaw had not been heard from since 1945, and at 2330, Colonel Moore reluctantly declared the outpost to be in enemy hands.

At the time the loss of Warsaw was announced, counter-measures designed to halt the enemy assault were in various stages of preparation or completion. The initial reinforcing element sent forward to strengthen the main line had linked up with Lieutenant Meikle's 1st Platoon, Company C, in the perimeter near the 3d Battalion boundary. The remainder of Company A was en route to the crest of the east-west ridge to thwart what appeared to be the main enemy drive. Colonel Moore had released his meager reserve, H/3/7, at 0300 on the 27th, and General Pollock had ordered one of the division reserve battalions, 3/1, to the 7th Marines area, although still retaining operational control of the unit.

Click here to view map

As the forward battalion of the division reserve, 3/1 (Lieutenant Colonel Altman) had prepared counterattack plans for critical locations in the division sector and had previously made a reconnaissance of the Hook area. The battalion immediately displaced from its bivouac site north of the Imjin (Camp Rose) to an assembly area behind the 7th Marines on the MLR.

All possible support for 1/7 was made available, since the critical situation resulting from the major enemy assault automatically suspended previous restrictions on use of artillery and mortar allowances. At Warsaw, 2/11 blanketed the position with a continuous barrage in order to limit the enemy's ability to effectively hold and consolidate the captured COP. Lieutenant Colonel Davis' cannoneers also blasted enemy formations in response to fire missions from forward observers. Artillery rounds fell on Chinese outposts supporting the attack, on approach routes to the battleground, on assembly areas, and on known and suspected Chinese artillery locations.

Marine aviation and tanks were employed as part of the plan to first limit the penetration made by the enemy before the counterattack to expel him. A section of tanks had been firing since 1930 against the enemy main line; a second section joined the direct fire assault a half hour later. At 2113, one F7F, with 1,300 pounds of bombs, hit a portion of the enemy's MSR. At 2306, another twin-engine Grumman Tigercat blasted the same area, about three-quarters of a mile west of the Hook. These initial one-plane strikes in support of the defense of the salient were flown by Captain Leon C. Cheek, Jr. and Major Laurel M. Mickelson, respectively, of VMF(N)–513.

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Chapter 5. The Hook
Reno Demonstration[27]

At 0030 on the 27th, Major Mickelson, returning from his MPQ attack, touched his Tigercat down at K–8 (Kunsan). At the very moment that the plane set down on the Kunsan runway, the Chinese launched another assault against the 7th Marines, the second in less than six hours. This later action, in Lieutenant Colonel Caputo's 2/7 sector, nearly two miles west of the Hook, was not a surprise move either. In fact, an attack against the Carson-Reno-Vegas area had been anticipated for some time, and it was this state of preparedness that throttled the enemy's attempt to seize an outpost here.

Division intelligence had accumulated considerable evidence that the Chinese buildup in late October was intended to ultimately clear the way to the 2/7 outposts rather than those of 1/7 in the eastern Hook area. A majority of the Marine supporting arms effort immediately prior to 1800 on the 26th had gone to the left battalion of Colonel Moore's regiment. Aware of the interest the enemy had shown in the outposts earlier in the month, the battalion commander had strengthened the defense of this key area. One measure, increasing the size of the ambush force maintained at night near Reno from a squad to a platoon, was to pay handsome dividends before October was over.

Just after dark on the 26th, a reinforced platoon from Captain James R. Flores' Company E departed the MLR on a combat patrol and ambush mission. After reaching its assigned area, about 300 yards short of the hill that housed COP Reno, the ambush platoon disappeared into camouflaged dug-in positions and waited. At midnight, the Marines were alerted by faint noises to the front. There, elements of two Chinese companies, which had stealthily maneuvered into the ambush area, were organizing for a sneak assault by an envelopment on Reno from the rear. (See Map 18.) The waiting platoon apprised the outpost of the enemy's presence in the area; then when it appeared that the Chinese were about to launch their assault, the ambushers opened fire.
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As the surprised Chinese turned to take on the hidden ambush platoon, the two defending squads at Reno began firing. It took 10 minutes before the Chinese were sufficiently recovered to organize a withdrawal. At 0040, enemy elements quickly began to pull back towards the north. The outpost had been spared a major action, but its occupants were to be again engaged by the Chinese before daybreak.

At 0400, one platoon from a third CCF company, approaching from an enemy hill to the northeast, hit Reno. The attack was conducted in a fashion not previously experienced by the 1st Marine Division in West Korea—platoons echeloned in depth, assaulting in successive waves. The first unit to reach Reno was composed of grenade throwers and supporting riflemen. This advance element was followed immediately by the rest of the platoon, infantry armed with submachine guns and rifles. Marines on Reno were not troubled by the initial platoon asault, but the second one made some inroads before the defenders' fires forced the enemy to pull back. A third two-phased attack succeeded, however, in cracking the defenses at the northeast section of the position. The outpost commander then ordered his Marines into the bunkers and called for overhead artillery fire. Caught in the open, the Chinese were forced to withdraw at 0440 and did not return.

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Chapter 5. The Hook Counterattack[28]

After the Marines in Lieutenant Colonel Caputo's 2/7 sector had dealt with the demonstration force, the action shifted back to the Hook. Early on the morning of the 27th, Captain McLaughlin's unit, sent to the Hook-Hill 146 crest to block the penetration of the MLR, had established contact with Captain Byrum's Company C, passed through its lines, and pressed on to the Hook. Suddenly, enemy small arms and machine guns opened up on lead elements of Company A. Artillery and mortar fire then began to hit the company. The Marines continued their advance and made some progress in arresting the Chinese thrust at the ridge. Shortly thereafter the enemy called in heavy supporting fires, forcing Company A to halt its attack temporarily. When the company commander ordered his men to resume the advance, overwhelming enemy fire again slowed the movement. McLaughlin then ordered his men to hold and dig in.

When report of the Company A situation reached the regimental CP, Colonel Moore ordered into action his last reserve unit, Captain Bernard B. Belant's Company H.[29] He was directed to report to 1/7, then to pass through the depleted ranks of Company A, and take up the attack downridge towards the salient. At 0340 the regiment attached H/3/7 to 1/7 for operational control; at 0505 the company arrived at the 1st Battalion CP. Forty minutes later, Company H reached Captain McLaughlin's area, where it regrouped and then deployed toward the ridgeline for the counterattack.

When Captain Belant led his Marines towards the Hook to oust the Chinese, the enemy drive had reached the point of its deepest penetration. By this time the Chinese had seized control of slightly more than a mile of the meandering MLR. Most of the captured main defense line extended from the Hook east along the ridge towards Hill 146. (One-third of the Communist advance was from the Hook southwest, in the direction of the 3d Battalion boundary.) Between 0545 and 0800, H/3/7 worked its way towards the Hook-Hill 146 crest. After two hours the company was at the ridgeline, and at 0800 Captain Belant was ready to move forward towards the salient, a straight-line distance of about a half–mile. On the hour, the push downridge started. After having advanced about 200 yards, the H/3/7 Marines were assailed by small arms fire and the rain of heavy caliber rounds supporting the enemy's thrust. Captain Belant signalled his Marines to attack.

Immediately, Second Lieutenant George H. O'Brien, Jr. leaped up from his position and shouted for his platoon to follow. On the run, he zigzagged across the exposed ridge and continued down the front slope towards the main trench. Before reaching this objective, the platoon commander was knocked to the ground by the impact of a single bullet. Scrambling quickly to his feet he motioned for his men to follow and took off on the run for the enemy-occupied trenchline. Again he stopped, this time to assist an injured Marine.

As he neared the trenchline, Lieutenant O'Brien started to throw a hand grenade into the enemy-occupied bunkers, but was stopped by the Chinese. With his carbine, the officer methodically eliminated this resistance, then hurled the grenades. Overcoming this position, the Texas Marine and his platoon advanced towards the Hook, but the enemy, now partly recovered, was able to slow and ultimately stop the counterattack. A profusion of artillery and mortar fire was primarily responsible for halting the advance, which had carried Company H very close to the Hook bunkers.

Spurred on by the leadership of Lieutenant O'Brien, who later received the Medal of Honor,[30] the company was able to execute a limited advance. Despite the heavy artillery and mortar fire, the company drove a wedge into the Communist position, thereby retaking the initiative from the enemy. Company H also took three prisoners in the southeast end of the Hook before being forced by a deadly enemy mortar and artillery barrage to

withdraw upridge.

The attack by Company H had been well supported from the air. At 0840, a flight of four ADs from Lieutenant Colonel Cargill's VMA–121 assaulted the former Marine COP Seattle, where enemy reinforcements were being funneled through on the way to the Hook. Bombs and napalm took a heavy toll of the troops, bunkers, and weapons pouring fire on the counterattacking Marines. One hour later, a division (four planes) from VMA–323 struck another trouble spot, a former Marine outpost known as Irene (later, Rome). Aircraft of Lieutenant Colonel Chamberlain's squadron hit this objective with three tons of bombs and more than 4,000 pounds of burning napalm. Thirty minutes later, another foursome, these from VMA–212, (Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Dobson, Jr.),[31] delivered bombs, napalm, and 20mm shells on enemy soldiers moving on the MSR towards JAMESTOWN.

While these three squadrons were bombing enemy strongpoints and other targets of opportunity, division artillery and tanks continued their destructive fire missions. Between 0930 and 1300, two tanks from Company A, 1st Tank Battalion, blasted away at Chinese bunkers and trenches, at an enemy 76mm gun on Seattle, and at positions southwest of the Hook. Artillery—2/11, 4/11, and the rocket battery—contributed the weight of its support. The 11th Marines, in an effort to stop the heavy hostile shelling of the Hook sector, fired 60 counterbattery missions on Chinese gun emplacements during the first 24 hours of the attack.

In the early afternoon of the 27th, 1st MAW attack squadrons continued their bombing and strafing of enemy troops engaged in the assault against the Hook. Before sundown, 30 aircraft had taken part in 8 additional strikes in support of Marine counterattacks along the ridge. The number of aircraft involved in close air support sorties for the Hook was approximately half the number received by the division all day. Of the 72 aircraft flying CAS strikes during the first 24 hours of the Hook action, 67 were Marine planes, all from MAG–12.

As in the morning's close air support flights, Lieutenant Colonel Cargill's ADs provided the bulk of air support for ground action that afternoon. Striking first a command post southeast of the 1/7 salient, at 1410, VMA–121 came back a half-hour later with four more Skyraiders against CCF troops pressing to envelop the right flank of the counterattack force. At 1635, two squadron aircraft flew in quickly in response to a sighting of troops moving forward in the Samichon tributary 1,000 yards north of the Hook. Twenty minutes after this successful attack, four more Skyraiders attacked bunkers opposite the left flank of Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki's sector. The final daylight strike for 1/7 was again made by four ADs from –121. These planes took under attack a target that had been bombarded just 25 minutes earlier by Corsairs from VMA–323.

Another Marine attack squadron, VMA–212, participated in the Hook support that afternoon. At 1344, a four-plane flight assaulted troops moving through Frisco to reinforce the Chinese drive on the Hook. Two of the planes dropped three 1,000-pound bombs and two 250-pounders on the enemy soldiers. The other pair of attack Corsairs released six 780-pound napalm tanks over the position. It was estimated that 25 Chinese casualties resulted from this air attack. Wrapping up the VMA–212 CAS for the Hook sector on the 27th was a strike, at 1440, on camouflaged positions and another at 1520 against caves and bunkers. Each of these air assaults took place about 950 yards from the Hook. The earlier one was a napalm attack from 50 feet above the ground. One of the six tanks would not release and three did not ignite. Four caves were destroyed and one bunker was damaged in the latter strikes.

Between the morning and afternoon air strikes, the ground commanders put together the final plans for recapture and defense of the Hook. When General Pollock had released I/3/1 to the regiment during an inspection trip to the 1/7 area that morning, the company was already en route to the ridge to make the counterattack. The ground commanders agreed that after I/3/1 regained the salient, H/3/1 would take over the right sector of 1/7 and the relieved company, B/1/7, would then occupy both the critical MLR sector and Warsaw. Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki's scheme to recapture the positions and ground lost on 26 October was a continuation of the attack from atop the ridge directly towards the objective. It was to be a hard-nosed, frontal assault, but the only maneuver

deemed advisable.

Clearing the Company C command post about noon, the lead elements of Captain Murray V. Harlan, Jr.'s Company I, the 1st Platoon, continued its route to the ridge. After the 40 Marines had gained the crest, they quickly reoriented themselves to the new direction, and at 1350, led the I/3/1 assault. Artillery preparation by the 11th Marines had preceded the crossing of the line of departure, and these supporting fires were partially responsible for the substantial initial advance made by the counterattacking Marines. But Chinese artillery was not idle at this time either, and the volume of enemy fire matched that of the Marines. The I/3/1 movement forward was also slowed by Communist soldiers, estimated at about a company, who fired from protected positions along the perimeter of the Hook.

Inch by inch the company crawled forward. The vicious Chinese supporting barrages were exacting many casualties among Captain Harlan's troops,[32] yet they crept on, and ultimately reached the artillery forward observer bunker atop the ridge but 150 yards short of the Hook trenches. At this time, 1635, the enemy supporting fires were directed not only on the advancing Marines and the MLR defenses but extended as far back as the regimental CP.[33] Chinese soldiers still clung to some of the Hook positions and trenches of the MLR just below the crest on the northern sides. Marines closest to the Hook could see the virtual ruination caused by enemy artillery and mortar shells to the trench system within the salient.

Nearing their objective, elements of Company I pressed on with even more determination. By 1700 a few had made it to the shell-torn ditches, where they sought momentary refuge to reorganize. Several more joined, and together they reconnoitered the trenches and bunkers for enemy soldiers. Just then the Communists reacted with an even heavier supporting arms assault, which forced these few Marines to pull back with their platoon to the reverse slope of the ridge. To the right, about 250 yards away, the main body of Company I Marines occupied the reverse side of the hill, riding out the onslaught of artillery and mortar rounds while they waited for a lull before making the final dash to recapture the lost area of JAMESTOWN.

While Captain Harlan's company was exposed to this extremely heavy enemy artillery fire, another unit, B/1/7, was on the move from Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki's command post to the ridge to strike what was intended as a lethal blow to the Communist invaders. At 1932, Company B began its march forward. By midnight, the 1st Platoon was nearing its assault position close to the left flank of Company I of 3/1. Simultaneously, the 3d Platoon closed in on its jump-off point. The going was extremely difficult, complicated by a moonless night and the many shell craters that pockmarked the terrain. But at 0019, 28 October, the platoons mounted their assault, firing their rifles and machine guns, and hurling grenades to silence enemy automatic weapons and to reach dug-in Communist soldiers occupying the trenchline.

The Marine charge was met by a burst of small arms fire and a shower of grenades. Weapons supporting the Chinese defense were still very active. After a standoff of 90 minutes the Marines pulled back, calling on their mortars and artillery to lay precise fire concentrations on the trouble spots. The weapons also fired on enemy approach routes through Ronson and Warsaw. After this preparation, Company B again made an assault against the enemy, at 0340. This advance was contested vigorously by the Chinese, but their resistance this time was not lasting. Quickly B/1/7 Marines deployed throughout the entire area, and by 0600 the Hook was again in Marine hands.

Before the victors could permit themselves the luxury of a breathing spell, there were a number of critical tasks that demanded immediate attention. Defense of the MLR had to be quickly and securely shored up for a possible enemy counterattack. The newly rewon area had to be searched for Marines, both casualties and holdouts, and for Chinese diehards or wounded. The company had to be reorganized. In addition to these missions, there were two others, regaining Ronson and Warsaw. As it turned out, the duties were discharged nearly at the same time. COPs Ronson and Warsaw were reoccupied by the 7th Marines at 0630 and 0845, respectively, on 28 October.

In organizing the recaptured position, the Marines were hampered to some extent by a dense ground fog. Nevertheless, work still went ahead on these necessary tasks. Most of the Hook area was held by Company B; the western part of the 1/7 line, south of the Hook, was still manned by the platoon from Company A and one from Company C. The 1st Platoon of Company B quickly searched the retaken area of the MLR (except the caved in parts of the trenchline and bunkers, which were investigated later), but found no enemy soldiers. During the day, as Company B expanded its responsibility along the Marine main line, the platoons from A/1/7 and C/1/7 were relieved to rejoin their companies.[34] Supplies began to move in, once the permanency of the defense had been established.

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Chapter 5. The Hook
Overview[35]

In evaluating the battle for the Hook, it would appear that the Chinese assault against Reno was merely a demonstration or feint. By making a sizable effort near the primary objective after the attack there was well under way, the Communists expected not to obscure the real target but rather to cause the Marines to hesitate in moving higher echelon reserves to influence the action at the Hook. It was to the credit of the ambush force that the Chinese ruse was unsuccessful.

Including losses from the Reno ambush, Marines estimated that the Chinese actions against that outpost cost the enemy 38 killed and 51 wounded. The COP defenders and the platoon that had surprised the enemy counted 22 dead Communist soldiers during and after the Reno action. Together with the Hook casualties, confirmed at 274 killed and 73 wounded and estimated at 494 killed and 370 wounded,[36] the figure represented more than a third of an enemy battalion permanently lost in addition to about a battalion and a half put out of action temporarily. Distributed among the number of battalions that participated in the two actions, the total number of casualties lost some impact. What remains significant, however, are the cost and results—369 counted and 953 estimated casualties for not one inch of ground.

Marine losses in the Hook battle were 70 killed, 386 wounded (286 evacuated), and 39 missing, of whom 27 were later definitely known to have been captured. This was the second highest number of Marines taken prisoner in any single action during the Korean fighting.[37] Such a large number was attributed to the tactics of the Chinese infantry, which followed the preparatory barrages so closely—at times even advancing into the rolling barrages—that the enemy was able to surprise and capture a considerable number of Marine outpost defenders. Nearly all of the 27 were captured in the enemy's first rushes against the two outposts and MLR. In the diversion on Reno, an additional 9 Marines were killed and 49 wounded (29 evacuated).

Perhaps as significant as any result of the Hook fighting is the amount of supporting fires the Chinese provided their infantry. Calculations of total incoming ran from 15,500 to 34,000 rounds during the 36-hour engagement. The 1st Marine Division reported conservatively that the enemy expended between 15,500–16,000 artillery and mortar rounds; estimates by supporting arms units put the total at the higher level. In any event, the 12,500 rounds the 7th Marines received during the first 24 hours represented the heaviest bombardment any Marine regiment had been subjected to up to that time. Moreover, it had now become clearly evident that the enemy could stockpile a plentiful supply of ammunition, despite attempts of UN aircraft to interfere with the enemy's flow of supplies to the frontline.[38]

With regard to combat tactics, the attacks during 26–27 October confirmed earlier reports that extremely heavy use of preparatory barrages by the enemy signalled an imminent infantry attack on the area. Defensive concentrations of apparently unlimited quantity typified Communist artillery support for their attacking forces. Meticulous policing of the battlefield, an established Chinese practice, was also apparent during the Hook battle. In order to prevent identification of his combat units, the enemy also took pains to ensure that assault troops remove all papers and unit insignia before going forward of their own lines.

Two other previously reported tactics were corroborated during the late October battle for the Hook. One was the presence of cargo carriers with the attacking force. These soldiers, estimated by the division to comprise as high as 75 percent of the total number of Chinese troops committed, carried shovels, lumber, extra rations, medical aid equipment, and stocks of ammunition. One Marine evacuated from a bunker reported on a method of bunker searching by the Chinese. "English speaking Chinese were yelling into bunkers for Marines to 'Come out

and surrender.' When there was no evidence of surrender, the Chinese would use bangalore torpedoes and satchel charges to destroy and seal bunkers."[39]

In one respect the enemy deviated from his usual tactics. During the battle for the Hook Marines who took prisoners made the discovery that the Chinese employed close-up relief forces. Prior to an offensive action, the enemy positioned a reserve just to the rear of the assault unit. After the attack had started, and at the appropriate time, the commander would signal the fresh force forward to take over the mission of the old unit. In this manner, the enemy hoped to sustain his drive or to retain a newly-won position.

Though the foresight appeared appropriate, the result was not always what had been anticipated. In the earlier part of the month, during a fight in another I Corps sector, the Communists had rushed a reserve force forward to consolidate the defense of an outpost immediately after its capture. In the Hook fighting, a fresh unit, which had been placed immediately to the rear of the assault troops, was ordered forward to keep the attack alive. Both attempts failed. Marines attributed this lack of success to the Communists' apparent inability to organize or reorganize quickly, a difficulty which was believed to have resulted from the scarcity of officers in forward areas. [40]

Discussing the defense of the Hook area, Lieutenant Colonel Dulacki commented shortly after the battle ended:

"The Chinese seemed to gain their greatest tactical advantage during action on 'The Hook' by assaulting friendly positions directly under their own artillery and mortar barrages. The effects on defending Marines were two-fold: heavy incoming either physically trapped them in their bunkers, or the Chinese, having overrun our positions through their own barrages, took the defenders by surprise as they left their bunkers to man their fighting holes. It is therefore considered imperative that in future instances of heavy enemy supporting fires, all Marines physically occupy an individual shelter from which their fighting positions are readily accessible.

"Marines gained a false sense of security by taking cover, in groups, inside bunkers. In some cases, groups of three or four Marines were killed when a bunker caved in on top of them. Had they been spread out along the trenchline, but under individual cover, it is believed that far fewer casualties would have resulted, and also the position would have been better prepared for defense. The false sense of security gained by being with comrades inside a bunker must be overcome."[41]

Another factor bothered the 1/7 commander. He directed unit leaders to exercise closer control over the care and cleaning of weapons under their custody. During the Hook fighting, the malfunctioning of weapons due to improper cleaning and loss of some rifles "in the excitement to gain cover" caused the Marines to take casualties that might otherwise have been prevented.

These same deficiencies were also observed by General Pollock, and he ordered their immediate correction. Lieutenant General Hart, CG FMFPac, whose inspection of the division coincided with the Hook battle and who saw the trenches after they had been leveled, noted that shallow trenches and bunkers built above the ground did not offer sufficient protection from intensive enemy shelling. He directed that more emphasis be placed on the digging of field fortifications and bunkers.[42]

In considering not only how the fight was conducted but why, one has only to go back to the first part of October and recall the situation that existed along the 1st Marine Division line. During the hotly contested outpost battles early in the month, the Chinese had attempted to outflank the division by seizing key terrain in the left and right sectors. Where the enemy had been unsuccessful, he returned later in the month for another major assault. On the night of the 26th the endeavor was in the division right. A new blow against the left was not far off.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
A Successful Korean Defense[1]

IN BOTH THE EARLY and late October outpost battles the Chinese had attempted to seize critical terrain on the flanks of the 1st Marine Division. Although the majority of these attacks failed, the enemy had acquired six outposts early in the month—three in the western Korean Marine Corps sector and three north of the right regimental line. On the last day of October, two hours before midnight, the CCF again struck the Marine left flank. This time their efforts were directed against four outposts that screened Hill 155, the most prominent terrain feature in the entire KMC regimental zone. The fighting that developed was brief but very sharp and would be the most costly of all KMC clashes during this third winter of the war.

The latest enemy attack came as no real surprise to Korean Marines of the 5th Battalion, occupying COPs 39, 33, and 31 in the northern regimental sector, or 2d Battalion personnel at COP 51 in the southern (western) half of the MLR. (Map 19.) The four outposts assisted in defense of the MLR (particularly Hill 155 just inside the MLR), afforded observation of CCF approach routes, and served as a base for friendly raids and offensive operations. Hill 155 overlooked both the wide Sachon Valley and Chinese frontline positions to the west. This critical Korean hill also commanded a view of the Panmunjom peace corridor, Freedom Gate Bridge, and the Marine division area east of Line JAMESTOWN in the KMC sector. Hill 155 had further tactical importance in that it protected the left flank of Paekhak Hill, the key ground in the entire 34-mile expanse of JAMESTOWN within 1st Marine Division territory.
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Actually, the probability of a determined enemy attack against the four outposts had been anticipated since early October following CCF seizure of three positions (former COPs 37, 36, and 86) in their strike against the KMC regimental OPLR. The enemy had then proceeded to organize an OPLR of his own with the two northern outposts, COPs 37 and 36, and informally occupied another position to the south and one toward the north in the vicinity of COP 39. “With this OPLR once firmly organized, the enemy will have an excellent jump-off point towards our OPs 39 and 33, his next probable objectives,” KMC officers reasoned.[2]

Sporadic probes throughout the month in the COP 39 and 33 areas indicated continued enemy interest in the positions. COP 51, to the south, was considered another likely target because of its location immediately east of COP 86, previously annexed by the CCF.

Prior to attacking the four outposts on 31 October, the Chinese had signaled their intentions by sharply stepping up artillery and tank fire against the sector. During the 24-hour period ending 1800 on 30 October, a total of 1,881 rounds crashed on KMC positions, most of these against the two northern outposts, COPs 39 and 33. Nearly 1,500 rounds fell the next day. More than 50 sightings of enemy troops and weapons in the forward area were also reported. By contrast, during the previous week less than 15 observations of enemy activity had been made daily and, on the average, only about 200-340 rounds of fire had fallen in the entire sector. Despite this comparatively moderate rate of hostile fire, at least one Korean Marine was killed and three wounded in late October from well-placed Chinese mortar or artillery rounds striking the outposts.

After the two days of heavy shelling, the regiment warned in its daily report issued only two hours before the full-scale attack began:

“The enemy has made a consistent two-day effort to destroy friendly outpost positions. Last night, at 1830, two enemy companies were observed in an apparent attempt to attack OPs 39 and 33. Artillery fire broke up the attempt, but continued enemy artillery today indicates further attack is probable tonight. If enemy artillery

preparation is indicative, a simultaneous attack against outposts 39, 51, 33, and 31 can be considered probable. . . .”[3]

These earlier observations and predictions as to the enemy’s action were shortly confirmed when the CCF launched its new ground attack.

Beginning at 2200,[4] the enemy delivered an intensive eight-minute 76mm and 122mm artillery preparation against the four outposts. Chinese assault forces from four different infantry regiments then launched a simultaneous attack on the positions. Moving in from the north, west, and south, two CCF companies (3d Company, 1st Battalion, 581st Regiment and 2d Company, 1st Battalion, 582d Regiment) virtually enveloped the northern outpost, COP 39. Two more CCF companies (unidentified) lunged against the two central outposts, COPs 33 and 31, a company at each position.[5] The southern and most-heavily defended post, COP 51, where a company of Korean Marines was on duty, was assailed by four Chinese companies (4th Company, 2d Battalion, 584th Regiment; 4th and 6th Companies, 2d Battalion, 585th Regiment; and 1st Company, 1st Battalion, 585th Regiment). Even though the enemy exerted his strongest pressure against COP 51, the position held and the Chinese broke off the attack there earlier than at the other outposts.

At COP 31 a heavy fire fight raged until 0155, when the defending KMC platoon halted the Chinese and forced them to make a partial withdrawal. To the northwest, at COP 33, the enemy encountered less resistance from the two squads manning the outpost. The Chinese achieved some success in penetrating the defenses and occupied several positions. After heavy close fighting and friendly artillery support, the Koreans expelled the invaders at 0515.

The enemy’s efforts appeared to have been most successful, temporarily, at COP 39, the northern post and one nearest to Hill 155. Although the Chinese wrested some ground from the KMC platoon, artillery fires continued to punish the enemy and by 0410 had forced him to pull back. A small hostile force returned at 0600 but after a 15-minute exchange of small arms it left, this time for good. At about this same time the last of the Chinese had also withdrawn from the two central outposts, 33 and 31.

In terms of sheer numbers, the enemy’s strongest effort was made against COP 51. This was the most isolated of the Korean positions and, at 2,625 yards, the one farthest from the MLR. Ironically, in the week preceding the attack COP 51 was least harassed by hostile artillery although it had received 20 rounds of 90mm tank fire, more than any other position. On the 31st, elements of three companies struck the southwestern trenches and defenses, while a fourth attempted to break through from the north. As it turned out the action here was the least intense of the outpost clashes. After initial heavy fighting the Chinese seemed reluctant to press the assault even though they vastly outnumbered the Korean company deployed at the outpost. In the early morning hours the enemy broke contact and by 0330 had withdrawn from COP 51.

During the night approximately 2,500 rounds of CCF artillery and mortar fire lashed the positions. Korean Marines, aided by friendly artillery, repelled the assault and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Supporting fires included more than 1,200 rounds of HE shells from the KMC 4.2-inch Mortar Company. Chinese casualties were listed as 295 known killed, 461 estimated wounded, and 9 POWs. Korean Marine losses were 50 killed, 86 wounded, and 18 missing.[6] By first light the Korean outposts had thrown back the enemy’s latest well-coordinated attack. This ended the last significant action of October in the 1st Marine Division sector.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
Six Months on the UNC Line[7]

The KMC Regiment's battle in late October marked the end of two months of heavy fighting in the division sector. October had witnessed the most intense combat in more than a year. As the third Korean winter approached outpost clashes and small unit actions along the rest of the UNC frontline began to slacken. During November and December, neither side appeared eager to pursue the offensive. Chinese aggressiveness declined noticeably.

Despite other action initiated by the enemy, the I Corps sector remained the chief Communist target. On 19 November, the British 1st Commonwealth Division successfully withstood what was initially a company-size attempt to capture the Hook. In sharp fighting between 1900 and 0430, Black Watch and reinforcing Canadian units repulsed a determined battalion-strength CCF assault, killing more than 100 Chinese.[8] Marine and I Corps artillery units fired almost continuously throughout the night in support of the Hook defenders. Fighting flared again, briefly, in December in the I Corps sector when Chinese soldiers attempted to overrun outposts on the Imjin River line, but were thrown back by the ROK 1st Division. The enemy then tried to seize key terrain forward of the U.S. 2nd Division, but was again halted.

Elsewhere before the end of the year, the CCF captured one outpost in the IX Corps area, to the right of I Corps, but suffered a telling defeat at the hands of the Ethiopian battalion during an attempt to crack this sector of the U.S. 7th Division line. After a brief fire fight the Chinese were forced to withdraw, leaving 131 CCF dead in the Ethiopian positions. North Korean efforts to seize critical ground in the X and ROK I Corps sectors, at the far eastern end of the EUSAK line, was similarly broken up by the U.S. 40th and ROK 5th Divisions.

By the end of 1952 General Van Fleet had not only revitalized his defenses with recent rotation of frontline units but had also strengthened his line by inserting another division in the critical and long-troublesome Chorwon-Kumhwa sector of IX Corps, on the I Corps right flank. With these changes by late December there were 16 EUSAK divisions on line—11 Korean, 3 U.S. Army, 1 Marine, and 1 British Commonwealth—plus 4 divisions in reserve (1 Korean and 3 U.S. Army). Nearly 75 percent of the UNC line had been entrusted to Republic of Korea units. Their performance was a tribute to growing ROK military proficiency and justified the EUSAK decision to assign to ROK troops a greater role in the Allied ground defense.

The slow pace of infantry action during the last two months of 1952 continued into the new year. Raids by small UNC units highlighted the limited combat during January and February. During the following month the battlefront tempo accelerated, due in part to expanded patrol activities. A number of sharp clashes in No-Man's-Land resulted in several Communist setbacks but led the enemy to make an increased use of ambushes. These traps initially caught the UNC troops by surprise, inflicting heavy casualties on them. But by far the most severe fighting of the new year resulted when the Chinese renewed their fierce outpost and main line of resistance attacks in March.

Again, the western I Corps sector was the major combat area as enemy pressure mounted along the front. This was believed due, in part, to the "growing Chinese sensitivity to the I Corps raids"[9] as well as an attempt by the CCF to regain the initiative as they began to send out larger forces to probe and assault UNC positions. On 17 March, the Chinese launched a battalion-size attack against Hill 355 (Little Gibraltar). This MLR position was defended by elements of the U.S. 2d Infantry Division, on line immediately east of the Marine division, in the sector customarily occupied by the 1st Commonwealth Division. (The Army unit had relieved the British division on 30 January.) A second large-scale assault on the hill that month was also turned back.

On 23 March, a Chinese Communist regiment attempted to capture three outposts manned by the U.S. 7th Division, at the far right of the I Corps line. Hills 225 (Pork Chop Hill) and 191 held. The enemy's main effort was against Hill 266 (Old Baldy), defended by units of the division's Colombian battalion. One attack carried the position, despite company strength reinforcements of the original defenders. Two strong UN counterattacks the next day to retake the outpost failed, and the Chinese retained the crest of Old Baldy. Although the CCF had gained their objective in Hill 266, the battles on the three hillocks had cost the enemy 750 casualties, according to 7th Division records.

In one respect, the nature and extent of ground operations affected the type of air activity over North and South Korea during the winter of 1952–1953. Introduction of PRESSURE strategy, which had embodied the policy of the Far East Air Forces since mid-1952, brought more aircraft in close support of Eighth Army ground troops, a change that pleased the corps commanders. When the heavy outpost fighting throughout October diminished to only occasional skirmishes in November, there was temporarily a decreased need for large numbers of CAS sorties. As a result more planes became available for PRESSURE attacks. These strikes at first appeared to be reverting to the previous STRANGLE strategy since railroads were often the targets. But interdiction of the transportation system was only part of the PRESSURE aerial concept which also called for striking enemy production, repair, and storage facilities. The Allied strategy in conducting its air offensive remained the same: to make the bombing hurt the Communists so that they would end their deliberate delaying tactics in the truce sessions and join the UNC in effecting a Korean settlement.

During the winter FEAF maintained a steady air pressure against the Communists. Major raids were made from time to time, but the number of strategic targets was gradually disappearing due to repeated UNC air attacks. Further, much of the enemy logistical net had gone so deeply underground during the prolonged stalemate that UN bombing and rocket attacks were having only a limited destructive effect. The U.S. B–29s, which had carried the fight to the enemy since the first week of the Korean conflict, found their last worthwhile objectives in stockpiles hidden in North Korean towns and villages. For the Fifth Air Force fighters there was little opportunity to increase their skill in air-to-air combat, since the Communist fliers continued to take evasive action and avoid "dogfights."

Naval aviation contributed importantly to UNC air operations from September 1952 to March 1953. On the first day of this period, three carriers staged the largest all-Navy Korean air strike to date, which simultaneously attacked an oil refinery at Aoji and other targets in the northeastern corner of Korea. Less than two weeks later, two carriers launched another assault in the same part of the country. The significance of these September strikes stemmed from the almost complete lack of enemy response. Apparently the Communists in this area had felt secure and protected, their territory being next to the Chinese border. In fact, their location close to the sanctuary had ruled out bombings proposed earlier. Strikes in this part of Korea were particularly suited to carrier planes of the Seventh Fleet, whose mobile airfields brought the targets within easy striking range along approaches that would not violate the Manchurian haven.

Perhaps the greatest naval contribution to the air war were the Cherokee strikes, so named after the commander of the Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral Joseph J. Clark, because of his Indian ancestry. This new type of deep air support attack, which came into use in October 1952, employed the maxim of mass delivery of ordnance. Usually, targets were immediately behind the enemy MLR but beyond the range of friendly artillery. In May 1952, when the rail interdiction program was being phased out and Admiral Clark's pilots were faced with a decreasing number of prime industrial targets, the fleet commander had theorized that he could most effectually damage the enemy by bombing supply dumps, artillery positions, and reserve forces immediately to the rear of the Chinese MLR. As the admiral reasoned, the enemy could not fight the kind of war he was waging "and still have *all* his forces, supplies, and equipment underground. *Some* of his stocks of supplies had to be above ground, out of sight and out of range of our artillery."[10]

Eighth Army welcomed the increased support that would result from the strikes, but FEAF expressed concern about the lack of top-level coordination. Admiral Clark had proposed that a EUSAK corps commander be allowed to authorize the attacks, which employed 24 to 36 aircraft. The Fifth Air Force initially maintained that it should control Cherokee strikes, just as it did the CAS missions. The matter was finally resolved in November.

Following a high-level conference it was decided that attacks inside the bombline would be subjected to FAF coordination and that a minimal amount of tactical control would be exercised by the corps commander. Eighth Army gave a big assist to the Navy by moving the bombline to within 3,000 meters (nearly two miles) of the outpost line. A line was also drawn approximately 25 miles beyond the bombline, separating the area of "general support" from "interdiction." Thereafter, the Cherokee strikes were effectively conducted against enemy installations outside the 3,000-meter line but within 20,000 meters of the ground front. General Clark, CinCUNC, had high praise for the strikes, which the Seventh Fleet employed until the end of the war.

Surface ships of the fleet were in much the same static warfare situation as the ground and air components of the United Nations Command. Aside from the Kojo demonstration in mid-October, the fleet had little diversification in its daily routine other than to maintain the siege around Wonsan. This operation had started in mid-February 1951 and had grown from the original plan to seize certain strategically-placed islands on both coasts into an attempt to isolate the entire port and city of Wonsan. Each day Allied minesweepers cleared the harbor; at night the enemy sampan fleet resowed the fields. Daily, usually during mine-clearing operations, ships of Task Force 95 fired on batteries in the mountains beyond the city and at other military targets in and around Wonsan. From time to time heavy units of the Seventh Fleet bombarded the area to keep the enemy off-balance and to partially deter the solid buildup of Communist arms and defenses just north of the 39th Parallel.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
Events on the Diplomatic Front[11]

For many of the UNC military personnel, the stalemated combat situation in Korea had become a depressing, no-win daily routine by the end of 1952. Back in the States, the Korean War was not only unpopular and ill-supported, but the slow progress of the conflict had also dulled public interest. In the course of the Presidential election campaign the question of Korea had become increasingly a matter of widespread national concern. Two weeks before election day the Republican candidate, former General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower,[12] had vowed to bring the Korean fighting to an end. As a first step toward accomplishing this he had pledged, if elected, to visit the battlefront.

Some had labeled Eisenhower's statement, "I will go to Korea" as a mere pre-election gesture. The general intended to act on this pledge and, following his election, began a four-day visit to Korea on 2 December 1952. Part of the President-elect's brief tour in Korea was spent at General Pollock's command post. Here, on 3 December, the Marine ground chief briefed his future Commander in Chief on current Marine division operations. Generals Clark, Van Fleet, and Kendall accompanied Eisenhower and his party. This included General of the Army Omar Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as Charles E. Wilson and Herbert Brownell, Jr., the new designates for Secretary of Defense and Attorney General, respectively.

Though General Eisenhower's promise to visit Korea personally to see the situation first-hand and his subsequent election had renewed American hopes for an early peace in Korea, negotiations there had been deadlocked since 1951 on the exchange of prisoners. Disagreement on this issue thus became the major obstacle which was not overcome until the truce was signed nearly 20 months later. The Communists insisted on repatriation to their native land of all NKPA and CCF prisoners held by the United Nations Command. More than 60,000 of the 132,000 enemy captives held by the UNC in South Korean POW camps did not wish to return to Communism, a fact which had been borne out by a UN survey.

To draw attention from this unpopular position the Communists, through the civil and military links existing in the POW camps, had staged a series of riots in the spring of 1952. The worst, at Koje Island (just off the coast of Pusan) lasted six days, largely because the Communist prisoners planned for, and successfully carried out, the capture of the UN camp commander. His release, on 12 May, was effected only after the new commander signed, under duress, a statement which the Communists immediately exploited in an effort to discredit the validity of the prisoner survey.

The propaganda gains had enabled the Communists to occupy a commanding position at the truce talks. In the meantime, the UN had offered several plans until, on 28 April, Admiral Joy presented "what we called our final package proposal.''[13] By instituting the tactic of calling a recess whenever the Communists had nothing constructive to offer, a recommendation of Admiral Joy's, the UN regained the advantage of the conference table. The talks continued but with no appreciable progress. On 8 October 1952, after continued Communist intransigence, Brigadier General William K. Harrison, who had become the senior UN delegate in late May, took the initiative in recessing the truce talks. This unexpected action, which caught the enemy off-guard, followed three separate proposals made by Harrison for ending the POW controversy. All had been promptly rejected by the Communist delegation. As General Harrison had informed one of its spokesmen, the North Korean General Nam Il:

"We are not terminating the armistice negotiations, we are merely recessing them. We are willing to meet with you at any time that you are ready to accept one of our proposals or to make a constructive proposal of your

own, in writing, which could lead to an honorable armistice . . . Since you have offered nothing constructive, we stand in recess."[14]

After October, while the truce negotiations were in a period of indefinite recess, liaison officers at Panmunjom kept the channels of communication open between the Communist and UNC sides. Several developments along other diplomatic lines about this time were to prove more fruitful and lead the way to solution of the POW dispute and, in fact, to the end of the war.

In mid-November, an attempt was made to end the prisoner exchange impasse through a resolution introduced by India at the United Nations session. The compromise measure recognized the United States position, namely, that force should not be used in returning prisoners to their homeland. This principle was to become known as the concept of voluntary repatriation.

To reconcile the widely conflicting Communist and UNC views on handling of prisoners, the Indian proposal suggested that a repatriation commission be established. This body was to be composed of representatives of two Communist and two Allied nations. It would function within a designated demilitarized zone in Korea through which all prisoners would be received and processed. Each prisoner was to be given a choice of being returned to his homeland or not. Both sides would have the opportunity of explaining to reluctant nationals "their rights" of repatriation. If these persuasive efforts failed and a man still chose not to return to his country, he would then be referred to a special political conference established by the armistice agreement.

Should this four-member repatriation commission still not agree on settlement of the nonrepatriates, a final determination was then to be made by an official named by the commission or UN General Assembly. Many UNC nations favored the Indian proposal. U.S. official reaction was frankly skeptical and critical, well aware that the many vague aspects of the proposal could easily be exploited by the Communists to the disadvantage of the individual POW. Despite the promise of a good many headaches in its implementation, the UN adopted the compromise Indian resolution in December 1952 by a vote of 54 to 5.

Later that same month the Executive Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies, meeting in Geneva, adopted another feature of the Indian resolution proposing an exchange of sick and wounded POWs in advance of a truce. As General Clark observed, "It was hardly an auspicious omen for an armistice, yet it was the action which set in motion a chain of events which finally resulted in cease-fire.''[15]

On another front, State Department officials advised the Joint Chiefs of Staff that a resolution similar to that of the Red Cross would probably be introduced when the UN reconvened on 24 February. Following a JCS suggestion that a "feeler" proposition be first made to the Communists, General Clark wrote the NKPA and CCF leaders on 22 February. His letter was addressed to North Korean Premier Kim Il Sung and General Peng Teh-huai, the CCF military commander. Delivered through the Panmunjom liaison officers, it requested the immediate exchange of sick and wounded POWs. As both diplomatic and military leaders doubtfully awaited the results, a totally unexpected and far-reaching event, the death of the Russian leader, Premier Joseph Stalin, jolted the Communist world. Its repercussions soon extended to the truce tent at Panmunjom and decisively affected the progress of negotiations there.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
The Marine Commands During the Third Winter[16]

Although renewed negotiations to bring the war to a close were under way with the enemy in late 1952 and early 1953, action on the battlefield continued the tedious routine of the war. An exception to the general lethargy across the front occurred on 22 November in the right regimental sector. A predawn raid was conducted by the 1st Marines, which had advanced to the front upon relief of the 7th Marines after their battle of the Hook. With the left and right battalion sectors manned by 1/1 and 3/1, respectively, Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Warren's 2/1, in regimental reserve, had been ordered to provide a company to raid Chinese positions across from COPs Reno and Vegas. Drawing the assignment was Company D (Captain Jay V. Poage).

Code-named WAKEUP, the raid was conducted in a manner typical of many earlier forays against Chinese strongpoints. Its results, too, in most respects were similar to the outcome of previous raids. Artillery preparation of the objective area was accomplished, the infantry assaults were somewhat short of the targets due to heavy CCF defensive fires, and the prisoner-taking part of the mission was unfulfilled. Counterbalancing this, and what made the raid of value to the regiment, was the information gained about enemy defenses and Chinese reaction to the raid. It was one of the rare occasions during which the CCF did not employ artillery fire while their positions were under attack, using instead mortars and automatic weapons against Marine assault forces.

Raids such as WAKEUP, patrols, and ambushes became the pattern of action in late November and in December. Earlier in November some changes in the MLR dispositions had taken place. On 3 November, at 2345, the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch, 29th Infantry Brigade, 1st Commonwealth Division, had relieved 1/7 of the Hook sector responsibility, ending Marine occupation of that part of JAMESTOWN.[17] And, on 16 November, the 7th Marines itself had been replaced in line by the 1st Marines. In between these changes of command on the frontlines, Generals Pollock and Jerome had received many congratulations and well wishes from combat commands and from government officials in the States. The occasion was the 177th birthday of the Marine Corps. Both of these senior commanders passed on to their Marines not only the Commandant's Anniversary message but also the congratulations of the UNC commander, General Clark.

Though the Commonwealth division had taken over the Hook area from the infantry Marines, the division's participation in defense of the British sector had not completely ended. On 18–19 November, the 11th Marines expended more than 2,000 rounds to repel Chinese attacks on the Hook. This firing by the artillery regiment helped to repay the British for their "cooperation and outstanding artillery and tank support during the engagements of 26–28 October. . . ."[18] And as the Commonwealth division commander, Major General M. M. Austin-Roberts-West, had himself reported to General Pollock the day following the Hook attack, "All hands on the Hook much appreciated the prompt and effective support given last night. Grateful if you would pass on their thanks to all concerned.''[19]

Throughout December 1952 and January 1953, the lull in ground fighting continued. Mass Cherokee strikes by Admiral Clark's Navy and Marine fliers had begun for the Marine division on 17 December, when the bombline was moved in nearer to the MLR for expanded operations. In noncombat activities, later that month Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York and Vicar for Catholic Chaplains of the Armed Forces, conducted a Christmas Mass at the division CP. On the 31st, His Eminence visited the 1st MAW at K–3 (Pohang). There he delivered an address to about 1,000 Marines, shook hands with nearly all of them, and later heard confessions for many. Another special guest, not long afterward, was Episcopal Bishop Austin Pardue, of the Pittsburgh Diocese, who held Holy Communion at the division chapel.

The passing of 1952 and the arrival of the new year was not marked by any special observance on the battlefield. For that matter there was, it seemed, no change to note; the Marines, like the rest of the Eighth Army troops, maintained much the same regular, reduced, wintertime schedule. Activity of Marine infantry units consisted of aggressive patrolling and raids, and improvement of the secondary defenses of Lines WYOMING and KANSAS. Units in division reserve, during January, also participated in MARLEX (Marine Landing Exercise) operations.

No major ground action had taken place in December, although Marine patrols, on a half dozen occasions, had engaged as many as 50 enemy for brief clashes and fire fights. January was a different story, however. On 8 January, a 7th Marines raiding party, reinforced by air, artillery, and tank support, skirmished with 85 Chinese in the Hill 134 area not far from COP 2, overlooking Panmunjom. Ten days later, the 1st and 7th Marines, together with the artillery regiment, took part in Operation BIMBO. This was another attempt, by combined infantry-artillery-tank-air action, to create the impression that CCF objective areas were under attack.

BIMBO began with heavy preparatory fires by the 11th Marines, including the 155mm projectiles hurled by 4/11, that inflicted early damage to CCF personnel and materiel. At 0630, on 18 January, frontline battalions of the two participating infantry regiments opened fire; reserve battalions assisted with indirect machine gun fire. Armored vehicles added to the effect of the ruse by shelling Chinese emplacements from prepared MLR positions. Marine attack planes streaked in to unload flaming napalm. In response to the BIMBO mock attack, the Chinese directed mortar fire into suspected Marine avenues of approach and assembly areas. Forward observers on JAMESTOWN could detect some enemy troop movement. (Marine artillery took these formations under intensive fire), but as in similar feint operations in the past, the enemy again failed to pick up the bait. The operation lasted approximately an hour and a half.

During the winter months, a number of command changes had occurred in the Marines' combat organizations in Korea. In the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, the rotation of commanders began at the very top when, on 8 January, General Jerome handed over the wing colors to Major General Vernon E. Megee. During a ceremony at wing headquarters that day, Air Force Generals Weyland and Barcus paid tribute to General Jerome's "exceptionally meritorious service" as 1st MAW CG since April 1952 by presenting him with the Distinguished Service Medal.

The incoming wing commander, General Megee, had been a Marine flyer for 20 years, having received his wings in 1932. His Marine Corps career began more than a decade earlier, with enlistment in 1919. Commissioned in 1922, he served in infantry, artillery, and expeditionary billets before undergoing pilot training in 1931. Following school, staff, and command assignments, Major Megee was named advisor to the Peruvian Minister of Aviation from 1940–1943. During World War II, Colonel Megee was sent overseas as 3d MAW Chief of Staff in early 1944. As Commander, Control Unit One, he participated in the Iwo Jima campaign, earning the Legion of Merit. Later, at Okinawa, he commanded all Marine Corps Landing Force Air Support Control Units. After promotion to brigadier general in 1949, General Megee was named Chief of Staff, FMFLant. Receiving his second star in 1951, he served as Commanding General at Cherry Point, El Toro, and Air FMFPac prior to his assignment in Korea.[20]

Within the wing and the division, every one of the top commands experienced changes of commanding officers in late 1952 and early 1953:

1st Marines—Colonel Hewitt D. Adams took over from Colonel Layer on 21 November;

5th Marines—Colonel Lewis W. Walt relieved Colonel Smoak on 10 December;

7th Marines—Colonel Loren E. Haffner took command from Colonel Moore on 5 November;

11th Marines—Colonel James E. Mills vice Colonel Sea on 22 February;

MACG–2—Colonel Kenneth D. Kerby relieved Colonel Jack R. Cram on 16 February;

MAG–12—Colonel George S. Bowman, Jr. vice Colonel Condon on 13 January;

MAG–33—Colonel Louis B. Robertshaw succeeded Colonel Herbert Williamson on 22 October.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
1st MAW Operations 1952-1953[21]

The heavy ground fighting across the Eighth Army front in October 1952 had drawn heavily upon units of the 1st MAW. That month Marine pilots logged their greatest number of sorties—3,897—since June 1951.[22] As a result of the intense infantry action in the 1st Marine Division sector another air record was established—365 casualty evacuations by HMR–161 during October. This was a peak number to that time for the helicopter transport squadron for which med evac was a secondary mission. These "mercy missions" were not limited only to wounded Marine infantrymen or downed aviators.

Whenever and wherever immediate air rescue was needed, the choppers were sent. In July 1952, HMR–161 evacuated "650 Army and Air Force troops as well as 150 Koreans"[23] from a flooded river island. On the night of 18 January 1953, a helicopter retrieved five Marines from an uncharted minefield after one of the group had accidentally stepped on a mine. On 13 March, HMR–161 sent three helicopters aloft in an attempt to save five men from the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion who had become trapped in mud near the edge of the Imjin, and later that month the squadron dispatched a chopper to rescue a hunter marooned in the middle of the Han River.

Almost obscured in the magnificent record of the mercy missions, especially the hazardous casualty evacuations by the VMO–6 pilots, were the problems encountered by the observation and helicopter squadrons. Under operational control of the division and administrative control of the wing, the squadrons found themselves exposed to overlapping command authority which sometimes resulted in conflicting directives from higher headquarters. Some squadron personnel felt that establishment of a helicopter group under the 1st MAW might have solved many of the organizational problems, but such a unit was never established in Korea, partly because only one helicopter squadron (plus half of the observation squadron) existed.

Another organizational difficulty beset VMO–6. With two types of aircraft and two unrelated missions (med evac for the HTL and HO5S copters; observation and artillery spotting for its little OYs and, later, OE–1s), the squadron found supply and maintenance problems doubled and operational control of its rotary and fixed wing sections extremely complex. Attachment of the VMO–6 choppers (for evacuation, administrative, and liaison missions) to HMR–161 was suggested as a possible solution to these difficulties, but was never done.

Other problem areas became apparent during the winter of 1952–1953. Accompanying the freezing weather were difficulties in starting and, for a brief time, in flying the helicopters. In order to overcome the engine starting problem on emergency evacuation missions, HMR–161 preheated its number one standby aircraft every two hours during the extreme cold. Dilution of engine oil with gasoline and use of warming huts (the latter, a scarcity) were also employed to cut down cold weather starting time.

Not related to freezing Korean temperatures were two additional problems, one navigational and the other mechanical. In January, the helicopter squadron put into use a jeep-mounted homing device for operations in reduced visibility. It proved unsatisfactory due to interference from other radio transmitters in the area, a difficulty never resolved during the rest of the war. The mechanical problem lay with the rotary winged aircraft in HMR–161. On 27 March, all of its HRS–2 choppers with more than 200 hours on the main rotor blades were grounded. Discovery in the States that minute .002-inch cuts on the blade surface had occurred during fabrication resulted in the grounding. New blades were promptly flown to Korea from both Japan and the United States, and the squadron again became fully operational on 2 April.

Evaluation of transport helicopter techniques continued during the period despite ever-present minor difficulties. At least one new HMR–161 tactical maneuver was scheduled each month to evaluate existing

procedures and determine full operational capabilities of the aircraft. During these landing exercises both the infantry and helicopter commanders and their staffs had the opportunity to further develop vertical envelopment techniques that would soon be the new trademark of U.S. Marine Corps operations.

Most of the time HMR–161 operations drew more attention than those of VMO–6, but pilots in the latter unit had a host of division Marines who could attest to the skills and critical role performed by helicopter fliers in the composite observation squadron. VMO–6 had pioneered the night casualty evacuation service, and during the active fighting in Korea, had flown out more than 1,000 Marines from frontline medical facilities to better-equipped ones in the rear areas. These flights were made in all kinds of weather and without the benefit of adequate instrumentation or a homing device. No other Eighth Army helicopter unit made regularly scheduled night front-line evacuations.[24]

The courage of these VMO–6 pilots was recalled nearly 15 years later by a former executive officer of the 1st Marines:

"The flying of the evacuation helicopters from the jury-rigged and inadequate landing sites was nothing short of miraculous. I've always contended those pilots of the observation squadron received far less credit than they deserved. They used to fly at night, to frontline landing strips, where I had difficulty walking without barking my shins."[25]

During the latter part of 1952 and the first months of 1953, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing command relationships underwent a significant change. On 26 January 1953, General Megee forwarded a memorandum request to General Barcus. The paper outlined specific recommendations for restoring 1st MAW tactical elements to wing operational control, even though the Marine wing would continue as a tactical component of Fifth Air Force. In the proposal, CG, 1st MAW pointed out (as had his predecessors) that the existing command structure, in effect, completely bypassed the Marine wing commander. It had prevented him from exercising normal tactical command functions, even though he was fully responsible for the performance of his air groups and squadrons to FEAF/FAF orders. The 1st MAW commander's proposal was intended to counter previous Air Force objections and demonstrate that more normal command relations would "enhance, rather than reduce [1st MAW] operational efficiency and effectiveness."[26]

At the same time, having been informally advised in an earlier conversation that CG, FAF would approve at least some of the requests made, General Megee implemented changes in his G–2 and G–3 staff sections. This reorganization was aimed at carrying out the increased functions which would result from approval of the request. Operational control of Marine tactical squadrons by FAF since 1951 had "relegated 1st MAW to the status of an administrative headquarters, forcing its G–2 and G–3 sections partially to atrophy."[27] To effect the changes in command relationships and establish the wing on an operational basis, the G–2 and G–3 sections were expanded. By the nature of their organization these were not capable of either targeting or tactical planning. In the intelligence section, a Target Information Sub-section was established to compile data on the mission targets (and accompanying photographs) received from FAF and to evaluate the desired objectives.

Upon receipt of this information, the G–3 planning group accomplished the target solution, prepared general tactics for conducting the strike, (number of planes, amount and kind of ordnance, approach routes to be used) and provided post-strike target evaluation. The chiefs of these sections jointly presented the completed information to the wing commander each afternoon. He selected the targets and forwarded via teletype and air courier to the wing G–3 representative at FAF headquarters a report of intended operations, providing a lead time of 36–48 hours.

As soon as the OP INTENT (Operations Intentions Report) was on its way to General Barcus for approval, the 1st MAW intelligence section began to prepare the target dossiers (including photographs, flak analysis, and related identification information) on each of the approved targets. The compiled dossiers were then sent to the appropriate tactical squadron. At this point, still perhaps a half-day before issuance of the FAF orders,

the squadrons received two major advantages over the previous system:

(1) Adequate photo intelligence employed for the first time since FAF had assumed operational control of 1st MAW; and

(2) A substantial lead time advantage for proper briefing of pilots and arming of aircraft.

After the strike, and usually within an hour, Marine planes photographed the targets for damage assessment. These photos were annotated and an assessment report prepared. This information was then presented by the G–2 and G–3 to the wing commander. Immediately thereafter, prints of the photographs were distributed to the appropriate tactical units, thus making post-strike photography more freely available on a regular basis to the participating tactical units.

"In a letter dated 18 February, General Barcus approved most of the 1st MAW commander's specific requests, but retained full control over General Megee's squadrons used in close air support. This was due to the fact that EUSAK–FAF joint policy required CAS mission requests to be approved by JOC, in accordance with daily Eighth Army priorities, which allocated the aircraft for each request. Returned to operational control of the Marine wing were planes used on interdiction, armed reconnaissance and general support activities—the planes on strikes beyond the bombline, the photo, and all-weather (night) squadrons. FAF also retained control over assignment of missions to VMC–1, the electronics unit.

Although some of the Marine wing tactical squadrons thus newly enjoyed the advantages of flying under their own commander's wings, 1st MAW headquarters staff members had to pay for these benefits. An increased work load swamped the G–2 section, where 7 photo interpreters were kept busy 16 hours a day, 7 days a week. Marine personnel processed and reviewed an average of 100,000 prints per month and these were "only those from that portion of the VMJ–1 effort devoted to 1st MAW operations."[28] Expansion of 1st MAW headquarters to set up a tactical planning capability pointed to a deficiency in the wing organization T/O, a weakness that existed during the rest of the war.

While General Barcus earlier had General Megee's recommendations under study, a radio news broadcast back in the States momentarily resulted in poor publicity for the Marine Corps. On 1 February a nationally syndicated columnist reported instances in which friendly troops had been bombed and strafed by U.S. aircraft. Marine Corps planes were the most careless, the broadcaster alleged, basing his statement on incomplete information. The news story had developed from an unfortunate publicity release issued by FEAF dealing with a MAG–33 incident. The phrasing implied that Marine aviators were "guilty of gross carelessness resulting in casualties among their own ground troops."[29]

Actually, of the 63 incidents in which friendly casualties had resulted from aircraft flown by FAF units between January and October 1952, 1st MAW pilots were responsible for 18, or 28.5 percent of the total number of incidents and majority of casualties. What was left unsaid, however, in the unfavorable publicity was that with approximately 14.5 percent of the aircraft represented in FEAF, Marine fliers had been accomplishing monthly totals of between 30 to 40 percent of all Eighth Army CAS missions. They also performed virtually all of the very close air support jobs (50 to 100 yards out from the MLR) which further reduced the comparative percentage of Marine "carelessness."

It was true, of course, that on rare occasions freak accidents did kill and injure UN troops, despite the continual training of pilots and controllers in strike procedures and target identification. The position taken by the two senior Marine commanders in Korea was that although any CAS incident involving friendly troops was highly regrettable, it was in the same category as "short" mortar and artillery rounds and just as unavoidable.

Target identification, low visibility flying conditions, and ballistic computations made the task of precision close air support an enormous one. If anything, it was almost a wonder that more accidents did not happen. Despite the similarity of Korean geography, an unending panorama of almost identical hilltops, ridges, and streams, the pilot had to release ordnance at the proper altitude and speed, and in a balanced (trim) flight.

While conducting his dive the pilot's view could be blocked by cloud formations and his attention distracted by antiaircraft fire which required evasive action. Even when the ordnance had been properly released, prevailing wind conditions could affect the flight path of the bombs. This, in addition to human error and mechanical factors, such as the occasional malfunctioning of parts, also affected the accuracy of bombing.

Throughout the November 1952–March 1953 period, 1st MAW squadrons continued to provide the bulk of close air sorties to the 1st Marine Division, in keeping with General Barcus' policy stated earlier in 1952. Between November and January there had been a lull in the heavy ground fighting that had prevailed in October and little need to request air strikes. When enemy forces opposing the division began to grow more active in February, however, the requirement for air support to 1st MarDiv greatly increased. During this month 1st MAW aviators reached an all-time high in the percentage of their total CAS sorties devoted to the division—two of every three wing close support sorties went to General Pollock's infantry regiments.

On the critical issue of close air support, the Marine division had become better satisfied by the end of 1952 with the quantity of air support received from FAF. A continuing difficulty, however, was the delayed response to requests for immediate CAS. For the wing, several other conditions existed which bothered General Megee. One was that the VMA–312 carrier-based squadron was not utilized to any great extent in execution of CAS missions. This detrimental condition saddled the wing commander with an "unqualified" squadron. It also prevented pilots from practicing a highly developed skill they were responsible for maintaining, although later in the war this condition was gradually alleviated. Two other difficulties—centralized control of CAS mission assignments by JOC and the prevailing differences between the Marine and Air Force/Army CAS communications systems and request procedures—were never rectified.[30]

One long-standing difficulty, though not a CAS matter, had been solved early in the winter. Following a series of mechanical troubles with the F3D–2 aircraft in VMF(N)–513 and prolonged delay in receipt of blast tube extensions for its 20mm guns, the squadron finally became fully operational on 1 November with its complement of 12 of the new jet Skyknight aircraft. Almost as soon as the F3D–2s were ready for night work, FEAF had put them to escorting B–29s on bombing runs over North Korea. With the F3D escort and changes in B–29 tactics, bomber losses, which had been severe, decreased sharply. Enemy attackers became fewer and fewer so that by February, air-to-air opposition was encountered only infrequently. Instead of sending up groups of night fighters at the escorted B–29s, the enemy would fly a single jet across the bomber formation. If a Skyknight followed, one or two MIG–15s, well to the rear and higher than the decoy, would attempt to gun down the Skyknight in its pursuit. But because of the F3D tail warning radar, the Marine radar operator could detect the enemy plane in its approach for the kill before it got within effective firing range.

Lieutenant Colonel Hutchinson's VMF(N)–513 pilots soon established an enviable record for Marine aviation, netting by 31 January five enemy jets without loss of a single F3D. In addition to the jets, the squadron downed a piston engine plane and scored a probable destruct on another. During its first three months of operations with the Douglas Skyknights—the first Navy-Marine jet night-fighter to arrive in the Korean combat theater—the squadron earned two night-kill records. It also quickly proved the design theory and proposed tactics for the Skyknights that enemy aircraft could be located, intercepted, and destroyed purely by electronic means.

While on a night combat air patrol in the vicinity of Sinuiju airfield early on 3 November, Master Sergeant H. C. Hoglind picked up a contact on his intercept radar, which a ground radar station had passed on to him, and notified the pilot, Major William T. Stratton, Jr. After losing and re–establishing radar contact, Major Stratton made a visual sighting of a jet exhaust straight ahead. When he had been cleared to proceed, the Flying Nightmare's pilot sent three bursts of 20mm into the other plane, identified as a YAK–15. Three explosions followed and the aircraft plunged towards the airfield directly below. This marked the first time that an enemy jet had been destroyed at night by use of airborne intercept radar equipment in a jet fighter.

Five days later the team of Captain Oliver R. Davis and Warrant Officer Dramus F. Fessler bagged the

first MIG–15 for the squadron. Captain Davis expended only 20 rounds of 20mm cannon fire in his aerial victory, which took place northwest of Pyongyang near the Yellow Sea.

The next two months brought new distinction to Marines in –513. Shortly after dark on 10 December, First Lieutenant Joseph A. Corvi had departed on a night combat patrol mission. About 35 miles northwest of Chinnampo, his radar operator, Master Sergeant D. R. George, picked up a target on his scope. Since the "bogey" (an unidentified aircraft, believed to be hostile) was three miles distant, the pilot quickly closed on the contact and shot it down. Almost immediately another blip appeared on the radar screen. Lieutenant Corvi turned to the new attack and began approaching it, but because of the slower speed of the enemy plane the Marine pilot was able to fire only one short burst before overtaking it. An instant before passing the enemy aircraft, Lieutenant Corvi saw it disappear from the radar screen, but neither member of the Flying Nightmares crew had made a visual sighting with the plane itself, listed as a probable kill. What these two Marines had accomplished with their earlier encounter was the first attempt to destroy an enemy aircraft without use of a visual sighting by means of lock-on radar gear.

All-weather squadron crews continued to demonstrate the F3D–2 capability for destruction of hostile aircraft by electronic intercept during January. The first MIG–15 downed was by Major Elswin P. (Jack) Dunn and Master Sergeant Lawrence J. Fortin, his radar operator. On 28 January Captain James R. Weaver and Master Sergeant Robert P. Becker destroyed another of the Russian fighter-interceptors in an aerial duel. The final kill came on the 31st when the new squadron commander, Lieutenant Colonel Robert F. Conley (who had taken over VMF(N)–513 on the 20th) accompanied by Master Sergeant James M. Scott bagged the Marine fighter pilots' 12th MIG of the war.

While VMF(N)–513 wrote several records in the sky, other MAG–33 and –12 squadrons also made their contribution during the winter of 1952–1953. In MAG–12, a highly successful noontime strike was launched on 16 November by 21 attack planes from VMAs–121 and –212 against a hydroelectric plant 25 miles southeast of Wonsan. For this exploit the group received the plaudits of the Fifth Air Force CG, General Barcus. Lieutenant Colonel John B. Maas, Jr.'s VMF–115 (he had succeeded Lieutenant Colonel Coln as CO on 29 September) helped all Marines celebrate their 177th birthday by sending 22 Panthers against enemy troops and supply shelters. On these strikes each MAG–33 aircraft was armed with 760 rounds of 20mm and 4 napalm tanks (500 pounds each), the first time that 4 tanks that large had been dropped from a fighter-bomber. This was part of the 98 sorties flown by 1st MAW against 21 enemy targets on the 10 November anniversary date. During December 1952, the frequency of combat flights by VMF–115 enabled the squadron to surpass its old (August 1951) monthly sortie record. The Panther jet fliers set this new mark of 726 effective sorties in the last 31 days of the year.

More honors came to wing pilots in the new year. On 8 January, three MAG–12 squadrons flew more than 28 combat sorties. Some, in support of the 1st Marine Division near the Panmunjom corridor, by VMAs–121, –212, and –323, produced outstanding results, earning the praise of General Pollock. Among the participating pilots was Lieutenant Colonel Barnett Robinson (VMA–212), who a week earlier had taken command of the squadron from Lieutenant Colonel Dobson.

Between 9–14 January, MAG–33 participated in a USAF–USMC joint operation to strike the rail system at Sinanju, 45 miles north of the enemy capital, and at Yongmi-dong, to the northwest across both the Chongchon and Taedong Rivers. During the six-day Operation PARALYSIS, Marine and Air Force jet squadrons flew flak suppression and interdiction missions, knocking out ground-based air defense weapons and damaging and destroying bridges, rails, and rolling stock. At night FEAF Bomber Command, with Flying Nightmare escorts, worked over the communications net, including repair facilities; during daylight, the fighter-bombers attacked marshalling yards near Sinanju, where railroad cars were stacked up awaiting repair of the river bridges. Bomb assessments and intelligence reports showed that two major rail lines were inoperative for 16 days and that, as

General Barcus had predicted, the Chinese “hurriedly increased their antiaircraft defenses in the Chongchon estuary and shot down seven fighter-bombers.”[31]

Following this operation, Colonel Robertshaw’s jets from VMFs–115 and –311 achieved extremely effective close air support in strikes flown 24 January in the I Corps area. About a month later, with an F9F as an airborne command post and with Lieutenant Colonel Walt Bartosh on his wing, the MAG–33 commander directed the operations of 208 USAF and Marine aircraft on another mass strike. The two-day mission was flown on 18–19 February against the North Korean tank and infantry school southwest of Pyongyang. More than 240 buildings were destroyed in 379 sorties. The attack was one of the largest all-jet fighter-bomber strikes of the war. Colonel Robertshaw thereby became the first Marine to lead such a large joint air-strike force from a CP aloft. And the next month, on 8 March, the Group CO flew the first Marine jet night MPQ mission, dropping six 250-pound bombs from an F9F–2 Panther on an enemy ammunition dump.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
Behind the Lines[32]

The Marine aviation command, like the division, found that its commitment to a large-scale land campaign in Korea considerably increased its requirements for nonorganic support, compared with normal amphibious combat operations. The wing fell heir to more of the permanent problems because its organization was less suited to the heavy support requirements of prolonged combat. Whereas the 1st Marine Division received adequate support through the FMFPac Service Command, the wing did not since the service command had been tailored more for support of ground organizations. Moreover, the command relations established in Korea underscored this situation, with the 1st Combat Service Group placed under CG, 1st Marine Division. The wing received emergency logistical support from VMR (Marine transport squadron) units. This was not an adequate substitute for the various ground support agencies essential for employment of the wing's full combat potential.

Major problems pertaining to service and support functions of 1st MAW units resulted from the use of amphibious Tables of Organization throughout the period of prolonged land combat without making a T/O adjustment for the actual combat mission being performed. What the wing had recommended to solve its longstanding support and supply problems was either to strengthen its organic logistical structure or to increase it by the attachment of appropriate units. It was emphasized that "prolonged Wing operations under Air Force control with logistical support derived from four different services, each at the end of its supply pipeline, brought clearly into focus the requirement for centralized control and monitoring of Wing requisitions and supplies."[33]

A step toward expanding the amphibious T/O of the wing was made in 1953 with the request from CG, 1st MAW to CG, FMFPac for a detachment of the 1st Combat Service Group to provide electronics logistical support. It was further recommended that the electronics section be made organic to the wing to meet its need for this type of service unit.

Unlike the division, existing T/Os made it impossible for the wing to consolidate and control resupply requests from subordinate units and then to monitor the requisitions until parts or supplies were received by the users. This lack of a central wing supply agency had, for some time, impaired the effective, sustained performance of 1st MAW ground electronics equipment in Korea. CG, FMFPac concurred with the proposal. He requested an increase in the wing T/O of four additional electronics supply personnel to be attached to the wing for this purpose. The basic problem of establishment of a combat service group tailored to fully meet 1st MAW needs in the field remained unresolved, however.

Supply problems in the division were less complicated. On 11 November 1952, General Pollock submitted a letter to the theater commander requesting approval of a special list of equipment in excess of certain Tables of Organization and Equipment within the division. The requirements of the Marine land war mission in Korea dictated the need for additional equipment, primarily crew-served weapons and automatic rifles. Approval was given on 19 January 1953 by CG, AFFE (Army Forces, Far East). All equipment received through this program was to be returned upon the departure of the Marine division from Korea.

During the cold months that ended in March 1953, the division continued its evaluation of experimental clothing and equipment. Items of winter wear generally proved to be highly satisfactory. The thermal boot, in particular, gave excellent service. On the other hand, the leather combat boot did not fully measure up to expectations. Most of its deficiencies were caused by the rapid wearing of the composition sole. One clothing item, the armored vest, had undergone further testing. In November, delivery of the vests to the division had been completed, including 400 sets of the new lower torso armor. Recent issue of this additional type of body armor

appeared highly effective in reducing combat casualties; its extended coverage also raised morale.

Though their ability to halt successfully a Chinese bullet or exploding shell was being improved on, thanks to armored wear, the Marines' opportunity to keep the enemy from division outposts or MLR areas was still being hampered by occasional ammunition shortages. From time to time during the winter months there was some relief from the grenade and howitzer firing restrictions that had been in effect before the Hook fighting. The cutback on use of 81mm mortar shells continued, however, as the supply level of these projectiles remained dangerously low.

A new shortage, this one in fuel, developed during the winter. In January 1953 it became necessary to reduce the distribution of gasoline for motor vehicles to .829 gallons per man per day, a drop of 17 percent from the previous month's allocation. Diesel fuel was cut back to 1.41 gallons, or 7 percent less than the December ration. By February, however, the crisis had passed and vehicles returned to a less restricted operating schedule. No extreme hardship had been experienced by the Marines during the fuel drought. It was considered that "prolonged operation under such restrictions would result in a marked decrease in efficiency since many essential activities may be temporarily postponed, although not entirely eliminated."[34]

The month of February also witnessed the largest helicopter supply lift in Korea. HAYLIFT I, the previous September, had tested the feasibility of transporting Class I, III, and V supplies to a frontline infantry regiment for five consecutive days. HMR–161 and the 7th Marines had turned out an excellent test performance of the rotary craft in this logistical operation. It then became the task for the infantry and helicopters to run a resupply operation for two frontline regiments for a five-day period. HAYLIFT II, conducted 23–27 February, was the code name for this test.

Both the planning and execution of the February operation followed the general pattern of HAYLIFT I, but on a much larger scale. As in September, division ordnance and service battalions moved the supplies to helicopter loading zones near Lieutenant Colonel Carey's HMR–161 air strip. It had been estimated that 130 tons each day would have to be lifted to supply the two MLR regiments, the 7th and 5th Marines. On the first day, this figure was exceeded by 30 tons. A request by A/1/5 on 24 February for support during an emergency operation necessitated additional ammunition[35] and helicopters to be diverted from those resupplying the 7th Marines. By the third day, a backlog of supplies had accumulated in the loading areas. In order to eliminate this buildup and to replace ammunition expended that morning by 1/5, HMR–161 on 25 February transported 200 tons in a single day, thereby establishing a new record. This represented 392 lifts made in 138.4 hours flying time. Maximum time for unloading a chopper was 54 seconds; the minimum, 28 seconds.

The last two days of HAYLIFT II, although less eventful, contributed to a resupply tonnage record five times greater than that set by HAYLIFT I. On the last day, when fog grounded their aircraft for a second time during the morning, Marines were again reminded of an operational limitation of the helicopters. In the end, though, the accomplishments far out-weighed this shortcoming. During the five days, a total of 1,612,406 pounds of supplies had been lifted to the two frontline regiments. Not one crewman or helicopter was lost. The operation contributed significantly to the February record for the greatest number of combat hours (765), total hours (1,275.5), combat flights (575), and total flights (1,183) flown by HMR–161 for any one-month period during the Korean fighting. For the rest of the war, the February 1953 gross lift of 2,018,120 pounds would also rank as the largest amount transported by HMR–161 for a single month.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare

The Quiet Sectors[36]

Two frontline units in the division MLR seldom became involved in setting records or bitter contests with the enemy, even though they carried out important roles in the sector defense. These were the Kimpo Provisional Regiment and 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion, both located on the left flank of the Marine line. The Kimpo Provisional Regiment had been organized as a component of the 1st Marine Division a week after its arrival in the west, specifically for defending that vital sector at the extreme left of the UNC line. The next month the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion had been assigned part of Line KANSAS between the KPR and KMC sectors.

Because it was set apart from the Korean mainland on the north and east by the Han River,[37] Kimpo Peninsula afforded little opportunity for its occupants to engage the enemy directly in infantry clashes. Artillery thus became the normal medium for carrying on the limited hostilities as they existed in this sector between the Communists and UNC opponents. Hostile forces opposing the KPR were deployed in company-sized strongpoints across the river, occupying numerous fortified heights on the north bank of the Han estuary. Enemy strength[38] was estimated to be 7 infantry companies, supported by 7 artillery batteries and 40 mortar positions. Sporadic mortar and artillery rounds fell in the sector, with little harm. Occasionally, enemy counterbattery fire caused minor damage to the LVTs of the command. During 1952, the first year of the existence of the Kimpo regiment, 15 June had stood as the record day for the number of enemy artillery rounds received. Between 1900-2100 a total of 588 shells had fallen in the sector.

As part of its normal defense mission, personnel of the regiment spent a large part of their time controlling civilians and regulating traffic, especially water travel. Certain counterintelligence problems confronted the Kimpo Provisional Regiment. A large civilian population, numbering nearly 80,000 natives, lived within the regimental sector. Local restrictions set by the National Police on Kimpo (who cooperated with the KPR in security matters) included the STAYBACK LINE to the north of the peninsula. As a rule, no civilians other than those with daytime farming permits, were allowed beyond this line. Numerous regulations were also issued to control boat traffic. Surrounded by rivers on three sides, there was ample opportunity for enemy agents or line crossers to infiltrate the defense line, despite continuous screening by friendly outposts and waterborne patrols.

Two months after the “heavy” June shelling came the August floods, which were more destructive than the artillery had been. The rest of the summer and fall followed a fairly regular, uneventful pattern with customary defense duties, rotation of frontline units, and training exercises. Among the latter were four helicopter demonstrations in October and a five-hour communication CPX (Command Post Exercise) the following month.

One episode toward the end of the year created a temporary stir in the daily routine. In late November, two Communist espionage agents and their North Korean guides were apprehended on the west bank of the Han, almost directly east of the Kimpo Airfield. They had crossed the Imjin-Han Rivers by boat, using this normal infiltration route to penetrate the Marine defense net. The agents were seized by National Police on 22 November and their North Korean guides two days later. It was unusual for agents and guides to be captured so closely together. Normal defense measures of the peninsula had assigned separate northern, western, and southern sector units for protection against possible amphibious or overland attacks or—far more likely—enemy infiltration.

The following month four more “roving” two-man outposts were established in the western coastal area of the southern sector. Manned from sunset to 30 minutes after sunrise daily by either KPR military personnel or

National Police, the outposts occupied different positions each night. They were responsible for checking for proper identification and enforcing the rigid 2100–0500 curfew hours. Another unusual occurrence took place the last four nights of December when a single-engine light aircraft dropped propaganda leaflets in Colonel Harvey C. Tschirgi's[39] sector.

Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Dobervich, the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion (minus Company A at KPR, and Company B at Pohang), reinforced by the Division Reconnaissance Company, had manned positions on the KANSAS line since April 1952. By the end of May, the battalion had inserted an additional unit, a provisional company,[40] in the KANSAS secondary defense line. In July, the amtrac company relieved the reconnaissance company on line, the latter then becoming part of Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division. All amphibian tractor battalion units assigned to ground defense missions received special refresher training in infantry operations, including the employment of forward observers.

During the first summer in the west, the mainland-based amphibian organization continued its KANSAS defense mission. The battalion also instituted a training program for patrolling the Han River by tractor. (Company A, attached to the KPR, had conducted water-borne patrols of the Yom since June. The unit also manned outposts along that river.) Headquarters and Service Company assisted the U.S. Army in laying a signal cable across the river during August, the same month Lieutenant Colonel Dobervich relinquished unit command to Lieutenant Colonel Edwin B. Wheeler. In late August the battalion sent 58 of its members to help augment 1st Marines ranks, thinned by the fierce Bunker Hill fighting.

Through the end of 1952, the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion continued its KANSAS mission. Although the sector had witnessed relatively little action for some months, several incidents about this time varied the generally quiet daily routine. In October, Company B (Major Charles W. Fitzmaurice) sent out an amphibious patrol to capture prisoners (Operation CAT WHISKER). The plan was to cross the Han in a rubber boat and set up an ambush after reaching the enemy shore, but a storm-angered river, with a strong tide boosted by heavy winds, prevented landing of the boat. Two months later, another snare—this one set by the enemy—was partially successful. Several hours after dark on 1 December, the jeep assigned to the battalion commander, Major George S. Saussy, Jr.,[41] was being driven on the MSR by Private First Class Billy J. Webb, its operator and only occupant.

Suddenly shots rang out from the side of the road. Within a few seconds, 23 bullets from a Russian-made submachine gun had struck the jeep; the driver, astonishingly, received only a knee wound. No trace of the ambushers could be found by the friendly patrol dispatched to investigate the incident. An activity of an entirely different nature that same month was the assignment of battalion LVTs, to break up the heavily encrusted ice that had formed around and endangered supports of three bridges in the I Corps area. A rash of minor incidents involving would be, but unsuccessful, enemy infiltrators also took place during the winter months in the amtrac sector. In November, three agents attempted to cross the Imjin on their way to the division area, but were engaged by a battalion patrol. After a brief fire fight, friendly artillery was called down on the retreating boat and it was believed destroyed. Enemy agents on foot were engaged by National Police or Marine listening posts again in January and March and deterred from their espionage missions.

Commitment to an infantry role in the KANSAS line, meanwhile, had permitted little time for operation of the battalion tractors. In December, construction began on a storage park for those LVTs not in use. By placing the non-operating tracked vehicles in a single area, the battalion could handle routine maintenance with just a few men. This facility, located at Ascom City, was completed early in 1953. By March, a total of 34 tractors had been placed there in caretaker status. Implicit in this economy measure was the requirement that all stowed tractors could revert to combat status, if necessary, on a 48-hour alert.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare
Changes in the Concept of Ground Defense[42]

During the winter months of 1952–1953, the 1st Marine Division modified the organization of its tactical defense, although it retained the basic concept of the combat outpost system as the backbone of MLR defense.[43] Development of much of the KANSAS line and parts of the Marine MLR during this period reflected several new ideas on how the ground defense could be better organized. Recent experience during Communist attacks had shown that defensive emplacements and positions could be dug deeper and below ground to withstand massed enemy fires. Contrary to traditional concepts, it had also been found that centering the defense on the military crest[44] of a hill was not always the best procedure. Emplacement of machine guns downslope or in low firing positions to cover draws or flat ground was not entirely suitable to the Korean terrain, enemy, or nature of positional warfare.

Altered defense concepts, beginning in October, took the following form:

Click here to view map

(1) The trace of defensive positions followed the topographical crest (A) rather than military crest (B) of key terrain features. (Map diagrams 20 and 21 illustrate these changes.)

(2) Fighting positions and emplacements were dug a short distance downslope (C) from the topographical crest.

(3) Trenches on the topographical crest permitted easier, faster, and more protected access to fighting positions from the reverse slope and support area (D).

(4) Positions on the topographical crest were less vulnerable to enemy artillery because it was more difficult for the enemy to adjust his fire on these positions than on trenches dug along the military crest. Many shells simply passed over the top (E) of the hill.

(5) Certain hills and noses were selected and organized so that trenches and gun emplacements, encircling the crest, would form mutually supporting positions (X).

(6) Machine guns were moved from the draws (Y) to hilltops and noses (Z) where better long-range observation and fields of fire existed.

Click here to view map

Another change in the improvement of field fortifications came into use during the winter months. A different type of barbed wire obstacle, called “Canadian,” “random,” or “double-apron” wire, began to find favor with Marine infantrymen. Canadian wire consisted of two parallel rows of three-strand barbed wire fencing, erected about three feet apart. The void was filled in with additional barbed wire, placed at random, but connected to the parallel fences.[45] The new type barbed wire appeared more effective for several reasons. Besides being simple and fast to emplace, Canadian wire merely became more entangled by artillery shelling, which quickly ripped apart the standard double-apron barbed wire previously used in COP slope defenses.

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Chapter 6. Positional Warfare Before the Nevadas Battle[46]

As the Marine division continued to revamp and strengthen its primary defenses, a change of pace on the battlefront was gradually being felt. Only a few major raids had taken place during November, December, and January, and these involved no transfer of real estate. Casualties had been light. Artillery rounds, both incoming and outgoing, had dropped substantially. By February, however, it became apparent that the period of winter inactivity was nearing an end.

Taking the initiative in the renewed action was the 5th Marines, occupants of the right regimental sector since 25 January. The next month the regiment conducted three successful daytime raids against fortified enemy positions. Targets for the initial action, on 3 February, were two consistently troublesome hills, 31 and 31A in the Ungok Hill mass, north of the left battalion sector.

Since all battalions of the 5th Marines were to be involved either directly or indirectly in Operation CLAMBAKE, the initial planning and actual execution of the raid was to be carried out by the regimental commander, Colonel Walt. CLAMBAKE required especially thorough coordination of the heavy fire support since it was to be launched with a tank-artillery feint against several CCF positions (Hill 104, Kumgok, and Red Hill) generally west of the Ungok objective area. The two target hills were to be assaulted by reinforced platoons from Company A (Captain Don H. Blanchard) of the reserve battalion, 1/5, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Jonas M. Platt, who was responsible for the later planning stages of the raid. It was anticipated that intensive air and artillery preparation on the feint objectives and movement of gun and flame tanks during the diversion would gain the element of surprise for the assault platoons. Thus the Marines hoped to take prisoners, the main purpose of the raid, and to kill enemy troops and destroy their defenses.

During the five weeks of preparation, every aspect of the maneuver was thoroughly reviewed and rehearsed. All participating units took part in the planning conferences. Routes were reconnoitered, mines cleared, and fire concentrations plotted and registered. MAG–12 pilots studied the target areas from the nearby Marine MLR. Six rehearsals, including practice in casualty evacuation, uncovered potential problem areas. Final rehearsal was held 1 February, with artillery and air preparation made against the feint objectives. Four close air support strikes were conducted that day and the next as part of the plan to divert enemy attention from the CLAMBAKE destruction mission.

Shortly after first light on 3 February, three platoons of tanks rumbled across the MLR to assault the feint area. A heavy “false” artillery preparation by 1/11 was also placed on the three western enemy hills as well as direct fire from gun and flame tanks. The two Marine assault forces, one against each hill, moved out armed with flamethrowers, 3.5-inch rockets, machine guns, grenades, satchel charges, bangalore torpedoes, and automatic weapons. Enemy forces occupying the positions made three separate counterattack attempts, which were blunted by Marine supporting arms. During the infantry attack, friendly air hovered on station and artillery fired continuous counterbattery and countermortar fire.

With the exception of the change of withdrawal route of one of the assault teams, the 5th Marines reported that the operation was carried out according to plan. Company A tanks had swung left across the frozen rice paddies to provide left flank security for the infantry and to interdict trenchlines that connected with the Ungok objective. Intense enemy fire lashed the armored vehicles as they approached Kumgok and Red Hill as well as those supporting tanks that remained on the MLR.[47] Air, artillery, infantry, and tanks produced an estimated 390 Chinese casualties (including 90 known KIA) in addition to damaged or destroyed trenchlines,

tunnels, caves, bunkers, and weapons of the enemy. Marine losses were 14 killed and 91 wounded. One flame tank was lost.

As in the case of the 1st Marines WAKEUP raid in November 1952, CLAMBAKE was important not so much in accomplishing its primary mission (actually, no POWs were taken) as in lessons learned. One of these was to reemphasize the fact that thorough preparation helped to ensure smooth coordination of infantry and supporting arms. In his report of the operation, Lieutenant Colonel Platt wrote, “minute planning to the last detail along with carefully executed rehearsals are basic to success in actions of this type.”[48] He further noted that “confidence and enthusiasm stimulated by the rehearsals are assets which cannot be overlooked.”[49] The battalion commander also commented on the importance of planning for both troop withdrawal and maintaining a flexible schedule of fires by supporting arms. Air,[50] artillery, and tanks all employed fire plans that could be readily adjusted to meet the changing tactical situation.

On the ground, flame was found to be the best weapon for neutralizing the well-fortified CCF caves. From Company A, 1st Tank Battalion (Captain Hunter) came information about Chinese 3.5-inch rocket launcher teams used in antitank defense. Several of these tank-killer teams had run down the trenchline holding small bushes in front of them. The enemy then boldly advanced through a hail of bullets to within 15–20 yards of the Marine tank before opening fire with their rockets. Short bursts of flame from headquarters tanks soon caused even the most intrepid to beat a hurried retreat.

Concluding his after-action report of CLAMBAKE, the regimental commander, Colonel Walt, observed:

“In addition to inflicting large numbers of casualties and destruction upon the enemy, the operation served a secondary purpose, none the less important. It provided excellent training and experience for the various infantry and supporting arms staffs involved, helping to develop them into a smoothly functioning infantry-air-artillery-tank team.”[51]

Shortly before the end of the month, the 5th Marines made another major assault. As in the earlier CLAMBAKE, this raid was again in two-reinforced-platoon size and made during the early daylight hours of 25 February. This time the objective was a single height, Hill 15 (Detroit), two miles east of the CLAMBAKE objective. Lieutenant Colonel Oscar F. Peatross’[52] 2/5, manning the extreme right sector of the division, gave the assignment to Company F, then under Captain Harold D. Kurth, Jr. Planning for Operation CHARLIE, a standard-type kill, capture, and destroy raid, was carried out in much the same detailed manner as the earlier 1/5 raid.

CHARLIE differed somewhat in concept in that the 2/5 operational plan attempted to gain surprise by launching the attack during the BMNT[53] period as well as in use of smoke to screen enemy observation. Supporting arms preparatory fires had been carefully plotted, including the precision destruction aerial bombing that had proved so effective in the CLAMBAKE assault. In actual execution of CHARLIE, however, bad weather prevented the use of almost all the planned pre-D–Day and D–Day air strikes. Upon reaching the Detroit objective area assault Marines “found the majority of enemy installations were relatively undamaged, even though subjected to heavy bombardment by other supporting arms.”[54] Artillery preparatory fires had been employed successfully to isolate the battle area and howitzer and tank missions supported the raid.[55]

Between the time of CLAMBAKE and CHARLIE a series of Marine and enemy small units actions erupted which were soon to become a way of life for the MLR combatants. By sporadic outpost attacks and increasing their use of artillery, the Chinese were beginning to demonstrate a more aggressive attitude than in recent months. On the night of 12–13 February, a CCF platoon supported by mortars and artillery probed COP Hedy (Hill 124), in the right battalion of the center regimental sector, held by Lieutenant Colonel Barrett’s 3/7. On the next night, it was the Korean Marines who turned aggressor. Two of their platoons raided Hill 240, on the west bank of the Sachon, nearly three miles north of the mouth of the river. The following night, a 7th Marines patrol moving into ambush positions was itself stalked by a large CCF patrol. When reinforcements, including

armored vehicles, moved out from the MLR to support the Marines, the Chinese hastily withdrew.

Three more contacts were made before the end of the month along the division front. On 19 February CCF soldiers, in two-platoon strength, engaged KMC sentries forward of COP 33, located about a mile east of the action the previous week. After the initial exchange of small arms fire, the Koreans moved back to the outpost and called down supporting fires on the Chinese. Artillery and mortars tore into the attackers causing numerous casualties and forcing the enemy to withdraw. On the morning of 22 February, a raiding party from the 5th Marines assaulted a smaller enemy force at Hill 35A, approximately 1,300 yards southwest of the Ungok hills. In this second raid staged by the 5th Marines that month, assault troops (H/3/5) used flamethrowers in the early stages of the action to help clear enemy trenches of hostile grenade throwers.

Late the next night a 7th Marines unit, consisting of a reinforced platoon and four M-46 tanks, set out to raid Yoke, located near the peace corridor five miles north of Freedom Bridge. The assault against that position never came off. At 2137 as the B/1/7 platoon moved into preliminary positions on Hill 90, north of the ultimate objective, a Chinese company ambushed the patrol from three sides. When the Marines closed with the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting, a support platoon was sent from the MLR. After an intense 30 minute fire fight, the CCF began withdrawing at 0138. Enemy losses were listed as 45 counted KIA, 33 estimated KIA, and 35 estimated WIA. As a result of the assault, orders for the 7th Marines raid on Yoke were cancelled. Marine casualties numbered 5 killed, 22 wounded.

Whereas February was characterized by a marked increase in ground contacts between Marines and their CCF adversaries, during the first part of March the Chinese again assumed an inactive posture. Marine patrols reported few contacts. Except for a KMC raid on 3 March, little action that could be considered a sizable engagement took place until after midmonth. On the 16th there was a brief skirmish involving a 5th Marines combat patrol near Reno and a short fire fight between Carson defenders and an enemy squad. The next night a Chinese platoon, waiting near Vegas for a Marine patrol to pass by, was itself put to flight by the patrol.

Two encounters with the CCF on 19 March marked the heaviest action yet of the month. Early that morning, a predawn raid was staged by B/l/5 (Captain Theodore J. Mildner) at Hill 31A, one of the Ungok twin objectives in CLAMBAKE the previous month. The March ITEM raid employed 111 Marines. One platoon was to make the assault and the second platoon to support the operation and assist in casualty evacuation. Following a series of nearly a dozen air strikes on the objective and artillery preparation, Captain Mildner's two assault platoons jumped off from the MLR check point at 0518. As usually happened in such operations, the preliminary fire drove the Chinese to reverse slope defenses. No enemy POWs were taken and at 0700 the Marine units disengaged, due to casualties sustained from enemy shelling and machine gun fire.[56]

Earlier that same date, two attacks had been made simultaneously by the enemy on outposts in the center regimental sector, where the 1st Marines had relieved the 7th on 10 March. At 0105 one CCF company struck in the vicinity of Hedy while a second lunged at Esther, about 1 1/2 miles east. When a G/3/1 reconnaissance patrol operating forward of COP Esther observed enemy movement, the Marines pulled back to the outpost, alerting it to the impending attack. After a heavy incoming artillery barrage, the enemy assaulted the outpost, but when a three-hour effort failed to carry the position, the attackers withdrew. By that time the Chinese company which had hit COP Hedy had also broken off the attack.

Actually the fight in Captain Carl R. Gray's Company H sector, to the rear of Hedy, was mainly at the MLR, for the Chinese indulged in merely a brief fire fight at the latter outpost, bypassing it in favor of a crack at JAMESTOWN. The main line of resistance failed to yield to the enemy thrust, which was supported by 2,400 rounds of mortar and artillery fire along the MLR and outposts.

After being thwarted by Hedy-Esther defenses, the enemy shifted his efforts westward to the 1st KMC area. The Korean regiment received the brunt of the enemy's minor infantry probes immediately preceding the Nevada Cities battle. Late on 25 March a series of skirmishes broke out in the 1st Marines sector between one-or-

two platoon size Chinese infantry forces and Marine outpost defenders. Following a quiet daylight spell on the 26th, the Chinese resumed the offensive with a probe at COP Dagmar. This coincided with what developed into a massive regimental assault unleashed against Carson, Reno, and Vegas, outposts in the 5th Marines sector, to the right. There Colonel Walt's regiment would shortly be the target of the bloodiest Chinese attack to date on the 1st Marine Division in West Korea.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
The Nevada Cities[1]

AS THE THIRD WINTER OF WAR in Korea began to draw to an inconclusive end in late March 1953, some 28,000 Marines of the 1st Division stationed on the western front suspected that coming weeks would bring a change of pace. Consider just the matter of basic logistics. Rising temperatures, tons of melting snow, and the thawing of the Imjin River, located north of the rear Marine support and reserve areas, would turn vital road nets into quagmires to tax the patience and ingenuity of men and machinery alike.

With the arrival of another spring in Korea there was strong likelihood that the Chinese Communists facing the Marines across a 33-mile front of jagged peaks and steep draws would launch a new offensive. This would enable them to regain the initiative and end the stalemate that had existed since October when they were rebuffed in the battle for the Hook.

Winning new dominating hill or ridge positions adjacent to the Marine MLR, in that uneasy No-Mans-Land buffer zone between the CCF and UN lines, would be both militarily and psychologically advantageous to the Communists. Any new yardage or victory, no matter how small, could be exploited as leverage against the "Wall Street capitalists" when truce talks resumed at the Panmunjom bargaining table. Further, dominant terrain seized by the CCF would remain in Communist hands when the truce went into effect. Although wise to the tactics of the Chinese,[2] UN intelligence had not anticipated the extent or intensity of the surprise CCF attack that opened up at 1900 on 26 March when the Communists sent battalions of 700 to 800 men against Marine outposts of 50 men.

The late March attack centered primarily on a trio of peaks where Marines had dug in three of their key outposts—Carson, Reno, and Vegas. Rechristened from earlier, more prosaic names of Allen, Bruce, and Clarence, respectively, the Nevada Cities hill complex was located approximately 1,500 yards north of the MLR fronting the 5th Marines right sector. The trio was the province of 1/5, which manned the western (left) part of the regimental area. Ultimately, however, reverberations ran through nearly 10,000 yards of division front, from the two Berlin outposts, 1,000 yards east of Vegas, to COP Hedy, midpoint in the 1st Marines center sector. Continuous attacks and counterattacks for possession of the key Vegas outpost raged unabated for five days. The action escalated into the bloodiest fighting to date in western Korea, resulted in loss of a major outpost, and the killing or wounding of nearly 1,000 Marines. It was a partial success for the enemy, but he paid a high price for the real estate: casualties amounting to more than twice the Marine losses, including 800 known killed and a regiment that was decimated by the Marine defenders.

The three Nevada outposts lay just below the 38th Parallel, approximately 10 miles northeast of Panmunjom and the same distance north of the Marine railhead at Munsan-ni. Possession of the area would give the Communists improved observation of I Corps MLR positions to the west. Indeed, the enemy had cast covetous eyes (an ambition translated into action through his well-known creeping tactics) on the semi-circular net of outposts since the preceding summer.

Mindful of this, the I Corps commanding general back in September had stressed the importance of holding key terrain features that could be of major tactical value to the enemy. This included Bunker Hill and COP Reno, both considered likely targets for renewed enemy aggression in the future. Particularly, the enemy had indicated he wanted to annex Reno. The object of increasing hostile attacks since July 1952, Reno was the closest of the three Nevadas to CCF lines and tied in geographically with two of the enemy's high ground positions—Hill 190, to the northeast, and Hill 101, overlooking the site of the destroyed village of Ungok. (See Map 22.)

Click here to view map

Reno's companion outpost on the right, Vegas, at 175 meters, was the highest of the three while Carson, on the left flank, was nearest JAMESTOWN and also assisted in defense of Reno and Vegas. Each of the three outposts was manned by a rifle platoon (40 Marines plus two Navy hospital corpsmen), heavily reinforced with weapons company personnel. A small hill between Reno and Vegas, known as the Reno Block, further supported the Nevada Cities complex and at night was defended by a reinforced squad.

Since they commanded the historic Korean invasion route to Seoul, 30 air miles south, the strategic importance of the Nevada outposts had been one of the reasons for transfer of the Marines from East Korea to the West, in 1952. Both Reno and Vegas, moreover, overlooked Chinese rear area supply routes. This was a matter of special concern to the enemy at this time since he had recently doubled his stockpiling efforts and wanted to prevent UNC intelligence from learning about the build-up. Possession of the Nevada hills would enable the Chinese to harass the Marines at even closer range and—hopefully—to conduct new thrusts at the MLR which would ultimately weaken the UNC position.

In mid- and late March, the units forward in the 1st Marine Division sector of the main defense line, JAMESTOWN, remained much as they had been in recent months. Left to right, the defending components were the Kimpo Provisional Regiment, 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion, 1st Korean Marine Corps Regimental Combat Team (1st KMC/RCT),[3] 1st Marines, and 5th Marines. One change had occurred when the 1st Marines relieved the 7th in the center sector earlier in the month. The latter was now in division reserve in the Camp Rose rear area. Before long, this regiment was to see more offensive action in a hotly contested, five-day period than it had during its entire recent tour on line. Overall, the 1st Marine Division continued as one of the four infantry divisions in the I Corps sector of EUSAK [4] and, in fact, the month itself marked exactly one year since the Marines had arrived on the western front.

Occupying the far eastern end of the division sector, the 5th Marines, under command of Colonel Walt, [5] had been assigned to the MLR since late January. The regiment manned six miles of the JAMESTOWN front. It was flanked on the left by the 1st Marines while to the right its neighbor was the 38th Regiment, 2d Infantry Division, U.S. Army.

Since 20 February, the western part of the 5th regimental sector had been held by Lieutenant Colonel Platt's 1/5, with Companies A, B, and C on line, from left to right. The battalion area held four outposts. COP Ava was tucked down near the boundary between the 1st and 5th Regiments, while the Nevada, or Three Cities, triangle screened the central part of the latter regimental sector. A Company A squad[6] outposted Ava, some 325 yards forward of the main line. Personnel of Company C were stationed on Carson and Reno. Vegas had a unique command situation. Due to its proximity to the boundary between 1/5 and 3/5, Vegas came under operational control of the former battalion while personnel charged with its defense belonged to Company H of 3/5.

The right flank of the regimental sector was the responsibility of 3/5, which had moved to the front on 23 March, under Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Oddy. Companies H, G, and I were forward, in that order from the west, with George personnel on duty at the two reinforced squad size outposts, Berlin and East Berlin. In regimental reserve was Lieutenant Colonel James H. Finch's 2/5.

Click here to view map

Westward along JAMESTOWN from Colonel Walt's 5th Marines was the center regimental sector, held by the 1st Marines commanded by Colonel Adams. (See Map 23.) The extreme western part of the regimental line came to a juncture with KMC territory just as it looped around the critical Panmunjom peace corridor. This left battalion sector was manned by Lieutenant Colonel George A. Gililland's 2/1. Companies E, D, B from 1/1,[7] and F were forward, outposting COPs 1, 2, Marilyn, Kate, and Ingrid. To the right 3/1, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ernest G. Atkin, defended Hedy, Bunker, Ginger, Esther, Dagmar, and Corinne, with Companies H, G, and I on line. Occupying the area adjacent to the secondary defense installations, WYOMING and the western

part of the KANSAS line, was Lieutenant Colonel Frederick R. Findtner's reserve 1/1. And located to the rear of the 1st and 5th Regiments was the 7th Marines (Colonel Haffner), in reserve,[8] and the division rear support units, also south of the Imjin.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Supporting Arms[9]

In support of the three infantry regiments were the artillerymen, guns, and howitzers of Colonel Mills' 11th Marines. Two of its three light battalions, 1/11 and 3/11, provided 105mm direct fires to the 5th and 1st Marines, respectively. The general support battalion was 2/11, prepared to reinforce the fires of 1/11. The regimental medium battalion, 4/11, was in general support of the division, as was the 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery. To the southwest of the division sector, the 75mm guns of the 1st KMC Artillery Battalion, also attached to the 11th Marines, were in direct support of the 1st KMC/RCT. Newly formed the preceding month, the 1st Provisional Antiaircraft Artillery-Automatic Weapons Platoon had the mission of defending two of the Imjin River Bridges—Freedom and Spoonbill—in the division sector.

In addition to organic and attached units of the 11th, four I Corps artillery components, located within division territory, further reinforced 11th Marines capabilities. The 623d Field Artillery Battalion, with batteries in the 5th and 7th Marines sectors, like 4/11 consisted of 155mm howitzers. Three heavy artillery units were also available for counterbattery missions. These 8-inch howitzers belonged to Battery C of the 17th Field Artillery, Battery B of the 204th Field Artillery, and the 158th Field Artillery Battalion. These Army units were assigned to general support of I Corps, reinforcing Marine fires on call, and were under operational control of the 159th Field Artillery Battalion Group.

Active armored support for the division's ground troops during March was provided by three of the four companies from the 1st Tank Battalion. Company A's M–46s, flame tanks, and retrievers, well forward in the right sector, were in direct support of the 5th Marines; Company D tanks were assigned to the 1st Marines. Company B functioned as the forward reserve unit, ready to move into firing positions on the MLR if the tactical situation called for it. The rear reserve unit, Company C, conducted refresher training and performed equipment checks on the rest of the battalion tanks. The battalion commander, since May 1952, was Lieutenant Colonel John I. Williamson.

The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, with a personnel strength of 6,400, was located throughout Korea. Wing headquarters, Marine Air Control Group 2, and Marine Air Group 33, with its F9F day jet fighters and the VMJ–1 photo reconnaissance squadron operated from K–3, Pohang. VMF(N)–513, with all weather jet fighters, flew out of K–8, Kunsan, on the west coast, 105 miles below Seoul. MAG–12 and its squadrons of attack ADs and Corsairs was relatively near the 1st Marine Division sector, at K–6, Pyongtaek, 30 miles southeast of Inchon. Marine Wing Service Squadron 1, with its heavy maintenance capability, remained at Itami, Japan.

Tactical control had been altered radically the previous month when the Fifth Air Force had relinquished its command of Marine pilots and planes and they returned to operational control of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing for the first time since the early days of the war. Direction of the helicopters in HMR–161 and VMO–6 used in transport and reconnaissance missions had for some time been closer to home; both squadrons were under 1st Marine Division operational control. HMR–161 was based at A–17, in the vicinity of the 1st Marine Division command post. VMO–6, a composite unit consisting of single-engine OE–1 observation planes and a copter section of the HTL–4 and the new larger HO5S–1 craft, was located at A–9, three miles south of division headquarters. The squadron provided regularly scheduled helicopter evacuation of night frontline combat-casualties, artillery spotting flights, and airborne control of air strikes. Both squadrons performed routine liaison and reconnaissance, administrative, and resupply flights.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Defense Organization on the Outposts[10]

Carson (Hill 27), furthest west of the three Nevada Cities was, at 820 yards, also nearest the Marine main line of resistance. It overlooked enemy terrain to the northwest and dominated an important approach from that same direction—the Seoul road. Organized as a perimeter defense position, Carson security was oriented toward two major Chinese strongpoints. These were the twin-peaked Ungok Hill mass (31–31A), approximately 650 yards west of the Seoul road which lay between Ungok and Carson, and Hill 67 (Arrowhead), an equal distance due northwest. Other critical features in the immediate Carson vicinity included, on the right, the west finger of Reno; the ridgeline south from Reno to a point known as "Ambush Alley," in the vicinity of enemy Hill 47; and the ridgeline approaches by the two listening posts—Fox finger and George finger. (See Map 24.)
Click here to view map

Little cover or concealment existed, other than that offered by the trenchline and a cave used as living quarters. Four weapons positions—light machine guns and Browning automatic rifles—covered main enemy avenues of approach. These and two listening posts were each manned by two men after 1800 and throughout the night. Of Carson's customary strength of 38 (1 officer and 37 enlisted), 28 stood watch and worked on fortifications at night.. A six-man security team was on duty during the day. All posts connected by land line to battalion headquarters, where a 24-hour phone watch was maintained. Sound power phones and radios also provided communication with the company CP.

Nearly 350 yards of trenchline encircled the outpost. Most was in good condition, five or more feet deep and two feet wide. The main trench on the reverse slope was in spots shallow, only three to five feet, and a new trench was being dug. Fields of fire for small arms protection were considered good, although some of the 28 fighting holes were overly close to culvert and sandbag overheading, which prevented complete fire coverage of forward slopes. Adequate fire support could be given along the southern slope of the west finger extending from COP Reno, which was also mutually supporting with that of the Reno Block. Forward observer teams for the 60mm and 81mm mortars provided observation for supporting arms. The arsenal of weapons at Carson included 4 A–4 light machine guns, 2 flamethrowers, 2 3.5-inch rocket launchers, 9 Browning automatic rifles, 36 M–1 rifles, 2 carbines, 2 pistols, and 4 grenade launchers.

Some 450 yards northeast, COP Reno (Hill 25) was dug in on a ridgeline that fronted enemy Hill 25A (also known as Hill 150), immediately north. Approximately 1,600 yards away from the MLR, Reno was the central of the three outposts and also the one most distant from Marine lines. West to east, critical terrain consisted of five enemy positions—Hills 31, 67, 25A, 190, and 153—and friendly companion outpost Vegas, on the right flank. (See Map 25.)
Click here to view map

Two main trenches led into the outpost, a reverse slope fortification. The forward trench, perpendicular to the ridgeline fronting the position, was approximately 20 yards long and 8 feet deep. The second, to the rear and about the same length, traversed the outpost in an east-west direction. Approaching from the entrance, or "Gate" of the MLR, the two trenches joined on the left, forming a 90 degree angle. A cave, located in the arc between the trenches, provided overcrowded living quarters where personnel slept either on the dirt floor or atop sandbags, since there were no bunkers at Reno. Ammunition supplies, as well as the corpsman's first aid facilities, were cached in the cave.

A major blocking position, some 100 yards south, and to the rear of Reno itself was covered by troops

posted in the trenchline. Left of the forward trench, protective wire was placed across the topographical crest. This left finger had good observation to Ungok and Arrowhead but also served as an approach to Carson. Most likely enemy approach, however, was considered to be the ridgeline from Hill 150, on the north. The Seoul road, rear trenchline, and valley to the right were alternate approaches. Twenty-four hour security at Reno included an automatic rifleman at the Gate, at Post 1, on the forward trench, and Post 2, which was at the extreme right of the rear trench. Ten machine gunners were also detailed as night watch on the guns. During the daytime they were responsible for maintenance of ammunition and weapons which consisted of 18 M–1 rifles, 6 BARs, 5 A–4 LMGs, 2 flamethrowers, 1 carbine, and 7 pistols.

The biggest defense problem at Reno stemmed from restricted fields of fire. Able gun, for instance, covered the rear of the topographical crest and Hills 31 and 67, on the left. But dead space masked its effectiveness practically from the base of Hill 67 to the gun itself. The Baker gun, protecting the reverse slope, had a lateral firing range of from 10 to 30 feet. Charlie gun maintained an unlimited sector of fire, approximately 180 degrees, and Dog gun covered the rear. As there were no prepared machine gun positions, they were fired from the parapet protecting both the fighting holes and firing positions in the trenchline. Two fighting holes were manned by BARs and two were used as machine gun posts.

Customarily 40 to 43 men were on duty at COP Reno. In fact this number had been viewed dubiously as being “far too many to man defensive positions at any one time,” by the commanding officer of the 1/5 Weapons Company during a survey earlier in the month, noting that “about 20 could adequately defend the position.”[11] A six-man force was detailed as a permanent working party for the improvement of fortifications. Sound power phones linked all positions and field phones connected the forward observer with gun positions. Overall, for proper defense, Reno depended heavily upon support fires from Carson and Vegas, on its right flank. Morale was considered “very good to excellent” with Reno personnel being relieved every 8 to 10 days.

Vegas (Hill 21), the highest of the three outposts, was located approximately 1,310 yards in front of the MLR. Observation of the surrounding terrain from the east slope of enemy Hill 190 on the north, clockwise to the ridge south of Reno had been pronounced “excellent” on an inspection trip made earlier the day the outposts were attacked. From north to south this observation included in its 180-degree sweep, enemy hill mass 57 to the right, friendly outpost Berlin, the MLR, key Marine defense highpoints, Hills 229 and 181 in the 1st Marines rear sector, and intervening terrain. (See Map 26.)

Click here to view map

The north-south ridge leading to COP Reno masked the view from Vegas on the west. To the north full observation was partially limited by outpost Reno itself and enemy Hills 150, 153, and 190. The latter was particularly strategic for two reasons. First, it shielded a major assembly area. And, although the Chinese had observation of the entire right battalion MLR from Hill 190 on the north, Vegas prevented enemy close-in view of Marine rear areas. It also dominated the approach to a major Marine observation point, Hill 126, to the rear of the front lines in the western part of the 3/5 sector.

Organized as a perimeter defense, Vegas was surrounded by 250 yards of trenchline. The forward, or north trench, averaged four feet in depth but deepened to about eight feet as it progressed to the rear. The most solidly constructed part was the western portion. A center communication trench was in good condition between the rear and topographical crest. From this point to the forward trench its depth decreased to about four feet. The trench leading back to the MLR, about five feet deep and two wide, was in good condition. A total of 13 fighting holes had been constructed.

Outpost troops, numbering approximately 40, consisted of six fire teams, heavy weapons and machine gunners, two 81mm mortar crews and two artillery observers, one corpsman, and a wireman at night. Strength was reduced during the day, with replacements to make up the normal complement arriving on position early each evening.

Major approaches to Vegas included the large draws to the west and north of the outpost, the ridgeline to the COP from Hill 153 to the northwest, and the rear trenchline. Several ancillary trenchlines to the east tended to reinforce this latter approach. A hindrance to the enemy, however, was the slope leading into the draw west of the outpost. For security purposes, the perimeter was divided into three sectors, each manned by two fire teams augmented by heavy weapons personnel. The outpost detachment stood nighttime posts on a 50 percent basis and remained within the several living bunkers or other shelters during daylight hours because of heavy shelling and sniper fire. Incessant enemy pressure at the exposed outpost made it expedient to rotate infantry Marines at Vegas every three days and observers, at the end of four or five days.

Weapons on position included two flamethrowers, one 3.5-inch bazooka, four machine guns, three pistols, and other small arms. Fields of fire at Vegas, rated fair to good, were generally restricted due to the proximity of overheading. Most of the light machine guns had plunging fields of fire except for the approach along the ridge-line from Hill 153, covered by grazing fire. A fighting hole to the left of Able Gate, which overlooked the trenchline leading to the MLR, was manned during the day. No other sentries or listening posts were in effect. Nine sound power phones were operative. Three were located in the CP bunker (connecting to C/1/5, G/3/5, and the CP net); one, each, at the four main posts, the rear Able Gate, and the cave.

Other than periodic work being done by 10 Korean Service Corps personnel in clearing out the trenches, no construction was in process at Vegas. KSCs, lugging their traditional A-frames and guided by Marines, also ran a nightly “supply train” to Vegas as they did to Carson and Reno. Sufficient personnel manned the outpost for adequate defense, although an inspecting officer opined that the “one 3.5 rocket launcher on position did not appear to be necessary for defense of this type position.”[12]

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Chapter 7. Vegas
The Chinese Assault of 26 March[13]

Until the final days of March, the CCF units opposite the 5th Marines had shown little aggressiveness. Regimental reports had officially cited Chinese actions as having been" "extremely limited" other than their expected resistance to patrols and the Marine ITEM raid staged earlier in the month by the 1/5 two-platoon unit on Hill 31A, part of the Ungok complex. The enemy posture had, in fact, been described as one "reluctant to meet our patrols except in their positions."[14]

A regimental patrol policy early in March established as SOP a minimum of four reconnaissance and two combat patrols in each MLR battalion sector daily. Nevertheless, 3/5 had reported no contact with the enemy for the three-day period prior to the attack which was launched at 1900 on 26 March. Since the middle of the month, 1/5 had conducted nearly a dozen night combat patrols and ambushes in one- and two-squad strength to test the enemy in the Carson-Reno-Vegas area. Terminology of the operation orders read that the Marines were to make contact, capture prisoners, and deny the ground to the enemy, an injunction that—in view of events shortly to transpire—was to turn out more prophetic than anticipated.

That last Thursday in March 1953 was clear, almost unseasonably warm. Just after darkness had settled down over the Korean ridges, gullies, MLR, outposts, and rice paddies, the enemy suddenly made his presence known. Up until that time it had been an average day of activity, and there had been no especially ominous overtones to the start of the night.

Suddenly, at 1900, small arms and machine gun fire cracked from enemy strongholds on Hills 44, 40, 35, and 33, and tore into the left and center part of the 1/5 sector. Almost immediately, a heavy mortar and artillery preparation of 15 minutes duration exploded all along the 5th Marines MLR. A Chinese rifle platoon and half a dozen machine guns on Hill 140, about 500 yards west of Kumgok, directed additional fire on the sector.

At the same time 5th Marines outposts Carson and Reno, each manned by a reinforced rifle platoon from C/1/5, came under attack from Chinese mortars and 76mm artillery. Approximately 1,200 mortar rounds struck COP Carson by 1920. As men of D/2/5, some of whom had been detailed to Carson earlier that night for an ambush, reported, "one round per second from Chinese 60mm and 82mm landed in or around [our] position during the first 20 minutes of the engagement. Thereafter, one round was received every 40 seconds until about 2200."[15] Interdiction fires also raked Marine rear areas and supply routes. Counterbattery fire struck Marine direct support artillery positions in the 5th's regimental sector while heavy shelling of the MLR and its battalion CPs shattered wire communication between those installations and their advance outposts.

Within ten minutes, Vegas, furthest east of the four OPs in 1/5 territory, became the object of serious enemy attention. Outposts Berlin and East Berlin, meanwhile, still further east in the 3/5 sector proper were also engaged by fire from hostile small arms and mortars from Chinese occupying Hills 15 (Detroit), 13 (Frisco), and 98 to the northeast. As the coordinated fire attack raged throughout the 5th Marines regimental front, preparatory fire and diversionary probes hit the 1st Marines sector. Outposts Hedy, Bunker, Esther, and Dagmar, in the center regimental area, were struck by small arms, mortars, and artillery shells a few minutes before 1900. Platoon and squad strength limited attacks were conducted against Dagmar, Hedy, and Esther, and enemy units were sighted moving in front of the KMC, further west along the MLR.

At precisely 1910, a force of 3,500 Chinese from the 358th Regiment, 120th Division, 46th CCF Army began to swarm down from Ungok, Arrowhead, Hill 25A, and Hill 190 and launched a massive assault in regimental strength against the 5th Marines sector. (Map 27.) Elements of six companies from three battalions

converged on the area from three directions. Two enemy platoons of the 1st Company, 1st Battalion from Ungok struck Carson while one infantry company each, initially, began a direct assault on Reno and Vegas. Units from the 3d Company, 1st Battalion, from Arrowhead and Hill 29, crossed the Seoul road to hit Reno in a direct frontal assault. Elements of the 7th Company, 3d Battalion moved down from Hill 190, a mile north, to encircle the left flank of Reno and thus strike from the rear of the Marine position. Other Chinese soldiers of the 8th Company, 3d Battalion, supported by the 9th Company, moved some 500 yards south of their ridgeline positions on Hill 25A and 155 immediately north of Vegas to attack the outpost head-on.

Click here to view map

Another enemy unit, the 2d Company, 1st Battalion, swept south from Hill 57A and made diversionary probes of the two most remote outposts of the entire 1st Marine Division line, Berlin and East Berlin in the 3d Battalion sector. These two smaller positions, each manned by a reinforced squad-size detachment from G/3/5, were to be successful in driving off the enemy's less determined efforts there with a rain of small arms, mortar, and artillery fires.

As the enemy regiment advanced toward its objectives in a coordinated three-pronged attack, Marine artillery fired protective boxes and VT on the outposts and routes of approach from the west, north, and east. Defending infantry also called down organic 60mm and 81mm mortar barrages. Actually, prior to the Chinese onslaught at 1900, 1/11, the direct support battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Olin W. Jones, Jr.) for the 5th Marines, began a registration and had laid its howitzer fires on the active area. The artillery regiment had also set up conference calls linking its four organic battalions and supporting Army units. The fire plan for the 11th Marines provided for its three light battalions (1/11, 2/11, and 3/11) to cover enemy approaches and assembly areas, deliver protective boxing and VT fires requested by the outposts, and furnish countermortar missions called in by forward observers. Medium battalions (4/11 and the 623d Field Artillery) were to reinforce defensive fires and destroy hostile mortars and artillery emplacements. Heavy 8-inch howitzer support (Battery C, 17th FA Battalion and Battery A, of the 204th) would silence enemy counterbattery weapons.

As it happened on the night of the 26th, Marine tanks, in addition to artillery, were also registered before the time of the actual attack. Eleven of Captain Hunter's Company A tanks had earlier rumbled into firing position on the MLR to provide mechanized support for an infantry raid scheduled at dawn the next morning.

Despite this immediate response of Marine fire support, the Chinese invaders outnumbered the platoons holding the outposts by a 20 to 1 ratio. The sheer weight of numbers was the decisive factor. By 1935 the enemy had penetrated the lower trenches of both Carson and Reno. An hour after the onset of the attack, at 2000, the Marines were throwing back Chinese forces with bayonets, knives, rifles, and bare fists in the close, heavy fighting at Carson. There, where 54 men had been on duty at the time of initial attack, the outpost was successfully holding off the Communists. Four reinforcing squads quickly dispatched by battalion were designed to further strengthen the position. At 2000, just when D/1/5 and C/1/5 relief squads were leaving for the outpost, the Chinese unexpectedly began to release their grip on Carson as they concentrated on the two more isolated COPs, Reno and Vegas, that were further from the MLR.

No other attempt was made by the enemy to occupy Carson that night or the next day. Barrage fires gradually ceased as the enemy began to withdraw about 2135. Sporadic bursts of his 60mm and 82mm mortars and 76mm guns, however, continued to rock the position until midnight.

Developments at Reno and Vegas, by 2000, were vastly more ominous. At Reno, two companies of CCF soldiers thrust into the position from a frontal and flank attack. Within a half hour they made their way into the trench defenses. Although VT fires placed on the outposts and WP flare shells outlined the enemy for the gunners, Chinese in overpowering numbers continued to batter the Marine post. Due to the lack of fighting trenches, bunkers, and to limited fields of fire, Reno defenders fell back on a cave defense within a half hour of the assault. [16]

A message received at 2030, requesting more VT rounds and reinforcements, indicated that the enemy had sealed all entrances to the cave and that the men were suffering from lack of air. Of the 40 Company C Marines on the outpost at the time of attack an hour and a half earlier only 7 were then reported still able to fight. More illumination to enable friendly machine guns and rockets to chop up the enemy was furnished by artillery and a flare plane that arrived on station at 2205. Two Marine tanks, in position behind Reno, were alerted and put their 90mm fires to good use on the enemy and his weapons emplacements.

Meanwhile, at Vegas, the situation was also deteriorating. More than a hundred Chinese had moved up under the perimeter of exploding shells and Marine defensive fires into the lower trenches by 1950, less than an hour after the enemy's first volley. Ten minutes later, the Marines were forced to give way to the overwhelming number of enemy soldiers which began to swarm over the outpost.

In addition to the sudden force and onslaught of the enemy, communication difficulties also plagued Marine detachments on the outposts, particularly at Vegas. Enemy mortar and artillery, aimed at the mainline CPs, had wrecked the ground lines. As early as 1940, communications between the 1st Battalion CP and Vegas went dead and continued to be broken despite repeated attempts to reestablish contact. Carson and Reno also had wire troubles about this time, but radio contact was shortly established. For the most part, operational reports and orders during the night and early morning hours were sent over company and battalion tactical nets. The intensity of the Chinese fire was not restricted just to forward positions; the 1/5 CP, a mile south of the MLR, at one point received up to 100 rounds per minute.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Reinforcements Dispatched [17]

While the Marines on the outposts were trying to drive off the enemy, reinforcements back at the MLR and in the reserve ranks quickly saddled up. A F/2/5 advance platoon dispatched to Reno at 2015 by way of the Reno Block was ambushed near Hill 47 an hour later by two enemy squads which had moved south to cut off Marine reinforcements. After a fire exchange, the platoon made its way to the blocking position. Another relief unit, from Company C, 1st Battalion, that jumped off for Reno 15 minutes later had poorer luck. The men had scarcely gone a half mile before being shelled. After briefly taking cover the Marines moved out again, only to draw fire from the enemy at Hill 47. Advancing for a third time, the Company C two-squad unit was again halted by fire from two hostile platoons. By this time 10 Marines had been wounded and evacuated.

A D/2/5 reinforcement platoon ordered to Vegas, at 2129, encountered strong opposition in the Block vicinity, but it threw back the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting and prevented him from gaining fire supremacy at the position. Leading units of F/2/5, meanwhile, had been ordered to operational control of 1/5 to augment the earlier Company C platoon at the Block and then move north with them to Reno. After being issued ammunition and hand grenades at the Company C supply point, the “F” 1st Platoon left the MLR at 2227, with the 2d Platoon filing out in column 400 yards behind them. Under a constant rain of 76mm artillery and 82mm and 122mm mortar shells—and with casualties for one platoon reaching as high as 70 percent within minutes—the F/2/5 men fought their way into the trenches at the Block. Here they joined the depleted ranks of Company C which had established a base of fire. Despite the incessant barrage of Chinese incoming that continued to inflict heavy casualties, the Marines maintained their precarious grip on the Block and cleared out large numbers of Chinese attempting to infiltrate the trenches and approaches from the north and south to the Marine position.

While the Reno and Vegas relief units were pinned down at the Block, the situation at the outposts remained critical. Throughout the night new waves of Communist soldiers poured out from their positions behind Chogum-ni, Hills 31 and 31D. When a company of enemy troops were observed at 2100 massing near Chogum-ni for a new assault, it was quickly disposed of by Marine artillery and Company A tankers. At Reno where the immediate situation was the most grim, a message at 2145 reported the enemy still in the trenches, trying to dig down into the cave while the Marines were attempting to work their way out by hand. The final report from Reno received late that night, about 2300, was weak and could not be understood.

At Vegas, meanwhile, communications failure continued to complicate defensive measures at the outpost. Because of this, on the order of regimental commander, Colonel Walt, operational control had been transferred, at 2119, from 1/5 to 3/5. Three minutes before midnight all contact with Vegas was lost. As with Reno, reinforcements sent out with the mission of buttressing the Vegas detachment had been delayed. When it became evident that the Company D platoon had been pinned down at the Block, a platoon from E/2/5 jumped off at 2323 for the Vegas position.

Shored up to reinforced company strength, the composite unit at the Block had prepared to move on for the ultimate relief of C/1/5 forces at Reno. Chinese firepower and troops continued to lash the position, however. There seemed to be no limit to the number of reserve troops the enemy could throw into the attack. At 2157, two Chinese platoons had hit the Block. Twenty minutes later, another two platoons struck. By 2300, the Marines had repulsed three attacks, numbering more than 200 troops, amid a continuing withering avalanche of bullets and shells. Shortly before midnight, a full enemy company had deployed south from Reno to the Block, but had been largely cut down by friendly 90mm tank fire and VT rounds from 1/11. Reinforced and reorganized, the Marines

again prepared for a counterpunch on Reno.

By midnight on the 26th, after five blistering hours of battle—to develop into five days of intense conflict and continuing counter-attacks—the early efforts of the enemy were partly successful. Two of the Nevada Hill outposts had fallen, and Marine attempts to strengthen them were initially being thwarted by Chinese troops that had overflowed the Block and southward toward the MLR. COP Carson was holding. But the enemy was in control of Reno and Vegas and was using the Reno position to mass troops and firepower to further brace his continuing assault on Vegas.

Initially, the 5th Marines had expected to launch an immediate counterattack to regain Reno. In the early hours of the 27th, however, it became apparent this plan would have to be revised. Reinforcing elements from the 5th Marines, composed largely of F/2/5, had been unable to mount out effectively from the Block for Reno. At 0144, the commanding officer of Company F, Captain Ralph L. Walz, reported he had one platoon left. Between then and 0220 his diminishing unit had rallied for attack three times. It had successively engaged the enemy in fire fights, one of 30 minutes' duration, evacuated its wounded, regrouped, and then had come under heavy incoming again. Countermortar fire had been requested and delivered on active enemy positions at Arrowhead, Hills 29, 45, and 21B, some 500 yards northwest of Vegas.

But as the Marines girded their defending platoon at the Block to company-plus size, the Chinese had done likewise, throwing in continuous rounds of new mortar attacks and additional troops. When, at 0246, another hostile company was seen spreading south from Reno toward the Block, the 1st Battalion directed artillery fires on the enemy and ordered its troops to disengage and return to the MLR. By 0300, early efforts to retake Reno were suspended. Relief forces from Companies F and C were on their way back to the battalion area. Ground action had ceased.

During these early attempts to rescue Reno and its defenders on the night of 26–27 March, Marine elements had struggled for more than four hours trying to get to Reno, but the enemy had completely surrounded it. At Reno itself, the Marine in command of the outpost when the Chinese struck, Second Lieutenant Rufus A. Seymour, machine gun platoon commander of C/1/5, had been taken prisoner along with several of his men. Of the Marines originally on duty there, all but five had been killed. Casualties of the Reno reinforcing units were later estimated by the regimental commander as being "as high as 35 percent, with many dead."[18]

A 21-year-old Navy hospital corpsman from Alexandria, Virginia,[19] attached to a Company C relief platoon from 1/5, helped save many Marine lives that night in the Reno Block area. He was Hospitalman Francis C. Hammond, who lost his own life but was awarded posthumously the nation's highest honor for bravery under fire. For more than four exhausting hours the young hospitalman helped others to safety, even though he had been struck early in the fighting and was hobbling around with a leg injury. When his unit was ordered to withdraw from its attack against a strongly fortified CCF position, Hammond skillfully directed the evacuation of wounded Marines and remained behind to assist other corpsmen. Shell fragments from a mortar blast struck him, this time, fatally.

The Vegas reinforcing units, in those dark early hours of the 27th, had come closer to their objective. Shortly after midnight two platoons, composed of elements from D/2/5 and C/1/5, had reached a point 400 yards from the outpost, in the vicinity of the entrance to the communication trench. When the enemy threw in powerful new assault forces at Vegas, F/2/7, a company from the regimental reserve, came under operational control of 3/5 and moved out from the MLR to reinforce the position. By 0300 the first relief platoon, despite heavy and continuing Chinese barrages, got to within 200 yards of the outpost. At this time, however, it was found that the enemy was in control of Vegas as well as Reno. Marines from D/2/5, C/1/5, E/2/5, and F/2/7 relief forces, on order, began to pull back to the MLR at 0417. Initial attempts to regain control of the two outposts were temporarily halted, and instead it was decided to launch a coordinated daylight attack.

At about the same time, 0430, the boundary between 1/5 and 3/5 was moved 250 yards westward to give

3/5 total responsibility for Vegas, although operational control had been transferred seven hours earlier the previous night.

Enemy casualties for the eight hours of action were heavy. An estimated 600 Chinese had been wounded and killed. Marine losses were also heavy. In the action First Lieutenant Kenneth E. Taft, Jr., Officer-in-Charge at Vegas, was killed and, as it was later learned, some of his H/3/5 defenders had been captured by the Chinese. By midnight the two line battalions, 3/5 and 1/5, had reported a total of nearly 150 casualties,[20] and this figure did not include those wounded or killed from the relief platoons and companies being shuttled into action from the 2/5 reserve battalion. One platoon from E/2/5 had arrived at the Company C supply point about 0210 and, together with a provisional unit from Headquarters and Service Company, 1/5, began to evacuate casualties in front of the MLR. By 0325, a total of 56 wounded had passed through the C/1/5 aid station and a cryptic entry in the G-3 journal noted that “more who are able are going back to assist in evacuation of casualties.”

Similar recovery efforts were being made at the same time in the 3d Battalion. Two alternate routes for evacuation were in effect. From a checkpoint located just south of the MLR in the H/3/5 sector, casualties were taken to the Company H supply point and thence to the battalion aid station, or else to the KSC camp from which they were evacuated to the 1st Battalion aid station. VMO–6 and HMR–161 helicopters flew out the critically-injured to USS *Haven* and *Consolation* hospital ships at Inchon Harbor and transported blood from supply points to Medical Companies A, E, and C forward stations. Excepting the original personnel killed or missing at Reno and Vegas, 1st Battalion forces from Companies C and F dispatched to Reno had returned to the MLR by 0445. Vegas units, ordered to disengage later than the Reno reinforcements, were back by 0530.

Diversionary probes by the Chinese during the night of the 26th at the 3/5 right flank outposts Berlin and East Berlin, as well as in the 1st Marines sector, had been beaten back by the Marines. Following the preassault fire at 1900, a CCF company had sent two platoons against Berlin and one against satellite East Berlin, both manned by Company G. These reinforced squad outposts, both only about 325 yards forward of the MLR, had stymied the enemy’s attempts. Boxing fires and VT on approach routes had forced the Chinese to retreat at 2115. Ten minutes later Company G reported that communication, which had temporarily gone out, had been restored. One squad dispatched by the 3d Battalion to Berlin and a second, to East Berlin an hour later, further buttressed the companion positions.

Action in the 1st Marines center regimental sector had also been relatively brief. Immediately after the 1900 mortar and artillery preparation, the Chinese in company strength attempted to penetrate outposts Hedy, Bunker, Esther, and Dagmar. Shelling had been heaviest at Dagmar and, shortly after 1900, two squads of Chinese began to assault the outpost with automatic weapons and satchel charges. Machine guns positioned on enemy Hills 44, 114, and 116 and small arms fire from Hill 108 supported the attack. The enemy was hurled back at all places except Dagmar where approximately 25 Chinese breached the wire entanglement.

Two hours of intense, close fighting in the trenches followed as the 27 defending Marines, directed by outpost commander Second Lieutenant Benjamin H. Murray of I/3/1, strongly resisted the invaders. More than 300 rounds of mortar and artillery fire supported the action. A counterattack from the MLR led by the I/3/1 executive officer, Second Lieutenant John J. Peeler, restored the position, and at 2120 the CCF finally withdrew. Less determined efforts had been made by the enemy at Esther and Bunker. By 2200 the Chinese had departed from the scene there, too. Altogether, the 1st Marines sector skirmishes had cost the CCF 10 killed, 20 estimated killed, and 17 estimated wounded to Marine casualties of 4 killed and 16 wounded.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Massed Counterattack the Next Day[21]

While the 5th Marines reorganized during the morning hours of the 27th for a new attack to recapture the lost outposts, General Pollock ordered mortars, tanks, and artillery, including rockets, to neutralize the Reno and Vegas areas and enemy approaches.

From the time of the 1900 attack the preceding evening until the temporary break in fighting eight hours later, at 0300, early estimates indicated 5,000 rounds of enemy mixed fire had been received in the "Wild" sector (code name for the 5th Marines, and appropriate it was for this late-March period). And this did not include the vast number of shells that had fallen on the three Nevada COPs. During the same period 1/11, in direct support of the 5th, reported it had delivered some 4,209 rounds on the enemy. Throughout the early hours, two battalions from the 11th Marines continued to pound away at Reno and Vegas with neutralizing fires to soften enemy positions, deter his resupply efforts, and silence those mortars and batteries that were troubling the Marines.

By 0330 observation planes from VMO–6 had made 28 flights behind enemy lines which enabled artillery spotters to direct nearly 60 fire missions on CCF active artillery, mortars, and self-propelled guns. From nightfall on the 26th through 0600 the following morning a total of 10,222 rounds of all calibers had been fired by Marine cannoneers supporting the 1st Division in its ground battles from Berlin to Hedy.

Revised intelligence reports from the 5th Marines S–2, Major Murray O. Roe, meanwhile, indicated that between 1900 on the 26th and 0400 the next day the Chinese had sent 14,000 rounds of mixed mortar and artillery crashing into Marine positions. It was also determined that a reinforced regiment had initially hit the Carson, Reno, and Vegas posts.

Early on the 27th, at 0345 as the 5th Marines prepared for the counterattack, the division reserve, 2/7 (Lieutenant Colonel Alexander D. Cereghino), was placed under operational control of the 5th Marines. (Previously put on alert the battalion had moved into an assembly area behind 1/5 shortly after midnight, and its F/2/7 had taken part in the predawn relief attempt.) During the early morning hours a section of Skyknights, from Lieutenant Colonel Conley's night fighter squadron, VMF (N)–513, had made radar controlled bombing runs to strike CCF artillery positions in the Hill 190 area and enemy troops at Hill 98. Precisely at 0650, friendly Panthers from VMF–115 began arriving on station to help the neutralizing artillery fire on Reno and Vegas. Originally, a dawn ground attack had been envisioned for Reno, but that was delayed to wait for air support.

A tentative H–Hour was set for 0900 with a dual jump-off for both Reno and Vegas. At 0930 the attacks still had not begun due to communication difficulties. While division Marines were waiting to get off the ground, 1st MAW pilots were enjoying a busy morning. By 0930, six four-plane air strikes had been completed by VMF–115 (Lieutenant Colonel Stoddard G. Cortelyou) and –311 (Lieutenant Colonel Francis K. Coss) plus sorties by Air Force Thunderjets. Tankers from Company A had also gotten in a few licks when two groups of Chinese were seen carrying logs for bunker support into Reno; one group was wiped out, the other got by.

Shortly after 1100, friendly artillery batteries began delivering smoke on Hills 57A and 190, two enemy high points of observation. The fire plan was modified to eliminate an early 10-minute preparation on objective areas. (Basically, the artillery plan for counterattack was that employed in the 19 March Operation ITEM raid on Ungok, because of the proximity of Ungok to the Vegas hills. This plan consisted of massed fires on the objective, with countermortar and counterbattery fires on known artillery positions. To this prearranged plan were added those new mortar and counterbattery targets located by air observers during the night of 26–27 March.) This time, the preparatory fires were to be on call, as was the 90mm fire support from the tankers. A further

change was made when it was decided to limit the assault to Vegas and not retake Reno but rather neutralize it by fire.

While artillery, air, mortars, and tanks pounded the objective, assault elements of D/2/5 from the regimental reserve, under Captain John B. Melvin, prepared for jump-off. At 1120 the company crossed the line of departure in the 3/5 sector of the MLR and immediately came under heavy fires from enemy infantry and artillery units. Within a half hour after leaving the battalion front for Vegas, Dog Company had been pinned down by Chinese 76mm artillery, had picked itself up, and been stopped again by a plastering of 60mm and 82mm shells falling everywhere in its advance. By 1210 only nine men were left in Captain Melvin's 1st Platoon to carry on the fight. The Marine unit continued to claw its way through the rain-swollen rice paddies and up the muddy slopes leading from the MLR to within 200 yards of the outpost. In 10 minutes, heavy incoming began to take its inevitable toll and enemy reinforcements were flowing towards Vegas from the CCF assembly point on Hill 153.

Between noon and 1300, four enemy groups of varying size had pushed south from Hill 153 to Vegas. At this time still another group, of company size, moved in with its automatic weapons and mortars. Within the next 15 minutes, a reinforced CCF platoon made its way from the Reno trench to Vegas while still another large unit attempted to reinforce from Hill 2lB. As enemy incoming swept the slopes and approaches to Vegas, Marine artillery and tank guns fired counterbattery missions to silence the Chinese weapons. In the skies, VMA–121 ADs and the sleek jet fighters from MAG–33 squadrons VMF–115 and –311 continued to pinpoint their target coordinates for destruction of enemy mortars, trenches, personnel bunkers, and troops.

Back at the battalion CP two more companies were being readied to continue the Vegas assault. The Provisional Company of 2/5, commanded by Captain Floyd G. Hudson, moved out at 1215. Close on its heels, E/2/5 left the Company H checkpoint in the 3/5 sector for the zone of action. At 1305 the counterattack for Vegas was raging in earnest, with Company D riflemen on the lower slopes, chewing into the enemy with their grenades, BARs, M–1s, and carbines. Two hours after the original jump off time, four Marines crawled out of the trenches at Vegas and by 1322 were going over the top, despite incoming that "literally rained on the troops." Assault commander Melvin recalled:

"It was so intense at times that you couldn't move forward or backward. The Chinese 60mm mortars began to bother us about as much as firecrackers. It was the 120mm mortars and 122mm artillery that hurt the most. The noise was deafening. They would start walking the mortars toward us from every direction possible. You could only hope that the next round wouldn't be on target."[22]

Meanwhile, Company E, 5th Marines, under Captain Herbert M. Lorence, had moved up from the rear and, at 1440, was ordered to pass through Company D ranks, evacuate casualties, continue the attack, and secure the crest of Vegas. Although Captain Lorence's men succeeded in moving into Company D positions, the deluge of Chinese mortar and artillery was so heavy that Company E was unable to advance beyond this point. At 1530, a new Marine company, F/2/7 (Captain Ralph F. Estey), was dispatched from the MLR to buttress the assault. By this time elements of D/2/5 had reached the right finger of Vegas but were again pinned down by intensive enemy artillery and mortars.

Within the first hour after leaving the battalion line, the Company F Marines nearly reached the advanced positions of 2/5, and Company D, which had been in the vanguard since 1100, returned to the regimental CP. During the next hour, however, heavy shelling slowed the Marine advance. At 1730, as Company F prepared to make its first major assault, a deluge of 60mm and 82mm mortar shells, 76mm and 122mm bursts, and machine gun bullets rained on the troops. As the men crawled forward slowly, planes from VMA–323 which had arrived on scene two hours earlier, continued to smoke the enemy's posts on Hills 190 and 139. Captain Hunter's tanks also moved into their MLR positions to zero in their 90mm rifles on the CCF stronghold at the Vegas northern crest.

By 1800, Company F was continuing the Marine counterattack to regain Vegas and was approximately

400 yards from the outpost summit. Combining with Company E Marines, for a total strength of three platoons in position, Captain Estey was able to retake part of the objective. After an intense 90-minute fire fight and hand-to-hand fighting in the lower trenches, E/2/7 advanced to the right of the outpost where at 1930 it began to consolidate. In the next half hour, two platoons of Company F moved out from the right finger of Vegas to within 50 yards of the peak, before being forced back by Chinese machine gun fire and mortars lobbed from the Able (left) gate on Vegas. The enemy company occupying the outpost resisted the attacking Marines with mortars, grenades, and small arms fire. In addition, the CCF employed firing positions at Reno for their machine guns, heavy mortars, and artillery supporting the Vegas defense and periodically reinforced their troops from the newly captured Reno outpost.

It was a busy night for Marines and corpsmen alike. One, whose split-second improvisations in the blazing zone of action were in the best Hippocratic tradition, was Hospital Corpsman Third Class William R. Charette. Attached to F/2/7, he was assisting a Marine when an enemy grenade landed but a few feet away. Charette immediately threw himself on the injured man, taking the full shock of the missile with his own body. Since the force of the blast had ripped away his helmet and medical aid kit, he tore off his clothing to make bandages. Another time, while attending a seriously wounded Marine whose armored vest had been blown off, the hospitalman removed his own to place around the injured man. Without armored vest or helmet, Charette continued to accompany his platoon in the assault. As a Marine observer, Staff Sergeant Robert S. Steigerwald, commented, “HM3 Charette was everyplace seemingly at the same time, performing inexhaustibly.”[23]

Throughout the night the enemy counterattacked but was unsuccessful in driving the Marines off the outpost. Between 1830 and midnight, F/2/7 repulsed three enemy onslaughts and engaged in sporadic fire fights. Although pushed back from the summit, Company F Marines set up a perimeter defense at the base of Vegas where the troops dug in for the rest of the night. Their opposite numbers, from 1st MAW, were also on the scene. As follow-up to the day’s unremitting air bombardment of enemy installations, night fighters of VMF(N)–513 and MAG–12 Corsairs from VMAs–212 and–323 made nine MPQ strikes between 1830 and 0115 unleashing 24 1/2 tons of explosives on CCF hill defenses and supply strong points.

Gradually, heavy incoming on Vegas began to lift, and from midnight through the early hours of the following morning most of the enemy’s artillery and mortar fires switched from Vegas to the Marine companies on the MLR. Intermittent small arms fire still cracked and punctuated the night from enemy positions on Hills 57A, Detroit, and Frisco, to the northeast of Vegas.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Push to the Summit[24]

Although the composite two-platoon unit of Marines from F/2/7 and E/2/5 had partially won Vegas back in 10 hours of savage fighting on 27 March, after earlier groundwork by D/2/5, it was a precarious hold. Marines had attained the lower slopes but the Chinese still clung to the northern crest. As it turned out, three separate company-sized assaults were going to be needed to dislodge the enemy.

The initial Marine action on the 28th began at 0335 when 105mm and 155mm howitzers of the 1st, 2d, and 4th Battalions, 11th Marines, belched forth their streams of fire at the pocket of enemy troops on the northern slopes preparatory to the forthcoming Marine infantry assault. This 2,326-round pounding was aimed at Chinese assembly areas and weapon emplacements, with much of the preparation zeroed in on active mortars.

Within a half hour the weary men of F/2/7, who had spent a wakeful night in the lower Vegas trenches, moved to within hand grenade range of the objective in their first attempt to gain the summit. An intense shower of small arms and mortar fire, however, forced them to pull back to the south slopes. While Captain Estey's troops reorganized for the next assault, air strikes joined the big guns, mortars, and tanks in battering the enemy's position on the outpost and supply routes thereto. Shortly after sunup, a lone AU from VMA–213, followed a half hour later by a VMA–323 Corsair, arrived on station. They laid a smoke screen three miles across the front between Arrowhead and the far eastern Marine–U.S. Army boundary to assist four early-morning air strikes. Soon afterwards, eight ADs from Lieutenant Colonel John E. Hughes' VMA–121 were in the skies to support the Vegas attack in the opening round of aerial activity that would see day-long bombing and strafing runs by five 1st MAW squadrons.

A new Marine assault at 0600 was repulsed and Company F pulled back to a defilade position 375 yards south of Vegas and regrouped. Again friendly planes from VMA–121 and–323, tanks, artillery, and mortars plastered the enemy in a new series of preparatory fires, beginning at 0920; and again Captain Estey's F/2/7 men jumped off in attack. By 1015 the Marines had made their way across the height to within 15 yards of the trench line on the left finger of Vegas. There they came under continuous small arms and grenade bursts from the crest and battled the Chinese in an intense 22-minute fire fight.

It was during this onslaught by Company F for the crest of Vegas that Sergeant Daniel P. Matthews so defiantly routed the enemy to save the life of a wounded comrade that his action gave renewed spirit to those witnessing it. A squad leader of F/2/7, Matthews was in the thick of a counterpunch against solidly dug-in hill defenses that had repelled six previous assaults by Marine forces. The 21-year-old California Marine was coolly leading his men in the attack when the squad suddenly was pinned down by a hostile machine gun located on the Vegas crest. When he saw that its grazing fire prevented a corpsman from removing to safety a wounded Marine who had fallen in full range of the weapon, Matthews acted instinctively.

Quickly working his way around to the base of the enemy machine gun position, he leaped onto the rock fortification that surrounded it. Taking the enemy by surprise, he charged the emplacement with his own rifle. Severely wounded within moments, the Marine continued his assault, killed two of the enemy, dispatched a third, and silenced the weapon. By this action, Sergeant Matthews enabled his comrades on the ground to evacuate the injured Marine, although Matthews died before aid could reach him.[25]

Back at battalion, E/2/5, with D/2/7 in column behind it, had moved out to relieve Captain Estey's redoubtable F/2/7 forces. By noon, Captain Lorence's Company E had completed passage of lines through Company F. The latter unit, now numbering 43 effectives after its six assaults on 27–28 March to regain the

Vegas high ground, returned to base camp.

Heavy air attacks, meanwhile, were assisting the artillery in blasting out Communist defenses of the Vegas area. Between 0950 and 1300, seven four-plane strikes by pilots of Colonel Bowman's MAG–12 had swept the outpost area and hill lairs of the enemy at 57A, the east slope of Reno, Tumae-ri (40D), 190, and resupply points. Within one 23-minute period alone, 28 tons of bombs were laid squarely on the Vegas position. Supported by air, mortars, and artillery, Company E was 400 yards from the objective, and, by 1245, forward elements had moved up to within 150 yards of the crest. As Marine supporting fires lifted from Vegas to enemy assembly areas on Hills 150, 153, and 190, E/2/5 launched its final assault at 1301. Although small arms, bursts of mortar and enemy artillery fire traced their every move, the Marines' hard-hitting attack brought them to the top of Vegas where they literally dug the Chinese out of their defenses.

At 1307, the Marines had secured their position and recaptured the Vegas outpost. At approximately the same time the Marine reinforcing unit, D/2/7, was ordered to return to MLR, since the objective had been gained. The Marine in charge of the E/2/5 platoon that retook Vegas was Staff Sergeant John J. Williams, who had taken over the 1st Platoon after its leader, Second Lieutenant Edgar R. Franz, had been wounded and evacuated. Almost immediately after securing Vegas at 1320, the Chinese launched a counterattack and Company E came under a renewed barrage of incessant artillery and mortar shells, exploding at the rate of one round per second in the Marines' newly gained trenches.

Marine firepower from the tankers' 90mm rifles and the protective fire curtain placed around the outpost by the artillery batteries, however, deterred this heavy enemy effort. For the next hour Captain Lorence's men continued with mopping up chores. Gradually and fitfully the Chinese resistance began to slacken. By 1401 definite control of Vegas was established, except for the topographical crest at the northernmost point. Resupply and consolidation of the outpost began at once, with Vegas under 3/5 administration and Major Benjamin G. Lee, operations officer of 2/5, in command.

Two prisoners had been taken during the day's action, one by E/2/5 during its afternoon assault and the other by F/2/7 early in the day. The soldier seized by a fire team from Company E was a 21-year-old wounded litter bearer attached to the attacking force, 3rd Battalion, 358th Regiment. He told 5th Marines interrogators that for the preceding three months the mission of the 358th Regiment (a component of the 40th CCF Army, under operational control of the 46th CCF Army) had been to prepare to occupy the Vegas and Reno outposts before the expected UN spring offensive could be launched. The two key installations overlooked CCF supply routes. Furthermore, occupation of these two hills, the Chinese believed, would serve as a valuable tactical example to the 46th Army, whose ranks at this time were composed of nearly 65 percent recruits. The POW also reported that prior to the CCF attack on Reno and Vegas, men of his regiment had practiced throwing hand grenades every day for the past two weeks. No political classes had been held during this period as practical proficiency, apparently, took priority over theoretical indoctrination.

The other Chinese prisoner, captured by Company F at 0610, was a grenadier with the 9th Company, 3d Battalion, 358th Regiment. Prior to the attack, his unit had occupied reverse slope positions on Hills 25A and 155 as reinforcements for the 8th Company. Each CCF battalion, he revealed, "held a front of approximately 1,000 meters, utilizing one company on line with two in support."[26] This remark interested interrogators since it contradicted the normal pattern of enemy employment. According to the grenadier, the mission of the 3d Battalion had been to attack Vegas, while the 1st Battalion (to the west of the 3d on the Chinese MLR) was to secure Reno. Hill 190.5, an enemy strongpoint, had several antiaircraft machine guns on its reverse slope, he declared, and was the location as well of the forward CP of the 3d Battalion, 358th Regiment.

For the next five hours, from 1440 to 1930, the Marines dug in on the crest and slopes of Vegas, buttressing their positions for the new Chinese attack sure to come. A muster of the rag-tag group left from the day's 10 hours of fighting revealed a total strength of only five squads—58 effectives from E/2/5 and 8 from

F/2/7. Uppermost in the minds of all the men, regardless of their diminished numbers, was the ironclad conviction that “we intend to stay.”[27]

Their leader, Major Lee, was no less determined. At 42, he was a Marine veteran of 19 years, a former sergeant major from World War II and holder of the Silver Star and Purple Heart for service at Guadalcanal. Now he had volunteered for this hazardous duty of holding together segments of the Vegas enclave until the Marines could once again possess the entire hilltop outpost. Under his direction the troops promptly began to prepare individual fighting holes in the best possible tactical positions and to emplace their weapons. Personnel from Captain Lorence’s E/2/5 held the hard-won Vegas crest, while 150 men from F/2/5 committed later in the afternoon strengthened the rear trenches.

Air bombardment, prior to the 28th, had not been employed extensively against Vegas itself. The goal had been to recapture the outpost and drive the Communists out without unnecessarily destroying its defenses. Chinese tenacity in exploiting the Marine weapons positions at COP 21, while augmenting them, had made it apparent that the Vegas defense network would have to be reduced to retake the position. Altogether, during the day 33 missions (more than 100 CAS sorties) were flown by AUs, ADs, F4Us, and F9Fs of the 1st Marine Air Wing to support division ground action in regaining the advance outpost. All morning long, powerful attack planes from three MAG–12 squadrons had winged in from nearby K–6. Pilots from VMA–121, VMA–212 (Lieutenant Colonel Louis R. Smunk), and VMA–323 (Lieutenant Colonel William M. Frash) had flown the bombing runs.

In the early afternoon they were joined by the speedy, stable Panther jets from VMF–115 and VMF–311, of MAG–33 (Colonel Robertshaw), based further away at K–3. Between 1300 and 1800, a series of three four-plane F9F assaults were launched north of the Marine MLR by VMF–311, while another strike was made further east in support of the Army 2d Infantry Division’s Old Baldy operations. These planes, together with two divisions from VMF–115, dumped a total of 23 tons of bombs and 3,100 rounds of 20mm shells on CCF trenches, bunkers, mortars, and caves at Vegas, Reno, and Hill 25A. Additionally, VMF–115 Panthers flew four single-sortie daytime MPQ missions north of the bombline to damage and destroy enemy resupply points.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Other Communist Probes[28]

Although the Chinese made it plain that their main interest was in the Vegas outpost area, spotty probes also took place in Colonel Adams' 1st Marines sector. On the 27th, at about 2310, two enemy squads milled around the wire defense at outpost Kate, but Marine small arms, BARs, and mortars routed them after a 15-minute fire fight. At midnight, a CCF reinforced platoon reconnoitered Dagmar and Esther, for the second successive night, supported by small arms and automatic weapons fire from Chinese Hills 114 and 44. The enemy platoon started to rush the forward slope at Dagmar, but Company I defenders pulled back to the reverse side and directed VT-fuzed shells on the enemy.

Following this barrage the Marines reoccupied their position, with the help of MLR machine guns, mortars, and artillery from the 3/11 direct support battalion. (Now commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Alfred L. Owens, who had succeeded Lieutenant Colonel Pregnall on 25 March.) The enemy reinforced with a second platoon, as did the Marines. After intense close-in fighting in the Dagmar trenches for two hours, the Chinese withdrew. An enemy squad also engaged Bunker and Hedy; but again, 3/11 VT-fuzed concentrations and the organic outpost defenses sent him off handily. Enemy casualties for the evening's activity were 15 dead, 25 more estimated killed, and 23 estimated wounded.

The following night the Chinese briefly harassed outpost Hedy, using as cover an abandoned Marine tank just east of the outpost, as well as the MLR to the rear of COP Bunker. Marine bullets and mortar shells dictated a quick retreat, however. Several minor contacts with the enemy had also been made during the two-day period in the 1st KMC sector. The most menacing were heavy enemy sightings on the 27th of some 200 Chinese in the area west of the old outposts 36 and 37, but no major action developed.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Three CCF Attempts for the Outpost[29]

As darkness blanketed No-Man's-Land on the night of the 28th, ground fighting flared up anew at 1955. The Chinese had begun another one of their nightly rituals, the first of three counterattacks to win back the disputed territory from the Marines. Vegas reported heavy incoming, including not only the usual assortment of mortar and artillery fires but direct 3.5-inch rocket hits. Enemy troops, estimated at nearly a battalion, began approaching from Reno. By way of answer two Marine light artillery battalions, 1/11 and 2/11, together with the medium 155mm howitzers of 4/11 and the Army 623d Field Artillery, lashed a 4,670-round barrage to interdict the approaching enemy. Ripples from the 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery reinforced the howitzers in thwarting this initial enemy assault. On the right flank of the outpost an intense 20-minute fire fight broke out at 2023, but the Vegas defenders beat back the intruders. For an hour the enemy, supported by heavy mortar and artillery fires from Reno and his own positions at Vegas, tried unsuccessfully to force the Marines to withdraw.

Carson, which had been relatively undisturbed for the past two days, also came under attack at this time from automatic weapons and mortars directed on its north slope by the enemy holed up behind Hills 67 and 31. For the rest of the night an enemy company prowled around the area, but the defense at Carson, plus artillery and mortar fire support from JAMESTOWN, sent the Chinese off in the early morning hours with their ambitions thwarted.

At Vegas, meanwhile, outpost commander Major Lee at 2130 radioed battalion headquarters that he was preparing for a new enemy counterattack. It was not long in coming. Less than an hour later, the Chinese were again storming from Hill 153, and Marine boxing fires picked off the advancing enemy. At 2230 Major Lee's riflemen, deployed about 25 yards from the peak, were holding Vegas, surrounded by Chinese on the southern face of the position. For a brief period the enemy took the high ground but then gave it up under pressure from the defending Marines. Close by, another sharp fire fight erupted; then subsided for about an hour. At 2300 a new onslaught of Chinese reinforcements made the third major attempt of the evening to recapture the Vegas position. Two enemy companies descended. Within a half hour another massive fire fight had broken out, and the battle was raging across the shell-scarred hilltop. Major Lee reported to G-3 heavy enemy sightings of at least 200 Chinese on the top slopes challenging Marine possession of the Vegas crest and attempting to smoke their positions. At 0045, hostile forces had surrounded the outpost and seized part of the Vegas height, but 11th Marines fires walled off the enemy and prevented penetration. Flare planes circling overhead lighted the target and cannoneers of both sides concentrated on the crest. The heaviest Marine shoot of the night-long artillery duel, a 6,108-round barrage, rained down on enemy troops and trenches shortly before midnight.

Altogether, during the night of 28–29 March, two battalions of Chinese troops had made three separate, unsuccessful ventures to retake the Vegas crest, but were thrown back by Marine mortar, artillery, and tank fires. At 0130, following a heavy 37-minute artillery and mortar concentration, the enemy began to withdraw, but not before venting his displeasure with a resounding blast of small arms and bazooka fire from the Reno hill. In their departure, the Chinese were given an assist by Company E, 7th Marines, which had broken through the enemy encirclement of Vegas in the early morning hours to join E/2/5 and F/2/5 defending forces and help drive the invaders off all but the northern tip of the hill. Now under Captain Thomas P. Connolly, E/2/7 ascended the high ground, passing through F/2/5 ranks in preparation for the ultimate relief of E/2/5.

For the next two hours the 11th Marines battalions, together with the 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery, sealed off the outpost and blistered enemy fortifications at Reno with a total of 4,225 rounds. Air observers on station

fired 10 missions between midnight and 0430. Twenty minutes later, the artillerymen unleashed still another preparation to dislodge the unyielding CCF dug in at the Vegas topographical crest. Heavier fires from the 155mm howitzers of 4/11 and the 623d Field Artillery Battalions followed on more than two dozen active mortar and artillery targets.

A new assault by Marine infantrymen (E/2/7, E/2/5, and F/2/5) at 0450 recaptured the critical northern segment of the outpost. Elation over this encouraging turn of events was dampened, however, by loss of several Marine leaders in the early morning foray. Shortly before 0500, Major Lee and Captain Walz were killed instantly by a 120mm mortar round during an intensive enemy shelling. Another Marine casualty early on the 29th was First Lieutenant John S. Gray. A forward observer from C/1/11, he was mortally wounded by an enemy mortar blast when he left his foxhole to crawl closer to the Vegas peak and thus better direct artillery fires on the enemy. At the time of his death, Lieutenant Gray was reported to have been at Vegas longer than any other officer.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Vegas Consolidation Begins[30]

Only a few surviving enemy were seen when Marines of F/2/5 and E/2/7 moved out to consolidate the position after daybreak. This task was completed without contact by 0830. In the meantime, the Vegas defense was reorganized with two reinforced platoons on the main portion and a third occupying the high ground. A smoke haze placed around the outpost screened the work of the Marines. Individual foxholes were dug and automatic weapons emplaced. Major Joseph S. Buntin, executive officer of 3/5, had taken over as the new outpost commander. Corpsmen and replacement weapons—machine guns, mortars, BARs, rockets—had arrived. The morning supply train brought KSC personnel and Marines with engineering tools to begin work on trenches, fighting holes, weapons dugouts, and bunker fortifications.

By noon, excavation work on the shell-pocked trench system was well under way, with all of it dug waist deep and the majority as deep as a man's shoulder. Daylight hours between 1000 and 1600 on the 29th were relatively quiet with only light ground activity. Rainy weather that turned road nets and fighting trenches into boot-high muck and giant mud holes further slowed the action. Artillerymen completed countermortar and smoke missions, and in the skies air observers directed fire throughout the day on 19 enemy resupply and target points until dusk when rain and light snow forced them to return to base.

At 1850, the Chinese launched what in some respects was a carbon copy action of the night of the 26th. Once again there was sudden heavy incoming and then shortly after dusk the CCF struck in a new three-pronged attack to overrun Vegas. This time three companies of Chinese approached both flanks of the outpost from their positions on Reno and Hill 153. In addition to his infantry weapons, the enemy was supported by heavy mortars and artillery. But the Marines' mortars, illuminating shells, and big guns replied immediately. Ten minutes after the enemy's latest incursion, a massed counterfire from five artillery battalions joined in the heaviest single barrage of the entire Vegas defense action. This massed fire of 6,404 rounds blasted the Chinese assault battalion and sent it reeling back with heavy losses. Two rocket ripples also tore into the Chinese troops.

In addition to the medium and heavy firing batteries, two heavy mortar units, Companies A and C of the 461st Infantry Battalion, had that day gone into position in the 5th Marines sector in general support of 1/11. Other fires came from the 8-inch howitzer unit, Battery C, 424th Field Artillery Battalion, also newly assigned to the 17th Field Artillery Battalion that day in general support of the 1st Marine Division.

Although another enemy attack was quickly repulsed at 2045 in a brisk, savage fight, shortly before midnight the Chinese reappeared, moving up from behind the right finger of Hill 153. This was believed to be an attempt to recover their casualties, but Marine artillery, mortars, and rocket bursts sent them fleeing within ten minutes. Still the enemy obstinately refused to give up his goal of retaking the high ground at COP 21. In the early morning hours of the 30th, he again returned to hit the outpost in his second battalion-strength attack within six hours. Again he struck from Reno and Hill 153, and again he attempted to cut off the outpost Marines by encircling the position. Heavy pounding by artillery, mortar, and boxing fires snuffed out the enemy's attack and by 0215 the Chinese had left the Vegas domain—this time, it was to prove, for good. Their casualties for this latest attempt had been 78 counted killed, 123 more estimated killed, and 174 estimated wounded.

With sunup, the Marines at the battered outpost again repaired the damage of the night's visits from the Chinese and continued work to improve their trenches and gun emplacements. Clearing weather enabled air observers and pilots to follow a full flight schedule. VMA–212 and VMA–323 were again over the Vegas skies during the morning hours and shortly before noon a joint mission by eight AU's, a division from each squadron,

dumped nearly 10 tons of bombs on enemy trenches, mortars, bunkers, and troops at Hill 25A across from Reno to discourage Chinese rebuilding efforts. Both flew afternoon sorties to destroy strongholds at Hill 21B, at Reno, now in possession of the enemy, and to make smoke screen runs. Early in the day, Company F of 2/5 came up from the 2/5 CP to fill in on the MLR and Berlin outposts for Company G from 3/5. Later in the afternoon, G/3/5 relieved E/2/7 on Vegas and Major George E. Kelly, S–3 of 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, succeeded Major Buntin as the new outpost commander.

Two comments, casually made at the time, perhaps typify the grim staying power of the Marines who defended Vegas. As Corporal George C. Demars, Company F platoon guide, 5th Marines, observed, "The guys were like rabbits digging in. The fill-ins [reinforcements] gotten by the Company during the reorganization, jumped right in. We didn't know half the people on the fire teams, but everybody worked together."[31] Second Lieutenant Irvin B. Maizlish, assigned as a rifle platoon commander of F/2/5 on the 25th, the day before the fighting broke out, and who had the dubious distinction of being one of the few officers of those originally attached to the company not wounded or killed, recalled: "I checked the men digging in at Vegas . . . I've never seen men work so hard . . . I even heard some of them singing the Marine Corps Hymn as they were digging. . . ."[32]

The last direct confrontation with the enemy at Vegas had occurred that morning, about 1100, when five Chinese unconcernedly walked up to the outpost, apparently to surrender. Then, suddenly, they began throwing grenades and firing their automatic weapons. The little delegation was promptly dispatched by two Marine fire teams. Three CCF soldiers were killed and two taken prisoners, one of whom later died.

As darkness fell on the 30th, Marine artillery fired heavy harassing and interdiction missions and regimental TOTs on enemy supply routes and assembly areas. Although the shoot was dual-purposed, both to prevent another Chinese attempt at retaking Vegas and to foil a possible diversionary probe elsewhere in the division sector, neither situation developed. For the fourth consecutive night, giant searchlights from the Army's 2d Platoon, 61st Field Artillery Battery illuminated the battlefield to spotlight the enemy withdrawal routes. Two of the quadruple .50 caliber machine gun mounts from the 1st Provisional AAA-AW Battery were also displaced to MLR positions in anticipation of trouble, but the CCF had apparently had enough of a thoroughly bloodied nose from the Marine fighters and decided to call it quits.

By daybreak, the Vegas sentry forces could report that things had been relatively quiet—the first time in five interminably long nights—and Companies D and E, 5th Marines, which had been watchdogging it at the outpost moved back to the MLR. At 0800, the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, reverted to parent control, and by noon, reliefs were under way not only for Vegas but for Corinne, Dagmar, Hedy, and Bunker in the 1st Marines sector. A 5th Marines body recovery detail, meanwhile, had moved out to search the draws.

If ground action was light on the 31st, supporting arms activity was a different story, starting with seven MPQ drops on enemy artillery positions and ammunition caves in the early hours of darkness. Between 0650 and 1900, 23 air strikes were flown in the Vegas-Reno area by VMA–121 ADs and AUs of–212 and–323, MAG–12 squadrons, as well as three quartets of Air Force Thunderjets dispatched by Fifth Air Force. Artillery fired a total of 800 rounds on 156 enemy concentrations, again with 4.2-inch mortars from the 461st Infantry Battalion reinforcing 1/11 fires on hostile mortars, ammunition dumps, and supply points. If the outgoing was aimed at discouraging Communist plans for new acquisitions, *their* incoming had dropped to a new low in comparison with the heightened activity of the past five days. A total of 699 rounds was reported in the division sector, most of it falling in 5th Marines territory.

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Chapter 7. Vegas
Aftermath[33]

Recapture and defense of the Vegas outpost was one of the intense, contained struggles which came to characterize the latter part of the Korean War. The action developed into a five-day siege involving over 4,000 ground and air Marines and was the most bloody action that Marines on the western front had yet engaged in. Its cost can be seen, in part, by the casualties sustained by the 1st Marine Division. The infantry strength of two battalions was required to retake Outpost Vegas and defend it against successive Chinese counterattacks. A total of 520 Marine replacements were received during the operation. Marine casualties totaled 1,015, or 116 killed, 441 wounded/evacuated, 360 wounded/not evacuated, and 98 missing, of which 19 were known to be prisoners. Losses for the critical five-day period represented 70 percent of division casualties for the entire month—l,488 killed, wounded, and missing (not including 128 in the KMC sector).

Enemy casualties were listed conservatively as 2,221. This represented 536 counted killed, 654 estimated killed, 174 counted wounded, 853 estimated wounded, and 4 prisoners. The Marines, moreover, in the five days of furious fighting had knocked out the 358th CCF Regiment, numbering between 3,000 and 3,500 men, and destroyed its effectiveness as a unit.

Throughout the Vegas operation, the 1st Marine Air Wing had flown 218 combat missions against the Nevada Cities hills (63 percent of the entire month's total 346 CAS missions), bombing and strafing enemy weapons positions, bunkers, ammunition dumps, trenches, and troops. On the 27th and 28th, while heavy fighting raged in both the Marine and 7th Army Division sectors, Marine Air Group 33 pilots flew 75 sorties—resulting in their highest daily sortie rate and air hours since December 1952. The March 28th date was a noteworthy one for MAG–12, too. It established a new record for combat sorties and bomb tonnage unloaded on the enemy in a single day; the group executed 129 sorties and dropped 207.64 tons of bombs and napalm.

Although restricted on two days by weather conditions, close air support was effectively used throughout the Vegas Cities operation. A total of 81 four-aircraft flights dropped approximately 426 tons of explosives in CAS missions. Smoke and flare planes—despite a shortage of both flare planes and flares[34]—were employed throughout the period as were the rotary aircraft of the two helicopter squadrons, the latter for casualty evacuation operations.

Tanks, provided by the Company A direct support tank company, were used day and night, firing from nine positions along the MLR. Their effective use to mark air targets was of particular importance in connection with their support role, while the tank light also helped to provide illumination of the objective area in hours of darkness. Approximately 7,000 rounds of 90mm tank ammunition were fired.

During these five tense days the enemy deluged Marine positions with 45,000 rounds of artillery, mortar, and mixed fire. Indicative of the savage pounding the Vegas area took is the fact that incoming Chinese artillery for the full two-week period from 1-15 March totaled only 3,289 rounds. Marine efforts to defend, counterattack, secure, and hold the Vegas outpost against repeated Chinese assaults were "marked by maximum use of and coordination with various supporting arms and organic weapons."[35] Three light artillery battalions, two medium battalions, two 8-inch batteries, one 4.5-inch rocket battery, and two companies of 4.2-inch mortars fired a combined total of 104,864 rounds between 27–31 March; the 11th Marines and its heavy Army reinforcing elements, in support of 5th and 7th Marines units, executed 332 counterbattery and 666 countermortar missions. Of the total number fired, 132 were air observed.

The artillery shelling was the hottest during a 24-hour period ending at 1600 on 28–29 March. During

this time 35,809 rounds were fired (33,041 from the four Marine battalions). This even surpassed the previous record of 34,881 rounds fired during a one-day period in the Bunker Hill defense of August 1952. A new one-day battalion total for West Korean fighting was also set on the 28th; 1/11 fired 11,079 rounds, exceeding the record of 10,652 set by 3/11 during the Bunker Hill fighting.

Marines at a rear area supply point achieved another record. In a 24-hour period, during the heavy fighting on 28–29 March, 130 men handled 2,841 tons of ammunition. Second Lieutenant Donald E. Spangler, an ammunition platoon commander with the 1st Ordnance Battalion, who had but 13 hours' sleep in the entire five days of fighting, proudly noted that his unit had "more than doubled the tonnage that the U.S. Army says a man can handle in 14 hours."[36]

As for the men on the front line, besides the Medal of Honor winners, 10 Marines were awarded the Navy Cross, the nation's second highest combat award. Nine citations were for the Vegas action and one for the 1st Marines defense of Dagmar, in staving off an enemy penetration on the night of the 26th.

Battlefront tactics employed by the CCF in its assault of the Vegas Cities outposts were largely consistent with their previous strategy. As in the past, the enemy launched simultaneous attacks against several Marine positions in attempt to fragment defensive artillery firepower. Characteristically, the enemy preceded his thrust with heavy preassault concentrations of artillery and mortar fire. He also took advantage of the twin ploys of surprise and overwhelming strength, with wave after wave of Chinese rolling over the objective. Innovative techniques consisted of scaling ladders, fashioned from lightweight but sturdy bamboo, which were used to traverse Marine wire defenses, and of having an artillery liaison officer attached to infantry squads to better direct supporting fires during the attack. Analysis of Chinese firepower tactics indicated deliberate counterbattery efforts by the CCF, although this employment of artillery was secondary to its support of ground troops.

Actually, the Chinese attack on the forward Marine outposts the night of the 26th appeared to have been part of an overall reinvigorated spring assault. Opening gun of this offense had been fired three nights earlier, on the 23d, when they swept over an Army hill defense at Old Baldy, 25 miles northeast of the Marine Vegas Hills. Despite heavy Allied gunfire and bombing by Air Force and Marine planes under Fifth Air Force flight orders, the Chinese had clung to the hill, burrowed deeply, and resisted all efforts to be dislodged. After three days of fighting, U.S. 7th Division troops had abandoned the Old Baldy hill at dawn on the 26th. The CCF, apparently emboldened by this success, that same night had launched a series of probes at nine UN outposts on the Korean far western front in an attempt to further extend their frontline acquisitions.

Following the loss of Reno, a new outpost, Elko, was established on Hill 47, southeast of Carson and 765 yards from the MLR, to prevent the enemy from using the Hill 47 position as an attack and patrol route to the MLR. In addition to this new platoon-strength outpost, the Marines substantially shored up Vegas from its former platoon garrison to a detachment consisting of 2 officers and 133 enlisted men.

Headlines had told Americans at home and the free peoples around the world the story of the "Nevada Cities" in Korea and the Marines' five-day stand there to prevent loss of critical UNC territory. The event that marked an official "well done" to the Marines themselves was a message from the Commandant, General Shepherd, who on 30 March sent the following dispatch to General Pollock, CG, 1st Marine Division:

"Have followed the reports of intensive combat in the First Marine Division sector during the past week with greatest sense of pride and confidence. The stubborn and heroic defense of Vegas, Reno, and Carson Hills coupled with the superb offensive spirit which characterized the several counterattacks are a source of reassurance and satisfaction to your fellow Marines everywhere. On their behalf please accept for yourself and pass on to every officer and man of your command my sincere congratulations on a task accomplished in true Marine Corps fashion."[37]

In turn, General Pollock congratulated the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing of General Megee and its six participating squadrons (VMAs–121, –212, –323, VMFs–115, –311, and VMF(N)–513). Citing the close air

support missions of the Marine flyers during the operation, General Pollock noted that the air strikes of the 28th were “particularly well executed and contributed materially to the success of the 1st Marine Division in retaking and holding the objective.”[38]

Plaudits had also come to the 1st Marine Division from the Korean Minister of Defense, Pai Yung Shin, [39] the day immediately preceding the Vegas attack. On 25 March, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation streamer,[40] for action from 26 October 1950 to 15 February 1953, had been placed on the division colors in ceremonies at the division command post, attended by the Korean Defense Minister; Vice Admiral Woon Il Sohn, Chief of Korean Naval Operations; Major General Hyan Zoon Shin, Commandant of the Korean Marine Corps; General Pollock, division commander, and his troops. The event marked the fourth Korean PUC awarded to Marine units since the beginning of the war.

A directive at the end of the month put the 7th Marines on the alert to move into 5th Marines positions in the right regimental sector. This was to be accomplished on 4–5 April when, after 68 days on line, the 5th Marines moved south to Camp Rose to become the division reserve regiment. The prospect of a new stage in the off-and-on truce negotiations had also come late in the month. On 28 March, the Communists informed the UN of their willingness to discuss the Allied proposal for return of sick and wounded prisoners. This exchange had originally been suggested by the UN more than a year earlier, in December 1951. Notification of the new Chinese intentions came, ironically, on a day when the Vegas outpost fighting was at its height.

As the month closed on the Vegas chapter, Marines on line and in the reserve companies who had just sweated through the bloodiest exchange of the war on the I Corps front to date added their own epitaph. With a touch of ungallantry that can be understood, they called the disputed crest of Vegas “the highest damn beachhead in Korea.”

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)

The Peace Talks Resume[1]

IT WAS APRIL 1953, but it wasn't an April Fool's mirage. On 6 April, representatives of the United Nations Command and the Communist delegation sat down at the Panmunjom truce tents to resume the peace talks that had been stalemated six months—since October 1952. If there was a word that could be said to reflect the attitude of American officials and private citizens alike—for that matter, the atmosphere at Panmunjom itself—it was one of caution—not real optimism, not an unbridled hopefulness, but a wearied caution born of the mountains of words, gulfs of free-flowing dialogue and diatribe, and then ultimate plateaus of intransigence that had marked negotiations with Communist leaders since the original truce discussions had begun in July 1951.

Diplomatic maneuverings had been underway since the end of 1952 for the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of both sides. This was considered a first step towards ending the prisoner of war dispute and achieving an ultimate truce. A resolution introduced in mid-November by India at the United Nations session dealing with settlement of nonrepatriate prisoners had been adopted in early December. Later that month the Red Cross international conference had officially gone on record favoring the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners in advance of a truce. A letter written on 22 February by the UNC commander, General Clark, calling for the immediate exchange of ailing prisoners had been delivered to the NKPA and CCF leaders.

Initially, the Communist answer was an oppressive silence that lasted for more than a month. During this time the Communist hierarchy had been stunned by the death, on 5 March, of Premier Stalin. Then, on 28 March, in a letter that reached General Clark at Tokyo in the middle of the night, came an unexpected response from the two Communist spokesmen. They not only agreed unconditionally to an exchange of the sick and injured prisoners but further proposed that "the delegates for armistice negotiations of both sides immediately resume the negotiations at Panmunjom."[2]

This favorable development astonished not only the United Nations Commander but the rest of the Free World as well. Several steps were quickly put in motion. The UN Commander's reply to the Kim-Peng offer was expressed in such a way that resumption of full negotiations was not tied in as a condition for the preliminary exchange of ailing POWs. President Eisenhower, commenting on the new Communist proposals at his 2 April press conference, stated he thought the country should "now take at face value every offer made to us until it is proved unworthy of our confidence."[3] He also further enjoined major military commanders and subordinates to avoid anything that might be contrary to this view when they made public remarks or issued press releases.

In Korea, the Munsan-ni Provisional Command was established on 5 April under the Commanding General, Eighth Army, in the vicinity of the 1st Marine Division railhead at Munsan-ni. The command was to prepare for the many housekeeping details involved in the receiving and orderly processing of all UNC prisoners. The anticipated exchange itself was dubbed Operation LITTLE SWITCH. Two Army officers, one Marine Corps, and one ROKA representative were designed to direct the administrative machinery of the provisional command. Heading the organization was Colonel Raymond W. Beggs, USA.

The Marine representative, Colonel Wallace M. Nelson, was named commanding officer of the United Nations Personnel and Medical Processing Unit. His responsibility was not limited to the obvious medical aspects of the exchange, but extended to other details involving clothing issue, personnel, security, chaplains, food, communication, motor transport, engineering, and the operation of unit headquarters. Among those matters to which the Munsan-ni command directed its immediate attention was the setting up of a temporary facility for Communist prisoners currently held in UNC camps at Koje, Cheju, and Yongcho Islands and a hospital near

Pusan. Arrangements were also made for in interpreter pool, debriefing teams, and press center facilities.

As the new week began on Monday, 6 April, and the world looked to Panmunjom for the next set of signals in the war, a new stage developed in the truce negotiations. Within five days after the talks had begun, both sides agreed to return the disabled prisoners in their custody. Final papers for the preliminary exchange were signed at noon on 11 April by Rear Admiral John C. Daniel, USN, for the United Nations Command, and Major General Lee Sang Cho, of the Communist delegation. The week-long transfer of sick and wounded POWs was scheduled to begin 20 April, at Panmunjom.

The Communists announced they intended to release 600 sick and wounded UNC prisoners (450 Korean, 150 non-Korean), a figure which Admiral Daniel called "incredibly small."[4] For its part, the UNC indicated that it planned to free nearly ten times that number of North Korean and Chinese POWs. Communist and Allied representatives also agreed that truce talks would be resumed at Panmunjom, once the prisoner exchange was completed.

Security precautions went into effect at both Panmunjom[5] and the entire Munsan-ni area, 10 miles southeast, on the first day of the prisoner talks. All facilities at both Panmunjom and Munsan-ni were placed off limits to Eighth Army personnel not directly involved in the operations. Regulations were strictly enforced. Even before the negotiations opened at Panmunjom, actual construction work for LITTLE SWITCH was well under way by Marine engineers. "Operation RAINBOW," as the building of the facilities for the POW exchange was called, began 5 April.

In a little over a day—actually 31 working hours—a task force of less than 100 Marine construction personnel had erected the entire Freedom Village POW recovery station at Munsan-ni. The special work detachment was composed of men from Company A, 1st Shore Party Battalion, under Major Charles E. Gocke, and attached to the engineer battalion; utility personnel from Headquarters and Service Companies; and a Company D platoon, 1st Engineer Battalion.[6]

Early Sunday morning the Marines moved their giant bulldozers, earth movers, pans, and other heavy duty equipment into Munsan-ni. Ground leveling started at 0800 and work continued around the clock until 0100 Monday. After a five-hour break the men dug in again at 0600 and worked uninterruptedly until 2000 that night. Furniture, tentage, and strongbacking stored at the 1st Engineer Battalion command post, meanwhile, had been transported and emplaced. When it was all done the Freedom Village complex, like ancient Gaul, had been divided into three parts. The command area comprised receiving lines, processing and press tents, and related facilities for United Nations troops. Adjacent to this was the 45th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital tent, completely wood-decked, equipped for mass examinations and emergency treatment. Across the road from the UN site proper was the area reserved for returning South Korean prisoners, who would form the bulk of the repatriates.

Altogether the three camp areas represented some 35,100 square feet of hospital tentage, 84 squad tents, and 5 wall tents. Gravel to surface three miles of standard combat road, plus two miles of electrical wiring, was hauled and installed. More than 100 signs, painted in Korean and English, were erected, as well as the large one that stretched clear across the road at the Freedom Village entrance. Six welcome signs were raised above the UN and ROK processing tents, while another mammoth Korean-English sign was installed at the Panmunjom exchange site.

Special areas for ambulance parking; helicopter landing strips; five 50-foot flagpoles; graded access roads and foot paths; sanitation facilities; and storage areas for food, blankets, and medical supplies were also constructed. And timing was important. It had been anticipated that the prisoner exchange might take place on short notice. For this reason 1st Marine Division work and processing teams had conducted their rehearsals so that they could complete all duties within 36 hours after first receiving the "go ahead" signal for the switch.

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
Operation LITTLE SWITCH [7]

Nine days after the truce talks were temporarily suspended, 11 April, Operation LITTLE SWITCH (code-named Little Swap) began the morning of Monday, 20 April. By the time it ended on 26 April, a total of 6,670 North Korean and Chinese Communist prisoners had been returned by the UNC. The enemy released 684 captives,[8] of whom 149 were Americans. Among them were 15 Marines, 3 Navy corpsmen who had been attached to the 1st Marine Division, and a Navy aviator. The first day Allied prisoners—walking, some hobbling along on crutches, and others carried on litters—were delivered in two groups. The initial 50 men reached Panmunjom at 0825, and the second group, two hours later. The first Marine freed was Private Alberto Pizarro-Baez, H/3/7, a Puerto Rican, who had been captured at Frisco in the early October 1952 outpost clashes. Later that day, another POW taken in the same action, Private Louis A. Pumphrey, was also released.

Early moments of the exchange were tense as UNC sick and wounded captives were shipped in a long line of CCF ambulances from Kaesong, five miles northwest of Panmunjom, down the neutral corridor past enemy lines to the exchange point. Despite the fact that all official papers and agreements had been concluded more than a week earlier, no one was absolutely sure until the last moment that the prisoner exchange would actually take place. The mechanics of the transfer operation itself, as it turned out, went off practically without hitch. One minor unsavory incident had occurred when 50 North Korean prisoners in UNC custody en route from Pusan to Panmunjom, had dumped their mess kits into garbage cans, noisily complaining about breakfast.

There was also a long taut moment of uneasy silence when the first Communist ambulance pulled up in front of the Panmunjom receiving center. An American MP, who in the excitement had gotten his orders confused, forgot to tell the enemy driver where to turn. The ambulance almost went past the center. A UN officer raced out to the road and motioned to the driver, who backed around and pulled into the parking lot.

One of the first things the liberated POWs saw was the big sign “Welcome Gate to Freedom” raised the preceding night over the Panmunjom receiving tents. Here they could get a cup of coffee and momentarily relax before starting the long one-and-a-half hour ambulance trip south to Freedom Village. The returnees were outfitted in blue Communist greatcoats, utilities, caps, and tennis shoes. Some of the men were bearded; some wore thin smiles; some had half-hidden tears in their eyes. Primarily, there was a subdued and businesslike air to the day’s proceedings, however, with a marked absence of levity. Admiral Daniel, whose UNC liaison group had negotiated the exchange, in commenting on the smoothness of the first day’s operation observed: “It’s been a tremendous emotional experience for us all. Not much was said between us here, but we are all very happy.”[9]

From Panmunjom all Allied prisoners were taken to Freedom Village at Munsan where they received a medical check, and the more seriously wounded were flown to a field hospital near Seoul. The first American prisoner to reach Freedom Village was an Army litter patient, Private First Class Robert C. Stell, a Negro. Helicoptered in from Panmunjom at 1007, he was treated “like a 5-star general by all hands, including General Clark, UN commander.”[10] By noon the routine, agreed upon in the earlier exchange talks, was moving along evenly and would be in effect throughout the week-long exchange. The Communist quota was 100 prisoners freed daily, in two groups of 50 each, while the Allies returned 500. Thirty Americans were among the 100 UNC men released that first day.

Upon their arrival at Freedom Village the Marine POWs, all of whom had been wounded prior to being captured, were greeted by representatives of the 1st Marine Division. In addition to General Clark, other ranking officials on hand included Lieutenant General Maxwell D. Taylor, new EUSAK commander, Major General

Pollock, 1st Marine Division CG, Brigadier General Joseph C. Burger, in one of his first public duties since assuming the post of assistant division commander on 1 April, and Dr. Otto Lehner, head of the International Red Cross inspection teams.

Each Marine prisoner was met by a 1st Division escort who gave him physical assistance, if necessary, as well as a much-prized possession—a new utility cap with its Marine Corps emblem. Recovered personnel received a medical examination. Waiting helicopters stood by to transport seriously sick or wounded Marines to the hospital ships *Haven* and *Consolation* riding at anchor in the Inchon harbor. Chaplains chatted as informally or seriously as a returnee desired. Newspapers and magazines gave the ex-prisoners their first opportunity in months to read unslanted news. And a full set of utility uniforms, tailored on the spot for proper fit, were quickly donned by Marines happy to discard their prison blues.

Although returnees received their initial medical processing at Freedom Village, no intelligence processing was attempted in Korea. Within 24 hours after their exchange, returned personnel were flown to K–16 (Seoul) and from there to Haneda Air Force Base at Tokyo. Upon arrival at the Tokyo Army Hospital Annex, a more detailed medical exam was conducted, including a psychiatric interview by officials from the newly formed Special Liaison Group of Commander, Naval Forces, Far East. Lieutenant Colonel Regan Fuller, USMC, was designated by ComNavFE as OIC of the detailed briefing of all returned personnel at Tokyo. Other Marine officers participating in the debriefings included Lieutenant Colonel Thell H. Fisher and Major James D. Swinson, of FMFPac headquarters; Major Jack M. Daly, representing the 1st Marine Division; and Captain Richard V. Rich, of the 1st Marine Air Wing.

Each Marine returnee was interviewed by a two-man debriefing team that consisted of a Marine and a Navy officer, the latter usually a counterintelligence expert. The three-phase interrogation averaged 9–12 hours and covered personal data, counterintelligence, and a detailed military questionnaire. The latter, particularly, sought information about UN personnel still held captive by the enemy. Since all of the 15 Marine POWs had been captured relatively recently (either in the October outpost contests or the Vegas battle the previous month), the information they had about the enemy was of limited intelligence value. From debriefing reports of Marine returnees, many of whom brought address books with them, it was learned that at least 115 more USMC and Navy prisoners were alive and still held in POW camps.

Upon completion of counterintelligence processing, returned personnel were available for press interviews. Long-distance telephone calls to parents or other family members were arranged by the Red Cross. Summer service uniforms and campaign ribbons were issued, pay provided, and administrative records updated by representatives dispatched by Colonel John F. Dunlap, Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Yokosuka.

All of the 19 Marine and Navy POWs had been released by 25 April. After final processing and clearance for return to the U.S. the men were flown home, via Hawaii, in three groups that departed 28 April, 30 April, and 4 May. Each was accompanied by a Marine Corps officer. Members of the first contingent of POWs arrived at Travis Air Force Base, California, on 29 April, thereby completing their 7,000-mile journey from Communist prison camps. Another small group of POWs considered possible security risks were airlifted directly from Japan to Valley Forge Hospital, near Philadelphia, for further interviewing. No Marines were among them. With the initial prisoner exchange completed, staffs of the major Far East commands began to prepare for the final return of all POWs. Operation BIG SWITCH would take place after the cease-fire that, hopefully, was not too far away.

On the day that Operation LITTLE SWITCH ended, 26 April, plenary truce talks resumed at Panmunjom. The stormy issue of repatriation of prisoners, which had already prolonged the war by more than a year, was still the one major problem preventing final agreement. There was indication, however, that the Communists appeared to be softening on their rigid insistence of forced repatriation. And, on 7 May, the Communists accepted the UN proposal that nonrepatriate prisoners be kept in neutral custody within Korea

(rather than being removed to a foreign neutral nation) and offered an eight-point armistice plan. With modifications, this ultimately became the basis for the armistice. While discussions and disagreements continued on this proposal, another real problem developed from a totally different source.

Since early in April rumblings had been heard, through the polite ambassadorial circuits, that Syngman Rhee, the aging South Korean president, was dissatisfied with major truce issues. In particular, he was disturbed over the possibility that Korea would not become reunited politically. Further, Rhee gave indication that he might take some kind of action on his own. The Korean leader had advised President Eisenhower that if any armistice was signed that permitted Chinese Communist troops to remain south of the Yalu, with his country divided, he would withdraw ROK military forces from the UN command. Since South Korean troops, backed by American specialized units, presently manned the bulk of the UNC front line, Rhee's threat to remove them from General Clark's command presented harrowing possibilities.

Meanwhile, on 13 May, General Harrison, senior UN representative at Panmunjom, made a counterproposal to the Communist plan. This incorporated three measures aimed at reconciling differences in the long-controversial repatriation issue.[11] Arguments flew back and forth at Panmunjom, with a temporary recess called in the talks; but on 4 June the Communists accepted this UN final offer. The dispute of 18 months' duration had ended and the Allied principle of voluntary repatriation had won out in the end. About the only homework left for the negotiating teams was to map out final details of the Demilitarized Zone.

President Rhee now even more violently denounced the projected armistice plan. He declared that he and the Koreans would fight on alone, if necessary. South Korean delegates boycotted the Panmunjom truce meetings, and Rhee began a campaign to block the cease-fire. Final agreement on the POW issue was reached 8 June. It provided that the NNRC offer a "civilian status" to former POWs who did not exercise their right of repatriation within four months after being taken into custody by the commission. Those POWs who desired asylum would be set free. The South Korean National Assembly unanimously rejected the truce terms the following day.

Revision of the truce line, to correspond to current battle positions, and other concluding details of the truce were being settled by 17 June. On 18 June, chaos suddenly replaced progress. Acting on orders from Rhee, during early morning hours ROK guards at the South Korean prisons released approximately 27,000 North Korean anti-Communist POW inmates (the majority of the large group of NKPA who did not wish to be repatriated). They quickly escaped and became absorbed into the civilian populace of South Korea. Immediately the Communists charged the Americans with complicity and demanded to know whether the United Nations Command was able to control its South Korean ally or not.

For the next two weeks the American ambassadorial and military team tried to restore some measure of international good grace and hope to the crisis. Daily talks (and pressure) took place with Rhee, as well as with the Communist negotiators, to set the course back on track again in the direction of a final truce agreement. At the end of June, UNC Commander Clark was authorized by Washington to work out a way in which it would be possible to sign the tenuous armistice—without the Koreans, if necessary.

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
Interval Before the Marines Go Off the Line[12]

Shortly after the heavy Vegas fighting in late March, Colonel Funk's 7th Marines, which had been in reserve, exchanged positions with the 5th Marines. The new line regiment assumed responsibility for the critical, action-prone right sector of the MLR on 4-5 April. In the center part of JAMESTOWN, the 1st Marines of Colonel Adams continued to man the MLR and its 12 outposts, including the strategic COP–2 tucked down by the Panmunjom peace corridor. With the resumption of truce talks on 6 April, this position had again taken on renewed importance with its tank-infantry covering force of 5 armored vehicles and 245 Marines on call at all times.

After its relief from the MLR in early April the 5th Marines, as theo new division reserve unit, assumed the regular missions of serving as a counterforce for Marines in the I Corps sector, if required; maintenance of the secondary KANSAS line; and a rigorous training program. On 10 April, the 3d Battalion moved out to the KANSAS position for a two-day field exercise. By midmonth, spring thaws and heavy rains had so weakened the trench and bunker fortifications of KANSAS that an all-out effort was temporarily diverted from refresher training to reconstruction. The 2d Battalion, meanwhile, under Operation Plan 24–53, pursued an intensive five-day shore-based training program, 7-11 April, in preparation for its coming amphibious exercise, MARLEX XX. On the 13th, BLT 2/5 under Lieutenant Colonel Finch, with armored amphibian, tank, amtrac, and 1/11 detachments, proceeded to the landing area, Tokchok-to, one of the WCIDE command offshore islands southwest of Inchon. Battalion assault companies hit the southern Tokchok-to beaches on D-Day, 15 April, according to schedule, although high winds and rough seas subsequently modified the exercise.[13]

Not long afterward a training exercise involving UNC personnel got underway when the 5th[14] and 1st Marines, together with the artillerymen, combined with the Army, ROK, and Commonwealth Division on 20 April for a four-day I Corps command post exercise (CPX) EVEREADY GEORGE, not far from Seoul.

Along the division front the war was still a daily survival contest, despite the promising outlook at Panmunjom. The most ambitious attempt by the Chinese during the month took place over a three-day period in the right regimental sector, not long after the 7th Marines had moved to the MLR. On 9 April, following a heavy two-hour ballistic downpour of 2,000 rounds of enemy mortar and artillery, a reinforced company of about 300 Chinese soldiers launched a strong probe against Carson at 0345. Attacking in two echelons, the enemy approached from the direction of Arrowhead on the north and the Reno ridgeline. In an hour's time, the enemy had reached the Marine trenches and protective wire, at some places, and was being unceremoniously repulsed by the 1/7 detachment at Carson. For an hour and a half a heavy fire fight raged at the outpost while intruders and defenders battled at pointblank range to settle the dispute.

A reinforcement platoon, from 4/2/7, dispatched from the MLR at 0530, made it as far as the newly established Marine outpost at Elko, about 400 yards southeast of Carson, before being held up by a heavy shower of mortar rounds, and small arms fire. Tankers from the Company A direct element[15] plus a section (two tanks) from the regiment's armored platoon leveled their lethal 90mm fires to discourage the enemy, as did the defender's barrage of 60mm, 81mm, and 4.2-inch mortars.

Two rocket ripples and 22 defensive fire concentrations unleashed by 2/11, also in direct support of Lieutenant Colonel Henry C. Lawrence Jr.'s 1st Battalion, plus additional reinforcing fires by batteries of 1/11 and 4/11 drove off the enemy at 0700. As a security measure, a company from the regimental reserve (E/2/7) was assigned to Carson to buttress the position and assist in reorganizing the outpost defense. The enemy's activity

had cost him 60 known dead. Additional casualties were estimated to be 90 killed and 70 wounded. Marine losses numbered 14 killed, 4 missing, 44 wounded/evacuated, and 22 non-seriously wounded. Meanwhile, beginning at 0715, Marine prop-driven attack AUs from VMAs–212 and–323 and ADs from VMA–121 were aloft over prime Chinese targets to perform CAS missions and MPQ drops.

Between the morning's first strike and midafternoon the three MAG–12 squadrons completed 43 sorties and blasted enemy hills and weapons positions north of Carson with a total of 67 1/2 tons of bombs. Later that night three Chinese platoons, operating in small units, reappeared in the Carson-Elko-Vegas vicinity to recover casualties. Although they reached an unoccupied caved-in bunker 50 feet from Carson, the enemy's nocturnal activity only cost him more casualties from the COP's defense fires: 15 known dead, 15 estimated killed, 7 known wounded, and 27 estimated wounded.

The following day, Panther jets from Marine Fighter Squadrons 311 and 115 contributed to the further destruction of hostile emplacements, but the enemy himself was nowhere to be seen. Again that night, ground-controlled radar bombing runs were made by VMA–121 and VMF(N)–-513 to help keep the enemy off balance. In the early-morning hours of the 11th, however, a band of 30 grenade-slinging Chinese renewed the assault on 7th Marines positions by attacking the reverse slope of Elko. This ambition was deterred by outpost organic weapons and box-me-in fires. After a brief fire fight the CCF withdrew, and the two MAG–33 squadrons later that morning returned to station for CAS strikes against CCF trouble spots. Another raid on Carson began at 2115 that night when 70 Chinese moved out from Ungok to the west ridge of the Marine position. Ten minutes later, Marine 81mm and 4.2-inch mortars, artillery, machine guns, and tanks forced them back with approximately 20 CCF killed and wounded to show for their efforts.

A brief repeat action occurred the following night when two squads of Chinese reappeared at Elko, but they were dispatched by Marine infantry, artillery, and armor direct fires following a 15-minute spirited exchange. During the night of the 12th[16] Chinese probes and harassing efforts diminished. Other than a few spotty, abortive skirmishes in the KMC sector, this pattern of reduced enemy effort would continue for the next several weeks, until after the change of the Marine line in early May. As the peace talks at Panmunjom were beginning to show some progress, enemy psychological warfare efforts in the KMC, 1st, and 7th regimental sectors became more zealous, an indication of the Chinese attempt to increase their propaganda offensive. This included not only loudspeaker broadcasts and propaganda leaflet fired in mortar shells but a more unusual tactic, on 6 April, of enemy messages dropped over the COP Vegas area by airplane.

Little ground action took place in the division sector throughout the rest of the month. During the last three days of April, as the operational period for the Marines drew to an end, both infantry and artillery units noticed an unusual lull across the front. Marine patrols made few contacts, and there was a sharp decrease in the heavy enemy sightings of midmonth. Chinese incoming, in fact, during the latter part of the month decreased markedly, with a total of 873 rounds compared to the 4,149 tallied during the 1–15 April period. An average of 58.2 rounds daily made it, in fact, the quietest period in the Marine division sector since the holiday calm of late December when only 84.2 rounds had fallen the last 10 days of the month.

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
The May Relief[17]

By late April, plans had moved into high gear for relief of the 1st Marine Division by the 25th U.S. Infantry Division and transfer of the Marines to U.S. I Corps reserve at Camp Casey. Although the Marine division had been in active defense positions for 20 months (first in the eastern X Corps and, for the past year, on the western front), some observers noted that there was a reluctance to turn over their presently occupied positions and that the Marines were coming out "under protest from commanders who wanted the Division to remain on the line."[18]

For its part, the 25th Division, commanded by Major General Samuel T. Williams, was to shift over to the I Corps far west coastal area from its own neighboring IX Corps sector on the right. Marine association with the Army division went back to the early days of the war.[19] In August 1950, when the Korean Conflict was then only a few weeks old, the 25th Division, with the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the Army's RCT–5, had spearheaded the first UN counteroffensive on the far southern front, in the Sachon-Chinju area. Now fresh from its own recent period in reserve[20] the 25th Division, including its attached Turkish Brigade, was to take over the 33-mile 1st Marine Division line, effective 5 May. Marine armor and artillery, however, would remain in support of the 25th Division and transfer to I Corps control.

Another change at this time affected the designation of the United Nations MLR. Called Line JAMESTOWN in the I Corps sector (and variously in other parts of the EUSAK front as MISSOURI, DULUTH, MINNESOTA, and CAT), the Allied front was redesignated simply as "main line of resistance," beginning 28 April, and was to be so known in all future orders and communications throughout the entire Eighth Army. A further modification dropped the reference "in Korea" from the acronym EUSAK, the title becoming "Eighth U.S. Army."

In the Marine sector, the last few days of April were a study in contrasts. While Marine frontline infantrymen and cannoneers were having a comparatively peaceful interlude during this period of minimal CCF activity, division engineers were the proverbial colony of beavers. Following up their rigorous schedule in early April of building Freedom Village from scratch within 36 hours, engineer personnel moved out from the division sector late that month to begin construction of the rear area camps that would shortly be occupied by the Marines while in I Corps reserve.

Located approximately 15 miles east of the Marine MLR, the Camp Casey reserve complex consisted of three major areas. They were: the central one, Casey, which gave its name to the entire installation and would house the new division CP and 5th Marines; Indianhead, to the north, where the 7th Marines, 1st KMC Regiment, Division Reconnaissance Company, machine gun and NCO schools were to be established; and Britannia, to the south, assigned to the 1st Marines. Motor transport, engineer, and medical units in support of the respective regiments were to locate nearby.

On 27 April, the day after resumption of truce talks at Panmunjom, Company A engineers began the work of clearing the camp site, erecting prefabricated buildings, and pioneering roads in the 7th Marines northern area. Two days later the 1st KMC Engineer Company was also detailed to Indianhead for work on the 1st KMC Regimental camp. Company C engineers and Company A, 1st Shore Party Battalion, attached to the Engineer Battalion, meanwhile moved into the Casey sector to ready the relocated Division CP and the 5th Marines camp.

Tactical relief of the 1st Marine Division officially began 1 May. By the time it was over, four days later, more than 2,370 truckloads of Marine personnel and equipment had been used in the transfer to Camp Casey.

Described another way: if placed bumper to bumper in a continuous convoy, this would have extended more than six miles, the length of the MLR held by a Marine regiment in any major defense sector. As a preliminary step in the relief, on 29 April the division assumed operational control of several incoming Army artillery units (the 8th, 64th, 69th, and 90th Field Artillery Battalions, and the 21st Antiaircraft Automatic Weapons Battalion) plus elements of the Turkish command, including the TAFC Field Artillery Battalion. By midafternoon, the first of the Army infantry relief personnel had also arrived in the division sector, when elements of the three battalions of the 35th Infantry Regiment had reported in to respective 1st Marines[21] host units, preparatory to assuming responsibility for the center sector of the Marine line.

On 1 May the 5th Marines, then in reserve at Camp Rose, took over responsibility for the 14th Infantry Regiment, designated as the Army maneuver unit. Later that day, when Colonel Tschirgi's regiment closed its headquarters and moved out by motor march to Casey, control of the Army unit transferred to the division. The same day, the 1st KMC/RCT artillery battalion—which, like the 11th Marines units, was to remain on line although KMC infantry personnel were to move to I Corps reserve—came under control of I Corps; two days later an Army armored unit, the 89th Tank Battalion, rolled into position in the KMC rear support area and came under division command.

The 7th Marines right regimental sector, with its critical Nevada Cities and two Berlin positions, became the new home for the Turkish battalions of Brigadier General Sirri Acar in a four-day phased operation, beginning 0115 on 3 May. Actual bulk displacement of the first Marine MLR units and their respective outposts got underway on this date, when responsibility for the 7th Marines left battalion sector transferred from 2/7 [22] to the 1st Battalion, TAFC, and the 7th Marines battalion began displacing to Indianhead. On the same day the division opened its advance command post at Camp Casey.

The first Marine sector to complete the relief was the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion, to the south of the Munsan-ni railhead; at midnight on 4 May, with the assumption of sector responsibility by the Army Task Force Track, it moved to the logistical complex at Ascom City where it opened its new CP. Throughout the BMNT hours of 4 and 5 May, Marine positions were transferred to the incoming organic and/or attached units of the U.S. Army 25th Division. Relief of three of the major sectors in the Marine division line was thus well under way by the early hours of the 5th. Final relief and its elaborate phasing operations were completed that morning. On the left flank, the 1st KMC was relieved at 1030 by the incoming U.S. Army 27th Infantry;[23] 30 minutes later, the 1st Marines was replaced in the line by the Army 35th Infantry; and on the right, the 7th Marines sector was taken over by the TAFC. (See Map 28.)

Click here to view map

Sharply at 1120 on 5 May,[24] the U.S. Army 25th Division assumed responsibility for defense of the MLR in what had been the 1st Marine Division sector for more than 13 months. At the same time all 25th Infantry Division units under operational direction of the division also reverted to parent control. In addition to the Kimpo Regiment, several small Korean Service Corps and medical units retained in the sector also came under Army command.

I Corps Operation Orders No. 31 and 32 had directed that the 11th Marines remain on line in the sector attached to I Corps Artillery, with a general support mission of reinforcing the fires of the 25th Division artillery, and a secondary task of coordinating counter-battery support. The medium battalion, 4/11, and the 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery, furnished general support for I Corps. Regimental and battalion CPs, as well as the rocket battery, continued to occupy their same locations. A change affected the KMC artillery battalion, however; when transferred to I Corps artillery control it displaced from the Marine sector, with a new general support role of reinforcing the I Corps line.

Also on 5 May, at 1130, the 1st Tank Battalion[25] passed to 25th Division control. Two companies, C and B, were assigned to the TAFC (which had no armored units) in the left and right battalion areas, respectively.

Company D vehicles came under command of the 35th Infantry Regiment, in the center sector; while A, the remaining company, was designated as the single reserve unit. This was a modification of the Marine system of maintaining two tank companies in reserve, one a short distance behind the MLR and the other, at the armored battalion CP near Munsan-ni. A change in tactics also took place when the Marine tanks came under Army operational control. It had been the Marine practice to retain the tanks at the company CP from where they moved to prepared firing slots at the request of the supported infantry unit.

When the 1st Tank Battalion was attached to the 25th Division, the armored vehicles were shifted to firing slots near the MLR where they occupied semifixed positions.[26] Armored personnel carriers (APCs) were assigned by the Army to Company B and used by both B and C as resupply vehicles to haul food, water, fuel, and ammunition to the tanks on line. Also as part of the relief, control of the KMC tank company was transferred from the Marine 1st Tank Battalion to I Corps, although the company still continued in its same location in the old KMC sector.

Also remaining in their same positions were MASRT–1 (Marine Air Support Radar Team One), in support of the 25th Infantry Division, MTACS–2 (Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron Two), and VMO–6. The mobile air support section of the observation squadron, however, had moved with the 1st Marine Division to the new Casey area for participation in the coming MARLEX operations scheduled during the reserve training period.

Thus with the relief completed, components of the old Marine division front, from left to right, were: the Kimpo Provisional Regiment; Task Force Track; the 27th Infantry Regiment; 35th Infantry Regiment in the center sector, including its armor and heavy mortar company and 2d and 3d Battalions forward, replacing the 1st Marines 3d and 1st Battalions; and in the right sector, the Turkish Brigade 4.2-inch mortar company and its 1st and 3d Battalions initially located[27] in the MLR positions vacated by the 2d and 3d Battalions, 7th Marines.

In addition to the 1st Marine Division railhead and truckhead at Munsan-ni and Ascom City, a subsidiary railhead/truckhead was opened at Tongduchon-ni, two miles southwest of the new division CP at Casey. No change was made in the airhead at K–16. Effective with the 5 May change, remaining elements of the division CP staff at Yongji-ri joined the advance elements at Casey. As the Marines moved off the front lines they received “well-done” messages from the Commandant, General Shepherd, and the U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander in Chief, Admiral Arthur W. Radford, as well as the new I Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Bruce C. Clarke[28] who cited the “excellence of the planning, coordination and cooperation which enabled the operation of the past few days to be successfully accomplished.”[29]

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
Training While in Reserve and Division Change of Command[30]

While the division was in reserve, its tactical mission consisted of preparation for commitment on I Corps order as a counterattack force in any of the four division sectors of I Corps. Division Operation Plan 7-53 implemented this I Corps Plan "RESTORE" and set forth the designated blocking positions in the 25th Army, Commonwealth, 1st ROK, and 7th Army Division sectors in event of threatened or actual enemy penetration of the MLR.

The 1st Marine Division's Training Order 8–53, issued on 6 May, the day after the relief was officially effected, outlined the training to be accomplished during the eight-week reserve period, 10 May–5 July. Following a few days' interval devoted to camp construction and improvement of facilities, an active training program commenced. Its objective was the continued improvement of amphibious and ground offensive combat potential of all personnel. Three major regimental combat team MARLEXES were scheduled.[31] The training syllabus called for a four-phased progressive schooling from individual to battalion and regimental level conducted in all phases of offensive, defensive, and amphibious warfare. Weaponry familiarization, small unit tactics, and combined unit training, with tank-infantry deployment and integration of helicopters at company-level exercises, were emphasized, culminating in a week-long field maneuver.

Lectures were to be kept to a minimum, with at least 50 percent of the tactical training conducted at night. Specialty training in intelligence, signal communications, antitank and mortar, machine gun, mine warfare, and staff NCO schools was also prescribed. Numerous command post exercises were programmed to obtain a high standard of efficiency in both battalion and regimental-level staff functioning. It was the first time the division had been in reserve since a brief two-week period in late July–August of 1951. A brisk 40-44 hour week, plus organized athletics, insured that the training period was to be fully utilized.

No time was lost getting under way. At a staff conference with battalion commanders on 11 May, General Pollock, division CG, stressed the importance of using the time they were in reserve for enhancing division combat-readiness. Even as he spoke, his 5th Marines had the day before boarded ships at Inchon and were en route to the Yongjong-ni landing area for MARLEX I. Since the 5th Marines, in division reserve, had been the first of the regiments to displace and on 1 May had turned its sector over to the incoming 14th Infantry Regiment, it got the jump on training during the reserve period. Regimental Operation Plan 12-53, of 28 April, had outlined requirements for the 5th Marines RCT LEX 1; from 2–9 May the regiment had participated in a week of intensive amphibious training, including reduced and normal distance CPX dry runs for the coming MARLEX.

With ships from CTE 90.85,[32] and air defense by VMFs–311 and–115, Colonel Tschirgi's RCT-5 made the D-Day landing on 13 May with its two assault BLTs securing the objective. An unexpectedly shallow beach gradient and difficulties encountered in unloading vehicles from the causeway resulted in less than a 100 percent performance rating. These were deficiencies that might have been prevented had not the customary rehearsal been cancelled the previous day when a heavy fog obscured the landing beaches. Besides regimental antitank and 4.2-inch mortar units, participating support elements included Company D, 1st Tank Battalion; Company A, 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion; Company C, 1st Engineer Battalion; 1/11; and helicopters from HMR–161 and VMO–6.

Meanwhile, on 15 May, command post and subordinate units from the 1st, 5th (less RCT–5 currently deployed in MARLEX I), and 7th Marines and support elements took part in a one-day division CPX at Camp

Casey stressing mobility, security and operational procedures. Another CPX on 22–23 May by 11th Marines and engineer personnel emphasized dispersion, camouflage, and message handling under simulated combat conditions. Units of the three infantry regiments plus the KMCs training with the 7th Marines at Indianhead combined in a CPX–FEX (command post-firing exercise) on 26-27 May. Realism bowed to current ordnance supply economics in that ammunition was carried for individual weapons, but it would "not be loaded except on specific orders from an officer."[33]

The CPX–FEX was held as a trial exercise for an Eighth Army CPX scheduled later in the month, which was postponed indefinitely on 29 May because of the critical battlefront situation and continuing enemy attacks across the EUSAK front. Extensive preparations were also underway for MARLEX II, with RCT–7, from 2–10 June; and concluding MARLEX III, scheduled 14–23 June, with RCT–1.

Armor and advance regimental elements had left for the Ascom City-Inchon staging area by 1 June, preparatory for departure to the Yongjong-ni beaches on the Korean west coast in the vicinity of Kunsan. The troop list included approximately 250 officers and 4,450 enlisted from Colonel Funk's 7th Marines and support units, including USN and KMC. Infantry personnel from the regiment's three battalions formed the three assault teams plus a reserve battalion composed of 475 Korean Marines designated as BLT 5/KMC. Regimental support units included Company C, 1st Engineer Battalion; Company D, 1st Medical Battalion; Company C, 1st Shore Party Battalion; Company B, 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion, and various motor transport, amphibian truck, military police, and helicopter detachments.

R-Day on 5 June went off per schedule. Despite intelligence estimates which cheerily predicted that only "nine days of rain can be expected during the month of June",[34] RCT–7 drew one out of the barrel with its D-Day landing, 6 June. This took place during heavy rains and decreased visibility which threw the boat waves off phase by minutes and required more than the allotted time for HMR–161 troop and cargo lifts.

Use of a 144-foot-long M–2 steel treadway pontoon bridge loaned by the Army, emplaced from the end of the causeway to the beach high water mark, was considered highly successful. It solved unloading problems encountered in the earlier MARLEX, in that all heavy equipment and vehicles were landed on the designated beaches. Further experimentation with this novel employment of the M–2 was recommended to test the coupling system of bridge and causeway during periods of heavy surf. On the minus side, shore party officers noted that night transfer operations had been hindered because of the lack of running lights on the amtracs.

On 9 June, as RCT–7 was on the way back from its amphibious exercise, a directive from ComNavFE (Vice Admiral Robert P. Briscoe) notified the division of cancellation of the forthcoming RCT MARLEX III. All available shipping was being held on 24-hour readiness for the expected final repatriation of POWs (Operation BIG SWITCH). All afloat training exercises by Marine, Army, and Navy units between 6 June and 15 October were to be cancelled.

The division was host to ranking I Corps, Eighth Army, Korean, and 1st Commonwealth officials when a special helicopter assault demonstration was staged 11–12 June at Camp Casey. Two rocket launcher sections, 14 HMR–161 copters, and 2/5 infantrymen were deployed to show the diverse combat capabilities of the aerial workhorse. While in I Corps reserve, the division was also host—and winner—of the I Corps Pistol Matches. And 3/11, which the previous month had taken the Army Training Test 6–2 (a) Modified, was notified the battalion had scored 92.91 percent and received congratulations from the CGs, I Corps Artillery and Eighth Army.

A change of command within the 1st Marine Division took place on 15 June with the arrival of Major General Randolph McC. Pate. The retiring CG, General Pollock, was presented the Distinguished Service Medal by the I Corps commander, General Clarke, for his "outstanding success in the defense of Carson, Vegas, and Elko." The previous month, General Pollock had received the Korean Order of Military Merit, Taiguk for his active part in the formation, development, and training of the Korean Marine Corps. Attending the change of command ceremonies were General Megee, CG 1st MAW, General Schilt, CG AirFMFPac, and other Marine, I

Corps, Commonwealth, and Korean senior officers.

The new 1st Marine Division CG was coming to his Korean post from Camp Lejeune, N. C. where (like General Pollock before him) he had most recently commanded the 2d Marine Division. Commissioned originally in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1921, General Pate was to later rise to four-star rank. Prior to World War II, he had seen expeditionary service in Santo Domingo, in 1923–1924, and in China from 1927–1929, and also served in Hawaii. For his outstanding service and skill in complicated staff duties, first at Guadalcanal, and later during amphibious operations at Peleliu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa, General Pate had been awarded the Legion of Merit and a Gold Star in lieu of a second Legion of Merit.

After the war, he had served two tours as head of the Division Reserve, in 1946 and 1951. Other assignments included Director of the Marine Corps Educational Center at Quantico and Deputy Director of Logistic Plans in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.[35]

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
Heavy May-June Fighting[36]

After the early May change of lines, the Chinese lost little time in testing the new UNC defenses. Shortly after 0200 on 15 May, the CCF directed a two-battalion probe on the Carson-Elko-Vegas trio and the Berlin-East Berlin outposts newly held by the Turkish brigade. Supported by heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery, one battalion of enemy soldiers moved against each of the two major defense complexes. Marine Company C tanks, occupying the firing slots that night, accounted for heavy enemy losses in the action, estimated at 200 CCF killed and 100 wounded. Assisting the TAFC Field Artillery Battalion in throwing back the attack were 1/11, 2/11, and 4/11 which sent 3,640 rounds into the sharp four-hour engagement.

The TAFC defense was further reinforced later that day with 21 air strikes against hostile personnel and weapons positions north of the Turkish sector. Adding their weight to the clash, 3/11 and the rocket battery also brought their guns into action, for a combined 5,526 Marine rounds[37] dispatched against the enemy.

It was not until 25 May, after the UNC had made its final offer at the truce talks, however, that CCF artillery really began to open up on the Nevada complex. The increased activity by hostile pieces, during the 25–27 May period, was duly noted by the artillery Marines who laconically reported, “Operations followed the recent pattern: enemy shelling of the Turkish Brigade increased during the afternoon; no contacts were reported.”[38]

This latter situation changed abruptly on 28 May. Beginning at 1800, major elements of the Chinese 120th Division launched simultaneous attacks over 17,500 yards of I Corps front that stretched from COP–2 eastward to that consistent trouble-spot, the Nevada Cities, on to the Berlins, and finally the Hook area in the adjacent Commonwealth Division sector. Supported by heavy artillery fires, one CCF battalion moved in towards Carson and Elko. Another battalion,[39] under cover of smoke, attacked central COP Vegas, while a third struck Berlin and East Berlin on the right flank. Three hours after the initial attack, defenders at Carson and Elko were engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the Chinese.

By midnight the men of the 35th Infantry had beaten back the attack at COP–2. The Turks, likewise, were still in possession of the two Berlin (platoon-strength) outposts, but Commonwealth forces were involved in a pitched battle at Ronson and Warsaw. The situation was even grimmer at this time in the Nevada Cities area outposted by the TAFC. Although the Turkish troops continued to hold Vegas, where 140 men were dug in, Carson (two-platoon size) had fallen and Elko (platoon-strength) was heavily besieged. Shortly thereafter, the 25th Division ordered that the TAFC withdraw from the latter position to its own MLR. The diversionary attack against Berlin-East Berlin had been broken off and the twin positions were secured.

During the first six hours of the attack, the night of 28–29 May, Colonel Mills’ 11th Marines, now under I Corps command, had sent 9,500 rounds crashing into Chinese strongpoints, while Marine air observers directed eight missions against active enemy artillery positions. Ripples from the 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery, transferred to the Commonwealth sector to support the Hook defense, were fired on CCF troop activity there. Another curtain of flame engulfed the Carson intruders. When the fighting started, 15 Marine tanks were positioned in the Turkish sector. Company B and C vehicles, under Captains James M. Sherwood and Robert J. Post, relentlessly pounded the approaching CCF columns, while Company D was put on a 30-minute standby. As the action developed, additional tanks were committed until 33 were on line at one time or another.[40]

When savage Chinese pummeling of the 25th Division outposts continued the following day, Colonel Nelson’s 1st Marines was transferred at 1315 to operational control of I Corps. The regiment’s three infantry battalions, antitank, and heavy mortar companies promptly moved out from their Britannia headquarters and

within two hours had relocated at 25th Division bivouac areas south of the KANSAS line in readiness for counterattack orders. The 1st Marine Division Reconnaissance Company was similarly ordered to 25th Division control to relieve a 14th Infantry Regiment reserve company in position along the east bank Imjin River defenses.

Overhead, close air support runs were being conducted by pilots of Marine Attack Squadrons 212, 121, and 323. A series of seven 4-plane strikes hit repeatedly from noon on those Chinese troops, hardware, and resupply areas north of the 25th Division line. The aerial assault continued late into the night with MPQ missions executed by VMA–121 and WMF–311.

During the 29th, control of the Vegas outposts–where 1st Division Marines had fought and died exactly two months earlier—changed hands several times between the indomitable Turkish defenders and the persistent Chinese. By dark, the CCF had wrested the northern crest from the TAFC which still held the southeastern face of the position. In the 24-hour period from 1800 on the 28th through the 29th, the 11th Marines had expended 41,523 rounds in 531 missions. At one point in the action Chinese counterbattery fire scored a direct hit on Turkish gun emplacements, knocking six howitzers out of action from the explosions of charges already loaded. As a result 2/11, under its new battalion commander, Major Max Berueffy, Jr., took over the direct support mission of the TAFC Brigade. Marine artillery spotters on station from 0450 to midnight directed 42 fire missions on CCF guns, while the rocket battery unleashed 20 ripples against troop activity, one of which caused 50 WIAs. Although an Allied counterattack early in the day had restored Elko to friendly control, the enemy refused to be dislodged from Carson.

I Corps had previously regarded the defensive positions of the Nevada complex as “critical,” with the TAFC having been “instructed to hold them against all enemy attacks.”[41] By midday on the 29th, however, the I Corps commander, General Clarke, and 25th Division CG, General Williams, had apparently had a change of mind. The Vegas strength was down to some 40 Turks. Altogether more than 150 men under the 25th command had been killed and another 245 wounded in defense of Nevada positions. It appeared that the Chinese, constantly reinforcing with fresh battalions despite estimated losses of 3,000, intended to retain the offensive until the outposts were taken.

With Carson and Vegas both occupied by the enemy, the Elko position became untenable without the support of its sister outposts. Six times the CCF had crossed over from Carson to Elko to try to retake the latter position, but had been thus far deterred by Allied firepower. Accordingly, at 2300, the 25th Division ordered its reserve 14th Regiment, earlier committed to the Elko-Carson counterattack, to withdraw from Elko and the Turks to pull back from Vegas to the MLR. By daybreak the withdrawal was completed and 25th Division and Turkish troops had regrouped on the MLR.

The Army reported that more than 117,000 rounds of artillery and 67 close air support missions had buttressed the UNC ground effort. Official estimates indicated that in the three-day action the Chinese had fired 65,000 rounds of artillery and mortar, “up to this point an unprecedented volume in the Korean War.”[42] The Marine artillery contribution from its four active battalions during this 28–30 May period totaled 56,280 rounds in 835 missions.

During the three-day siege, 15 to 33 Marine tanks poured their lethal 90mm projectiles on the enemy from MLR firing slots. At times the action was so heavy that the tanks were refueled on line. As they ran out of ammunition and fuel, “armored utility vehicles of the battalion, with a basic load of ammunition aboard, maneuvered beside the tanks in position and rearmed them on the spot,”[43] to permit virtually uninterrupted tank firing. One Marine was killed in the action the first night. Although 4,162 rounds of Chinese fire fell near the tank positions, no damage to materiel was reported. For their part the M–46s and flames were responsible for 721 enemy deaths, an estimated 137 more killed, 141 wounded, and an estimated 1,200 injured.

During the second day of action, nearly 20 missions were flown by Corsairs and Skyraiders of the three Marine attack squadrons and the jet fighters of VMF–311 and–115. Altogether throughout 28–30 May, Marine

aircraft had flown no less than 119 sorties for the inflamed sectors of the U.S. Army 25th Division and adjacent British 1st Commonwealth Division. Of these, 99 were in support of the sagging Carson-Elko-Vegas-Berlins line.

Ground action ceased the following day as rain drenched the battlefield, although the 11th Marines reported sightings of more than 200 Chinese soldiers, most of them on the three recently lost outposts. Benched while the fierce battle was going on, the 1st Marines remained under operational control of I Corps as a possible contingency force from 29 May to 5 June. On the latter date, following the Eighth Army decision not to retake the Carson-Elko-Vegas outposts, the regiment reverted to Marine control and returned to Camp Britannia. The previous day the Communists had agreed on all major points of the UNC final offer and it appeared that a ceasefire was close at hand.

Diplomats and military leaders both felt this latest Chinese assault was to show a strong military hand and win dominating terrain features along the MLR. Thus the enemy would be able to improve his defensive posture when final battlelines were adjusted at the truce. It was not believed that the CCF effort was an attempt to expand their operations into a general offensive. In any event, the Nevada positions were downgraded from their previous designation as major outposts. I Corps also decreed no further effort would be made to retake them and that a "revaluation of the terrain in view of the destruction of the defensive work indicates these hills are not presently essential to defense of the sector."[44]

If things were now relatively quiet along the battlefront of the I Corps coastal sector, the situation had begun to heat up in the central part of the UNC defense line. On 10 June, following a CCF realignment of troops and supply buildup that had not gone unnoticed by Eighth Army intelligence officials, elements of the CCF 60th and 68th Armies struck the ROK II Corps area, on the east-central front. (See Map 29.) Advancing south along both sides of the Pukhan River with two divisions, the Chinese struck at the ROK II defense line which originally had bulged out to form a salient in the Kumsong vicinity. Within six days the ROK line had been forced back 4,000 yards. In subsequent assaults the enemy made new penetrations further west in the ROK II MLR. Although the main Communist thrust was directed against the ROK II Corps, secondary attacks were also made in the X Corps sector east of ROK II, in the Punchbowl area manned by the ROK 20th Division. It was the heaviest, all-out drive since the CCF spring offensive of April–May 1951, when the UNC had been pushed south approximately 30 miles across the entire Korean front.

Click here to view map

By 18 June, the CCF assaults started to settle down. During the nine days of flaming action, ROK units had suffered some 7,300 casualties to enemy losses of 6,600. Boundaries had been redrawn and three ROK divisions had been redeployed in counterattacks to plug holes in the line that the Chinese had punched open. Nearly 15,000 yards of ROK front had been pushed 4,000 yards south and several hill positions east of the Pukhan had been lost.

The brief respite ended 24 June when the CCF again directed heavy blows against the ROK troops, ignoring other UN forces in the Eighth Army line. It was generally considered a retaliatory move for the 18 June mass release of anti-Communist prisoners by South Korean President Rhee. This time the major target of the renewed Chinese offensive was the ROK 9th Division, in the IX Corps sector immediately west of the ROK II Corps. On 25 June the 1st ROK Division on the eastern flank of I Corps, to the right of the 1st Commonwealth Division, was pounded by another Chinese division. Significantly, the date was the third anniversary of the invasion of South Korea.[45] The 7th Marines, training in I Corps reserve, was put on standby status. The regiment was removed the following day when the 1st KMC/RCT (minus its 3d Battalion) was instead placed in readiness,[46] and subsequently moved out from its Indianhead area to be committed as a relief force in the left sector of the 1st ROK line.

By the 26th, the persistent Chinese probes of the 1st ROK sector had resulted in several forward outposts being overrun. To help stem the action the Marine 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery was displaced on I Corps Artillery

order from its regular position (in the right regimental sector) 20 miles east to support the hard-pressed ROK division. On at least two occasions the battery placed ripples between ROK positions only 600 yards apart and it was felt that these “continued requests for fire close to friendly troops attested to the gunnery of the unit.”[47] Between that date and the 30th, the rocket battery remained in the ROK sector, firing a total of 25 ripples. For the 25th Infantry Division sector, however, the front continued undisturbed throughout the entire month of June.

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
Developments in Marine Air [48]

While the division was in I Corps reserve during the greater part of the April–June period, the 6,800-man 1st Marine Aircraft Wing continued its missions as an operational component of Fifth Air Force. For the Marine air arm it was a time of a major tactical innovation, a number of new air records set, and rapid personnel changes in the squadrons.

Shortly before the Marine division went off the line, a new method of close air support at night was introduced. This employed the use of two or more ground controlled 24-inch searchlights located on prominent terrain features along the MLR in the 7th Marines left battalion sector where the missions were to be flown. Enemy-held reverse slopes—in some cases less than 500 yards from Marine positions—were thereby pinpointed by the powerful intersecting searchlight beams. These long pencil-shaped beams created an excellent artificial horizon and enabled pilots to make bombing or strafing runs with a high degree of accuracy even on the blackest of nights. Manned by ANGLICO personnel, the lights were employed either for target location or illumination (both shadow and direct). A tactical airborne observer in an OE light liaison plane of VMO–6 directed the searchlight teams and controlled the missions.

A week of experimentation and trial runs to perfect the night close air support (NCAS) was conducted by several VMF(N)–513 pilots under direction of Colonel Jack R. Cram. Formerly CO of Marine Air Control Group Two at K–3, he had extended his tour in Korea to complete work on the new program. On 12 April, the first night of operations, Major Charles L. Schroeder and Second Lieutenant Thomas F. St. Denis flew two night support missions in F7F Tigercats. Although employed only a few weeks prior to the division going into reserve on 5 May, the new system rated an enthusiastic response from both pilots and ground commanders, all the way up to the division CG. As the latter reported to the Commandant following the first week of night close support missions, “results. . . exceeded all expectations.”[49]

Between 12 April and 5 May, the night fighter squadron conducted 58 NCAS sorties in the division right sector employing this new control system with excellent results.[50] The procedure was a marked success and made it possible to provide continuous 24-hour-a-day close support to Marine infantry units. It was considered a supplement to, not a replacement for the MPQ (radar controlled bombing) missions of MASRT-1. Plans called for F9F aircraft to be integrated into the program, since the F7F Tigercats were being replaced by jets. Allied psychological warfare teams on 17 April introduced a different theme in their broadcasts to the enemy: that of the dangers to the CCF from the new searchlight marking of targets. As a Marine training bulletin noted: “It is believed that this method of attack by aircraft is particularly demoralizing to the enemy because he is unable to anticipate where the strike will hit, and therefore has no means of defending himself against it.”[51]

Another tactical improvement about this same time dealt with artillery flak suppression in support of close support aircraft. Two refinements made in the procedure in the late spring of 1953 involved firing of HE rounds during the actual run of planes over the target. Basically, the plan consisted of releasing a TOT or VT concentration on the most lucrative enemy antiaircraft positions within a 2,500-yard circle around, the strike area. A continuous rain of HE-fuzed projectiles was placed on these targets for a three-minute period, during which Marine planes made their runs.

Favorable results were achieved in that new system tended to keep enemy antiaircraft gunners off-balance for a longer period of time and thus decreased the danger to friendly attacking aircraft. On the other hand, pilots quickly noted that this became an “unimaginative employment of an unvarying flak suppression schedule

which Communist AA gunners soon caught onto and turned to their own advantage."52

With respect to squadron hardware, Marine combat potential increased substantially during the spring months with the phasing out of F7Fs in Night Fighter Squadron 513 and introduction of the new F3D–2 twin-jet Skyknight intruder. By late May the allocation of 24 of these jet night fighters had been augmented by 4 more jets from the carrier USS *Lake Champlain* and the squadron "assumed its primary night-fighter mission for the first time in the Korean War."[53] While the sturdy, dependable Tigercats[54] made their final contribution to the United Nations air effort early in May with the experimental NCAS program, the new Skyknights continued the squadron's unique assignment inaugurated in late 1952 as night escort to Air Force B–29 bombers on their strike missions. Not a single B–29 was lost to enemy interceptors after 29 January 1953. The capabilities of the skilled Marine night-fighters were noted in a "well done" message received by the CO, VMF(N)-513 in April from the Air Force.[55]

Organizational changes within the wing included the arrival, on 29 May, of a new MAG–12 unit to replace the "Checkerboard" squadron. VMA–332 (Lieutenant Colonel John B. Berteling) was slated to operate on board the USS *Bairoko* (CVE–115) for the F4U carrier-based squadron VMA–312[56] due for return to CONUS. Veteran of 33 months of combat while attached to the wing as West Coast (CTE 95.1.1) aerial reconnaissance and blockade squadron, VMA–312 (Lieutenant Colonel Winston E. Jewson) was officially relieved 10 June. The change, moreover, was the first phase of a new personnel policy, carrier unit rotation, that was expected to implement a unit rotation program for land-based squadrons. It was anticipated that the new unit rotation program would eliminate inherent weakness of the individual pilot rotation system and thus increase the combat effectiveness of the wing.[57]

During the period other organizational changes included transfer of administrative control of VMF(N)–513 on 15 May from MAG–33 to MAG–12.[58] The squadron, with its new twin-engined jet fighters, moved from K–8 (Kunsan) further up the coast to the MAG–12 complex at K–6 (Pyongtaek), upon completion of the new 8,000-foot concrete runway there. This phased redeployment of nightfighter personnel and equipment began in late May and was concluded on 6 June without any interim reduction of combat commitments. Replacement of the squadron F7F–3Ns with F3D–2s was also completed in early June.

Late that month, plans were underway for two additional changes: the Marine photographic squadron, VMJ–1, was due to be separated administratively and operationally from MAG–33 on 1 July and revert to 1st MAW; and Marine Wing Service Squadron One (MWSS–1) was to be deactivated, effective 1 July.

The change of command relationships between CG, FAF and CG, 1st MAW earlier in the year[59] which had restored operational control of certain designated Marine air units to the wing commander, increased the efficiency of 1st MAW operations. Despite the fact that VMJ–1 at times contributed nearly 40 percent to the total FAF input of all daylight combat photographs,[60] aerial intelligence (both pre- and post-strike photos) supplied to wing and group headquarters was considered inadequate. As a MAG–33 intelligence officer commented with some exasperation as late in the war as May 1953:

"The Section continued to experience difficulty in obtaining 1:50,000 scale overlays of friendly MLR and OP positions. These overlays are important for making up target maps for close support missions, but they are continually held up for long periods by higher echelons, and, if received here at all, are then often too old to be considered reliable."[61]

Similarly, at the individual squadron level, the carrier unit VMA–312 shortly before its relief, reported: "The one limitation on squadron activities continued to be photo coverage of the strikes. With limited facilities available, the squadron has no clear cut pictures of strike results."[62] Return of VMJ–1 to operational control of General Megee ultimately "gave the Wing adequate photo-intelligence for the first time since commencement of combat operations in Korea."[68]

Indoctrination of new replacement personnel within the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing took a swift upturn

during the spring period. Pilots who had completed 100 combat missions were transferred to staff duty elsewhere in the wing in Korea or rotated Stateside. The average squadron personnel strength ran to 88 percent of T/O for enlisted; and officer strength, considerably less, frequently dipped as low as 61 percent. Under the 100-missions policy, it was a time of rapid turnover of unit commanders, too, as witnessed from the following squadron diary entries:

"*VMA-212*—Lieutenant Colonel James R. Wallace assumed command from Major Edward C. Kicklighter, effective 19 June; the latter had been squadron ExO and acting CO in interim period following 30 April departure of former CO, Lieutenant Colonel Smunk;

"*VMA-323*—Lieutenant Colonel Clarence H. Moore vice Lieutenant Colonel Frash, on 11 April; and Major Robert C. Woten succeeding Lieutenant Colonel Moore on 27 June;

"*VMA-121*—Major Richard L. Braun vice Lieutenant Colonel Hughes, on 21 April;

"*VMF(N)–513*—Lieutenant Colonel Ross S. Mickey vice Lieutenant Colonel Conley, on 6 May; in June, Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Conrad, acting CO, named CO for Lieutenant Colonel Mickey, hospitalized for injuries received in a May aircraft accident;

"*VMJ–1*—Lieutenant Colonel Leslie T. Bryan, Jr. vice Lieutenant Colonel William M. Ritchey, on 15 May;

"*VMF–311*—Lieutenant Colonel Arthur M. Moran vice Lieutenant Colonel Coss, on 21 April; Lieutenant Colonel Bernard McShane vice Lieutenant Colonel Moran, on 1 June;

"*VMF–115*—Lieutenant Colonel Lynn H. Stewart vice Lieutenant Colonel Warren, 5 June."

With respect to CAS activities, excellent weather in April—only a single day of restricted flying—brought the 1st MAW air tally that month for its land-based squadrons to 3,850 effective combat sorties (440 more by VMA–312) and 7,052.8 combat hours. This was a substantial increase over the preceding months. Not surprisingly, the average daily sortie rate for the month was correspondingly high: 128.3. Of 1,319 CAS sorties the largest proportion, 579 and 424 (43.9 percent, 32.1 percent), were for Marine and ROK operations, respectively.

The outstanding day of the month was 17 April. During the 24-hour reporting period, 262 sorties were completed by MAGs–33 and–12 pilots,[64] who expended a combined total of 228.3 tons of bombs and 28,385 rounds of 20mm ammunition. For the two MAG-33 fighter bomber squadrons, it represented maximum effort day. Preparation had been made a week earlier to devise the targeting and best all-round flight schedules for ordnance and line sections. Objective areas for the mass attack were picked by the wing G–3 target selection branch and approved by the EUSAK-Fifth Air Force JOC. It was decided that "flights of eight aircraft staggered throughout the day would offer the best efficiency in expediting reloading and refueling with not more than sixteen aircraft inactive on the flight line at one time."[65] Throughout the day, from 0410 to 2030, VMFs–311 and–115 continuously pounded designated targets in support of the U.S. 7th and 3d Infantry Divisions.[66] Commented MAG–33:

"Hitting an all-time high in the annals of memorable days, this, the seventeenth of April not only further proved MAG–33's ability to cripple the enemy's already diminishing strength but it also allowed VMF–115 to set records in total airborne sorties launched in a single day plus a record total ordnance carried and expended in one day by jet type aircraft."[67]

VMF–115 alone, with 30 pilots and 23 aircraft, had flown 114 sorties and delivered 120 tons of bombs on North Korean targets.

A sample of the intensity of this maximum day was a series of three early-morning interdiction strikes led by three VMF–115 pilots that launched the effort. Led by Lieutenant Colonel Joe L. Warren, Major Samuel J. Mantel, Jr., and Major John F. Bolt, the 23 attacking Panther jets lashed the objective with 22.35 tons of ordnance and 4,630 rounds of 20mm ammunition. The three missions destroyed half of the buildings and inflamed 95

percent of the target area in the enemy supply concentration point T'ongch'on on the Korean east coast.

By contrast, wing operations in May were considerably hampered by the bad weather peculiar to this time of the year in Korea. Restricted flying conditions were recorded for 18 days of the month. A total of 153 CAS sorties were flown for the Marine division before its 5 May relief from the front lines. Of the wing's 3,359 sorties[68] during the month, 1,405 were for close support to forward units beating back Communist encroachment efforts. The allocation of CAS sorties was 412 for U.S. infantry divisions (including 211 for the 25th Division occupying the customary Marine sector); 153 for the 1st Commonwealth Division at the Hook which the Communists assaulted on 27–28 May as part of their overall thrust against western I Corps defenses; 412 sorties for ROK units; and 63, miscellaneous. Heaviest action for Marine aviators took place towards the end of the month to thwart enemy blows in the I Corps sector where Army and Turkish units were attemping to repulse the Chinese.

The renewed effort of the Chinese Communists against UNC ground forces in late May continued sporadically the following month. A number of new records were set by Marines flying CAS assignments under the Fifth Air Force. During the intense mid-June attacks on the ROK II Corps area and adjacent X Corps sector, MAGs–12 and–33 pilots chalked up some busy days. Between 10–17 June, Marine, Navy, and Air Force aircraft had flown 8,359 effective sorties, the bulk of this massive FAF effort to buttress the crumbling ROK defense. Of this number, Marine sorties totaled 1,156, or nearly 14 percent. (Combat sorties for the 1st MAW throughout June came to 3,276 despite 23 days of marginal to nonoperational weather.) Marine pilots scored as high as 48 percent of a single day's interdiction strikes made by FAF. This occurred 15 June when the 1st MAW flew a record-breaking 283 sorties, followed by another peak 227 sorties the next day.

Actually, when the ground situation in the ROK II Corps front began to deteriorate on 12 June, the new Fifth Air Force commander, Lieutenant General Samuel E. Anderson, "waived the {3,000 foot} minimum-altitude restrictions on his fighter-bombers and ordered his wings to give all-out support to the Eighth Army."[69] The Seventh Fleet commander, Admiral Clark, likewise kept his carriers on line for seven days and ordered its naval pilots to "team with Marine and Fifth Air Force airmen for a close-support effort exceeding anything up to that time."[70] When the ROK II Corps defenses cracked open on 15 June, temporary clearing weather "allowed General Anderson and Admiral Clark to hit the Reds with everything they had. FEAF planes flew a total of 2,143 sorties of all kinds for the largest single day's effort of the war."[71]

Commenting on this heavy action period, 14–17 June, a dispatch to General Megee from the new FAF commander, who had succeeded General Barcus the previous month, noted:

"The figures are now in. From 2000, 14 Jun 53, to 0001, 17 Jun 53, Fifth Air Force units flew a total of 3,941 combat sorties. The cost was 9 pilots lost, 11 aircraft lost, 11 aircraft major damage, 42 aircraft minor damage. The results: 1 enemy offensive stopped cold. I very deeply appreciate the splendid efforts of all members of the 5th AF at all levels. Only a concerted team effort made the foregoing possible."[72]

This came, incidently, only five days after receipt by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing of the Korean Presidential Unit Citation.[73] The award cited the wing's "outstanding and superior performance of duty" between 27 February 1951 and 11 June 1953. During this period Marine fliers executed more than 80,000 combat sorties for UNC divisions.

The fighter-bombers of MAG–33 and the MAG–12 attack planes saw heavy action during 24–30 June when the Chinese again concentrated their attention on ROK divisions in the UNC line. Peak operational day was 30 June. Marine squadrons alone executed 301 sorties, including 28 percent of the CAS and 24 percent of total FAF interdiction missions. It was also an outstanding day for MAG–12 which "outdid itself by flying 217 combat sorties against enemy forces. The 30th of this month saw MAG–12 establish a new ordnance record when an all-time high of 340 tons of bombs and napalm were dropped on North Korea."[74] Contributing heavily to this accomplishment was Marine Attack Squadron 121. It unleashed 156 tons of ordnance, a squadron record. It was

believed this also established an all-time record for tonnage expended on the enemy by a Marine single-engine propeller squadron.

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)
Other Marine Defense Activities[75]

Like their counterparts on the Korean mainland, the Marines, naval gunfire teams, and ROK security troops comprising the West Coast and East Coast Island Defense Commands felt the alternating pressure build-up and slow-down that typified the closing months of the war. At both installations the defense had been recently strengthened, more or less by way of response to a CINCPacFleet intelligence evaluation in December 1952. This alerted the isolated island forces to the possibility of a renewed Communist attempt to recapture their positions. The Allied east coast defense structure at Wonsan, right at the enemy's own front door just above the 39th Parallel, was considered particularly vulnerable.

As in the preceding months, the mission of the west coast island group remained unchanged—namely, the occupation, defense, and control of its six island components. These, it will be remembered, were: Sok-to, Cho-do, Paengyong-do (command headquarters), Yongpyong-do, and the two lesser islands at Taechong-do and Tokchok-to.[76] Formal designation of the island commands was modified on 1 January 1953. At this time the West Coast and East Coast Island Defense Elements (TE 95.15 and TE 95.23) were redesignated as Task Units (TU 95.1.3 and TU 95.2.3) respectively. Korean Marines, who represented the bulk of these task units, were provided from the 2d KMC Regiment, the island security force. This unit constituted the main defense for the important U.S. Marine-controlled islands off the Korean west and east coasts.

Approximately 17 Marine officers and 100 enlisted men were assigned to the western coastal complex, with two battalions of Korean Marines fleshing out the garrison defense. The primary mission of this island group was to serve as offshore bases for UNC intelligence activities, including encouragement of friendly guerrilla operations conducted by anti-Communist North Korean personnel. Artillery based on the Marine-controlled islands provided both defensive fires and counterbattery missions against enemy guns sited on the nearby mainland.

The secondary mission of WCIDU, that of training Korean troops in infantry and weapons firing exercises, continued to be hampered somewhat by faulty communication. As one officer observed, the training program to qualify selected KMCs for naval gunfire duties "met with only modest success, due primarily to the language barrier and lack of communications equipment in the Korean Marine Corps. Personnel who had received this training did prove to be extremely helpful in accompanying raiding parties on the mainland in that they were able to call for and adjust fires."[77]

Enemy pressure against the West Coast Islands, both from Communist shore guns and bombing, had increased during the fall and winter of 1952. Cho-do, shaped roughly like a giant downward-plunging fish, as previously noted had been bombed in October for the first time in the history of the command. This new trend was repeated for the next two months. By way of response, two 90mm guns were transferred to Cho-do from Kanghwa-do (a more peaceful guerrilla-controlled island northwest of Inchon) for use there as counterbattery fire against aggressive mainland batteries. The islands of Sok-to and Paengyong-do had likewise been bombed during this period, although no damage or serious casualties resulted. In December, enemy shore guns fired 752 rounds against Task Force 95 (United Nations Blockading and Escort Force) ships charged with responsibility for the island defense, in contrast to the 156 rounds of the preceding month.

Intelligence in December from "Leopard," the friendly Korean guerrilla unit at Paengyong-do, also reported the presence of junks, rubber boats, and a nearby enemy artillery battalion off Chinnampo, believed to be in readiness to attack the island. A captured POW, moreover, on 22 December reported that elements of the 23d

NKPA Brigade located on the mainland across from Sok-to would attempt to seize the island group before the end of the year. The next day, shortly after dusk, when a concentration of 200 rounds[78] of 76mm suddenly fell on Sok-to, and another 125 rounds struck neighboring Cho-do, it looked as if it might be the beginning of trouble. Naval gunfire (NGF) spotters on the islands directed the fire from UNC patrol boats cruising the Yellow Sea. This counterbattery fire quickly silenced the enemy guns. Again, at the end of the month, West Coast islands were alerted for an invasion, but it never materialized.

A matter of continuing concern to the command during the fall and winter months was the North Korean refugee problem. So serious was the situation, in fact, that it had warranted a directive from the TF 95 commander (Rear Admiral John E. Gingrich). In the early fall, a large number of refugees had filtered into the West Coast Islands, raising serious doubts as to their feeding and ultimate survival during the Korean winter. Through the United Nations Civil Assistance Command, a tentative date of September had been set for evacuating these North Korean refugees to South Korea. By November the question of their relocation was still not settled, although the feeding problem had been eased somewhat by two LST-resupply loads of emergency rations and grain by CTF 90.

Activities followed a fairly consistent pattern during early 1953, with harassing fire striking the islands from the North Korean shore batteries and sporadic bomb and propaganda drops. Periodically USAF pilots who had strayed off course, planes from the nearby British carriers HMS *Glory* or *Ocean*, or Marine fliers from USS *Badoeng Strait* or *Bataan* made emergency landings on the beach airstrips at Paengyong-do for engine repairs or refueling. Logistical support continued to be a problem, due to the peculiarities of the joint ordering system through the Army. In January the western islands had unfilled requisitions dated from as early as February 1952. Official unit reports also noted the difficulty of obtaining medical supplies either promptly or in full.

In April, with the hot-cold cease-fire talks again taking one of their spasmodic upswings, WCIDU commander, Colonel Harry N. Shea, conferred with American and British naval officials regarding CTG 95.1's (Royal Navy Commander, West Coast Blockading and Patrol Group) Operation PANDORA. This called for the evacuation of Sok-to and Cho-do, the two WCIDU islands north of the 38th Parallel, at the time of the armistice.

Increased naval gunfire and artillery missions against active enemy mainland targets, caves, and observation posts gave the two new 90mm guns delivered to the Sok-to garrison the month before and the pair already at Cho-do, as well as their gun crews, some unscheduled practice. Marine garrison personnel at the two islands and nearby patrol ships were busy 25 days of the month knocking out or neutralizing Communist mainside batteries. Late that month, the battleship USS *New Jersey* stationed off the east coast, sailed around the Korean peninsula to add its 16-inch guns to the bombardment. Enemy shelling of the two western islands increased in June, with 1,815 rounds expended in response by the two Marine gun sections.

During June, as it appeared the end of the war was in sight, the first phase of PANDORA got underway with the evacuation by CTF 95 of approximately 19,425 partisans, their families, and refugees from Sok-to and Cho-do to islands south of the 38th Parallel. A new WCIDU commander, Colonel Alexander B. Swenceski, had also arrived by this time, since the average tour of duty was but a brief four months at both island commands.

Across the Korean peninsula, the east coast Allied off-shore island defense centered on a cluster of islands in Wonsan Harbor. Situated more than 100 miles north of the battleline, these strategically-placed islands comprised the northernmost UN-held territory in Korea. The East Coast Island Defense Command numbered approximately 35 Marines, 1,270 Korean Marines, and 15 Naval personnel. Headquarters for TU 95.2.3 was Yo-do, the largest installation, which was garrisoned by approximately 300 Korean Marines and a limited detachment of USMC and USN personnel. Smaller defense forces were located on the other islands under ECIDU command.[79] In addition, an improvised NGF spotting team was also stationed at the three forward islands (Mo-do, Tae-do, and Hwangto-do). Mission of the ECIDU was a defensive one: to hold the islands as a base for covert intelligence activities. The island defense system existed for the purpose of "containing and destroying any enemy

forces who escape detection or who press home an attack in the face of Navy attempts at their destruction."[80]

Individual island commanders were responsible for the defense of their small parcels of seaborne real estate, control of both defensive and offensive NGF missions in the area, and evaluation of intelligence regarding enemy troop locations, the movement of supplies north, or new emplacements of hostile guns. Fire support for the ECIDU islands, exposed to the enemy shore batteries above the 39th Parallel, was available from Task Force 95, which maintained a task group of ships off both the east and west coasts. Aircraft and ships of Task Force 77 (Seventh Fleet Striking Force), operating off the East Korean coastline, were also on call. In December, for instance, the Corsairs of TF 77 had resumed their rail-bridge interdiction. All-out attacks on railroad and highway bridges, as well as bombing runs on the 90-mile stretch of east coast railroad from Hungnam to Songjin, were undertaken to cut off supplies being moved north for Communist industrial use.

February marked the second anniversary of the siege of Wonsan by the UNC, the longest blockade of a port in recent U.S. history. Some naval authorities by this time argued that the venture had become one of doubtful merit which "should never have been undertaken, but its long history made it difficult to abandon without apparent admission of defeat."[81] In any event, the month also signaled increasing attention paid by hostile shore batteries to the little island enclave. For seven consecutive days, 9–15 February, the harbor islands were targets for enemy mixed artillery and mortar shells. Minor materiel damage and casualties were sustained at Yo-do during a Valentine's Day bombardment, 14 February.

Altogether, the enemy harassed the harbor islands for 16 days during the month, expending 316 rounds, compared with 11 days in January. Hostile fire, not limited to the Wonsan Harbor islands, was also directed against friendly ships USS *DeHaven* and USS *Moore*. These provided counterbattery fire and were, in turn, fired upon, the nearest shells landing only 400 yards from the two vessels. This attack, also on 14 February, was described as an "unusually determined and precise"[82] effort. The enemy, moreover, did not appear to take his usual precautions with respect to disclosing his positions. The fact that a Communist shore battery would cease fire when subjected to friendly counterbattery, with other positions then immediately taking up the delivery, "indicated some sort of central control for the first time."[83] The I Corps, NKPA artillery units across from the Wonsan Island command revealed the "heavy, effective artillery capability of enemy batteries which encircle Wonsan Harbor."[84]

Unseasonably good weather the latter part of February improved the transportation and supply situation. With the bitter cold and wind subsiding, maintenance crews could repair the ravages of the past several months. Craft, up to LCVP size, were hoisted in on a large pontoon for repair. For most of December and January, "this small, physically remote Marine Corps command,"[85] as the ECIDU commander, Lieutenant Colonel Robert D. Heinl, Jr. himself described it, had been snowbound. Winds howled in excess of 40 knots, and temperatures dropped to 10° below at night. Personnel at the command island, Yo-do, subsisted on C rations for eight days. With boating operations suspended because of the high winds, it was not possible to send supplies or water to Hwangto-do which for several days relied solely on melted snow.

The prolonged foul weather, moreover, interrupted all classified radio communications between the ECIDU and the outside world. Crypto guard for the Wonsan islands was maintained by elements of the East Coast TG 95. Coded and decoded security radio messages had to be picked up by patrol boat which could not reach the islands during extreme conditions of icy seas and heavy snows.

As with the men on the front line, the Communists stepped up their pressure and gunfire against the island command Marines during March. The record[86] 524 rounds which fell on the ECIDU islands in March doubled the following month when the command received 1,050 rounds from active mainland batteries. In April the persistent NKPA artillerymen kept up a continuing bombardment of the eastern coastal UNC islands, missing only three days of the entire month, that caused nine casualties when a direct hit was made on the Tae-do CP bunker. It was the highest rate of incoming since UN occupation of the islands. Another April record was enemy

mine laying, which increased sharply in both the WCIDU and ECIDU command areas. A total of 37 mines were sighted, the highest number since August 1952. Communist shore gunners, in addition to harassment of the island themselves, fired 2,091 rounds against TF 95 ships, another all-time high.

With respect to personnel, the situation had improved markedly. An increase in ECIDU command strength authorized by CG, FMFPac in March provided for an additional 9 Marine officers, 38 enlisted Marines, and 6 Navy personnel. These were exclusive of the current detachments of 1st ANGLICO shore party and naval maintenance personnel, and represented nearly a 40 percent strength increase.[87] Not long afterward the new ECIDU commander, Lieutenant Colonel Hoyt U. Bookhart, Jr., arrived to succeed Lieutenant Colonel Heinl, who had held the position since the preceding November.

As with the WCIDU force, by late spring it appeared that the days of UNC control and occupation of the east coast islands were numbered. In view of the imminent armistice, a CinCFE directive of 11 June called for the evacuation of all civilians, supplies, and equipment “in excess of immediate needs.”[88] This was a preliminary step towards full evacuation of the islands once the armistice agreement was reached. Accordingly, on 11 June, as evacuation of the friendly west coast partisans got under way, villagers from Yo-do, the largest and ECIDU headquarters site, and the far northern island of Yang-do were similarly moved south. The evacuation was completed by mid-June.

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Chapter 8. Marking Time (April-June 1953)

The Division is Ordered Back to the Front[89]

A rash of political activity in June markedly affected the tenor of military operations in Korea. Intensified Communist aggression broke out north of ROK sectors in the Eighth Army line, largely as a reaction to President Rhee's unprecedented action on 18 June of freeing, with the help of ROK guards, approximately 25,000 North Korean anti-Communist prisoners at POW camps in the south. Other anti-Communist POWs at Camp No. 10, near Ascom City, staged violent break-out attempts at that same time and Company A, 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion passed to operational control of the camp commanding officer there to help prevent a repetition of any such incidents in the future. Following a recess of truce talks, pending a clarification of the status of the current military-diplomatic agreements, key delegates held crisis meetings at Panmunjom and Tokyo to get the beleaguered talks back on track.

Despite the furor, signing of the armistice agreement was expected shortly. As a result, the Munsan-ni Provisional Command was reorganized with the 1st Marine Division assigned the responsibility of reactivating the United Nations Personnel and Medical Processing Unit for the anticipated post-truce exchange of prisoners of war. This was to be conducted along lines similar to that for Operation LITTLE SWITCH, the initial limited exchange. The Division Inspector was named processing unit commander and functional sections (S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, interpreters, messing, medical, engineer) were also activated. As the division training tour in I Corps reserve drew to a close, a number of regimental CPXs were held during June. And the 5th Marines drew a new assignment: training in riot control. Following civilian demonstrations that had erupted in various populated areas of Eighth Army, including the I Corps sector, the regiment was ordered "to be prepared to move in battalion size increments, to be employed as army service area reserve in suppression of civil disturbances anywhere in army service area." [90]

While the Marine infantry regiments concluded their training period, the 1st Tank Battalion, Kimpo Provisional Regiment, and Division Reconnaissance Company remained under operational control of the frontline U.S. 25th Infantry Division. Marine artillerymen likewise continued under orders of CG, I Corps Artillery, in the forward area, reinforcing division artillery fires. Tentative plans were underway for movement of the 1st Marine Division back to its former position on the MLR in early July. After the signing of the cease-fire, the division would comply with provisions of the truce agreement by closing out its former MLR and withdrawing to designated positions two kilometers south of the former defensive positions.

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Chapter 9. Heavy Fighting Before the Armistice

Relief of the 25th Division[1]

FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF JULY the 1st Marine Division continued its mission as I Corps Reserve and its two-month period of intensive combat training that had begun on 5 May. Planning got under way on 1 July, however, for return of the division to its former sector of the MLR, as the western anchor of I Corps, in relief of the 25th Infantry Division.

Marine infantry components were directed by I Corps to effect the transfer of operational control during the night of 7–8 July. Tank and artillery units—already in the division sector throughout the reserve period—were to make whatever minor relocations were necessary at suitable times thereafter. Division Operation Plan 10–53 ordered the 7th Marines to reassume its responsibility for the right regimental sector of the MLR, eastward to the 1st Commonwealth boundary. The 5th Marines, which had been in reserve at the time of the May relief of lines, was assigned to the center sector of the MLR, while the 1st Marines was designated as divisional reserve.

Relief of the 25th Infantry Division by Marine units got underway on 6 July when the first incoming elements of Colonel Funk's 7th Marines moved up to the right regimental sector manned jointly by the U.S. 14th Infantry Regiment and the Turkish Armed Forces Command. Advance personnel reported into the left sector, to be taken over by the Marine 1st Battalion, and at 1400 the 3d Battalion relieved the TAFC reserve battalion in the rear area.

Two platoons from the Marine regiment's 4.2-inch Mortar Company, meanwhile, also began their phased relief of the Turkish Heavy Mortar Company. The incoming mortar crews had some unexpected early target practice. As the men took up their active MLR firing positions in the right battalion sector, they were promptly forced to put their tubes into action to silence a troublesome machine gun, enemy mortars, and hostile troops behind the Jersey Ridge to the north and Reno and Elko on the west. That evening the 2d Battalion opened its new command post in the eastern sector, occupied by two TAFC battalions.

Sharply at 0455 on 7 July, the 7th Marines assumed responsibility for the right regimental sector and came under operational control of the 25th Division. Shortly after noon that day, forward units of 1/7 reached the 25th Division sector after a three hour motor march from Camp Indianhead, through driving rains in their second day without letup. At the battalion sector, 1/7 joined the advance echelon of 40 men who had arrived the previous day and took over its MLR positions from the 14th Infantry. Additional 7th Marines units reporting in throughout the day and assuming new locations were the weapons, mortar, and antitank companies.

The first of Colonel Tschirgi's 5th Marines returned to their center regimental sector before dawn that same day to begin their relief of the Army 35th Infantry Regiment. At 0300 the 3d Battalion assumed responsibility for the eastern half of the MLR. By late afternoon, antitank personnel and the 2d Battalion were in line, the latter taking over the western battalion sector at 1716. In the rear regimental area, early elements of Colonel Nelson's 1st Marines, locating just south of the Imjin River, had begun to arrive by 1300. The regiment would assume ground security for the Spoonbill and Libby (formerly X-Ray) bridges in the sector as well as MASRT #1.

No one needed to remind the 1st Marine Division that the territory it was moving back into was not the same—with respect to defense posts in the right regimental sector—that it had left two months earlier. Three of its six outposts there (Carson, Elko, Vegas) had fallen to the enemy in the late-May battle, despite the formidable resistance of the defending Turks. Outpost Ava remained at the far western end of the line, with the Berlin-East Berlin complex in the right battalion area. Some 6,750 yards of intervening MLR—more than four miles—lay in

between, bereft of any protective outposts to screen and alert the defending line companies to sudden enemy assaults. The Marines were thus returning to a main line of resistance considerably weakened in its right regimental sector.

As the 1st Division CG, General Pate, observed:

"Vegas [had] dominated the enemy approaches to Berlin from the north and northwest and therefore made Berlin relatively secure. Berlin, in turn, dominated the enemy approaches from the north and northwest to East Berlin and made East Berlin relatively secure. The loss of Outpost Vegas to the CCF placed Berlin and East Berlin in very precarious positions and negated their being supported by ground fire except from the MLR."[2]

Ground support fire from the MLR, moreover, tended to be only moderately successful in supporting the outposts because of the nature of the terrain. A major Communist stronghold, Hill 190, lay northeast of the Carson-Elko-Vegas complex. Since Berlin (COP 19) and East Berlin (COP 19-A) were sited on extensions of this same hill mass, the enemy could make sudden "ridgeline" attacks against the Berlins. With buffer outpost Vegas now lost, the likelihood of CCF success in such attacks was "immeasurably increased."[3]

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Chapter 9. Heavy Fighting Before the Armistice
Initial Attacks on Outposts Berlin and East Berlin[4]

It did not take the Chinese long to exploit this situation. At about 2100 on 7 July, while the relief of lines was in progress, the two Berlin outposts and newly-located MLR companies of Lieutenant Colonel Cereghino's 2d Battalion (from the left: D, F, and E), were greeted by a heavy volume of Chinese mortar and artillery fire. The barrage continued unremittingly, followed by waves of a reinforced Chinese battalion that swept over the two platoon-sized outposts, from the direction of Vegas. By 2345 defending Marines at both outposts were engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the enemy, identified as elements of the 407th Regiment, 136th Division, 46th CCF Army.

Berlin, manned at the time by TAFC[5] and Marine personnel, was unexpectedly strengthened by a Company F reinforced squad that had been dispatched on an earlier ambush patrol in the vicinity of the outpost. At East Berlin, however, the overwhelming hordes of Chinese soldiers advanced to the trenchline of the steep forward slope and quickly locked with the Marines at point-blank range. Despite the coordination of MLR machine gun, 60mm, 81mm, and 4.2-inch mortar, and artillery fires from 2/11[6] and 4/11, the enemy overran the outpost at 2355 after heavy, close fighting. Chinese mortar and artillery barrages, by midnight, had continuously disrupted the Marine communications net at East Berlin, and by 0130 radio relay was also out at Berlin proper.

A provisional platoon from Headquarters and Service Company of 2/7 was quickly ordered to reinforce the main line against any attempted breakthrough by the Chinese. This was a distinct possibility since the Berlins were only 325 yards from the MLR, nearer than most outposts. Men from Companies H and I of the rear reserve 3d Battalion (since 26 May commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Paul M. Jones) were also placed under operational control of 2/7 and ordered to forward assembly areas in readiness for a thrust against the enemy at East Berlin.

At 0355 a Company F squad jumped off for the initial counterattack. This was made at 0415, without artillery preparation, in an attempt to gain surprise for the assault. It was thrown back. A second Company F unit, by 0440, was on its way to reinforce the first but got caught by 25 rounds of incoming, with 15 men wounded. It continued on, however, but an hour later the Marines were ordered to disengage so that the artillerymen could place TOT fire on the area preparatory to a fresh attempt to dislodge the enemy soldiers.

During the early morning hours of 8 July, large numbers of Chinese were seen at their new Vegas and Reno strongholds. Marines of the 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery blanketed hostile troops there and at the Berlin outposts with four ripples. On another occasion, a time-on-target mission launched by the 2/11 direct support battalion, landed in the midst of an enemy company assembled on Vegas. Friendly firepower by this time consisted of all four battalions of the 11th Marines, as well as seven Army and Turkish artillery battalions still emplaced in the area during the relief period and thus under tactical control of 25th Division Artillery.

Throughout 7–8 July, 11 Marine tanks from Company B placed 800 shells on enemy installations and troops. In the characteristic pattern, use of Marine armor heightened unfriendly response. The tanks drew in return 2,000 rounds of Chinese mortar and artillery on their own positions, but without any serious damage. Elements of the Army 14th Infantry Regiment Tank Company, still in the area, also opened up with some additional shells and bullets.

Despite the Chinese attack, the relief of lines continued during the night. In the center MLR sector, the 5th Marines had taken over regimental responsibility at 2130, with 3/11 becoming its direct supporting unit. And in the western half of the 7th Marines line—about the only undisturbed part of the regimental sector—1/7 had routinely completed is battalion relief at 0335 on 8 July.

At 0630 it was confirmed that East Berlin, an extension of the ridge on which Berlin was located, was under enemy control. Better news at first light was that Berlin,[7] 500 yards west, had repulsed the enemy, a fact not definitely known earlier due to communication failure. At this time, G–3 reported that 18 effectives were holding Berlin, and 2/7 assigned an 18-man reinforced squad to buttress the defense. It was not considered feasible to send a larger reinforcement "since the Berlin area [could] accommodate only a small garrison."[8]

Meanwhile, another 7th Marines counterforce was being organized for a massed assault to retake East Berlin. At 1000, under cover of a thundering 1,600-round mortar and artillery preparation by Marine and TAFC gunners, a reinforced two-platoon unit from Companies George and How, launched the attack. The unlucky H/3/7 platoon, in the lead, got caught between well-aimed Chinese shells and the Marines' own protective wire. In less than 15 minutes the platoon had been reduced to 20 effectives, with Company G passing through its ranks to continue the attack. By 1123 the Marines were in a violent fire fight and grenade duel in the main trenchline at East Berlin.

Tank guns, meanwhile, blasted away at Chinese troops, bunkers, active weapons, and trenches. On call they placed their fire "only a few yards in front of the friendly attacking infantry and moved this fire forward as the foot troops advanced."[9] Heavy countermortar and artillery rounds were also hitting their mark on forward, top, and reverse slopes of East Berlin to soften the Chinese defenses. A few minutes later the 3d Battalion men had formed for the assault. During the heavy hand-to-hand fighting of the next hour the Marines "literally threw some of the Chinese down the reverse slope."[10] Gaining the crest of the hill, the Marines by force and fire dispatched the enemy intruders. At 1233 they were again in possession of East Berlin. With just 20 men left in fighting condition at the outpost, a reinforcing platoon from I/3/7 was dispatched to buttress the assault force.

North of the 7th Marines sector four F9F Panthers, led by the commanding officer of VMF–311, Lieutenant Colonel Bernard McShane, found their way through the rainy skies that had restricted aerial support efforts nearly everywhere. In a noon MPQ mission, the quartet delivered five tons of ordnance on Chinese reinforcement troops and bunkers.

Promptly at 1300—a half hour after retaking the outpost—the 7th Marines effected the relief of the last Turkish elements at Berlin and occupied the twin defense positions. And by 1500 on 8 July, the 1st Marine Division assumed operational control of the entire division sector from the Army 25th Infantry Division. Relief of individual units would continue, however, through several more days. At the same time, the mission of the 11th Marines, since 5 July under a new regimental commander, Colonel Manly L. Curry, changed from general support of U.S. I Corps, reinforcing the fires of the 25th Division Artillery, to direct support of the Marine Division. The 1st Tank Battalion similarly took over its regular direct support role. Other units under temporary Army jurisdiction, such as the Kimpo Provisional Regiment and Division Reconnaissance Company, reverted to Marine control.

During the rest of the day, gunners of the 11th Marines continued their fire missions despite reduced visibility that hindered surveillance by the OY spotting planes and forward observers. Only 42 Chinese were sighted during the daytime, although shortly before dusk a CCF group reportedly heading toward the Berlins area southwest from Frisco was taken under fire. Estimates of enemy incoming throughout the 7–8 July action from 17-odd battalions of Chinese artillery dug in across the division sector was placed at 19,000 rounds of all types. Marine and Army-controlled battalions, for their part, pounded Chinese strongholds with a total of 20,178 rounds.

That night Colonel Funk authorized a 3d Battalion platoon to bolster the MLR. Five tanks were also ordered to locate in the Hill 126 area, the Marine high-ground terrain feature to the rear of the frontlines. This foresight was well rewarded. During the late evening hours strange motor noises "sounding like a convoy pulling in and then back out again"[11] floated over the Korean hills and the tanks immediately swept suspected hostile installations with their 90mm guns. Later that night of 8–9 July, the Chinese suddenly renewed their probing efforts at the battered Marine outposts. Moving in from Vegas, an estimated reinforced enemy company attacked

Berlin at 0104, then brushed on to East Berlin. An intense fire fight ensued off and on for nearly two hours at the two posts. Marine 81mm and 4.2-inch mortars, plus artillery illumination, boxing fires, and tanks blunted the assaults. At 0315 the enemy broke contact and action quieted down at both locations.

Throughout the rest of the day, eight Company C[12] armored vehicles assisted the infantrymen in consolidation of positions. A total of 25 rounds of shells and 19,140 rounds of .30 and .50 caliber machine gun bullets were expended on CCF strongpoints and troops during a 24-hour firing period that ended at 1700.

Because of the casualties at Berlin, an H/3/7 reinforcement squad was sent to augment the Marine force there. Losses suffered by the 7th Marines for the two successive nights were 9 killed, 12 missing,[13] 126 wounded and evacuated, and 14 with minor wounds. The cost to the CCF was 30 known dead, and an estimated 200 killed and 400 wounded.

With the Marines back on line, VMO–6 and HMR–161 which were under division operational control again resumed normal combat routine. Returning on 8 July to their forward airstrip in the center regimental sector, VMO–6 helicopters made eight frontline helicopter evacuations. Observation planes that same day conducted four artillery spotting missions behind enemy lines. HMR–161, assuming normal operations on 10 July, resupplied Marine division outposts with 1,200 pounds of rations, water, and gear as part of its 25.3 hours flight time this first day back in full service.

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Chapter 9. Heavy Fighting Before the Armistice
Enemy and Marine Probes, 11–I8 July[14]

After the flare-up on the Berlin front, there was relatively little action for the next 10 days. Marines continued the relief of the last of the outgoing 25th Division units. When this was completed on 13 July, 1st Marine Division units, including the 1st KMC/RCT[15] and 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion, were all back in their accustomed sectors. They thus rejoined the 1st Tank Battalion, 11th Marines, Kimpo Regiment, and Division Reconnaissance Company which had remained on line throughout the period. The July relief was one that could hardly be characterized as routine. Interfering elements had included not only the Chinese but torrential summer rains. These had continued virtually nonstop from 5–8 July causing bridge and road washouts, rerouting of supply trucks, and juggling of manifests at a time when the regiments were using an average of 90 transport vehicles daily.

Forward of the MLR the regular nightly patrols probed enemy territory, often with no contact. On at least three occasions division intelligence reported entire 24-hour periods during which the elusive Chinese could not be sighted anywhere in No-Man's-Land by friendly patrols operating north of the Marine division front.

More rain,[16] continual haze, and ground fog for 6 of the 10 days between 9–18 July not only reduced the activity of air observers and Marine pilots, but apparently inspired the ground-digging Chinese to pursue—at least across from the division sector of I Corps—a more mole-like existence than ever. Enemy troop sightings during the daytime decreased from as many as 310 CCF to a new low of 14. Incoming, for one 24-hour period, totaled no more than 48 rounds of Chinese artillery and 228 of mortar fire that struck Marine positions, causing only slight damage.

The same could not be said for their mines. One 7th Marines reconnaissance patrol located a new minefield staked out with Soviet antipersonnel mines (POMZ–2) of an unfamiliar type with both pull and tension fuses. It appeared that mines which had lain dormant during the winter months had suddenly come to life with the warm weather, or else been recently re-laid. Nearly a dozen were uncovered by 5th and 7th Marines patrols, soon after their return to the front, and sometimes the discovery came too late. Probably the worst day was 12 July when four Marines were killed and eight wounded as a result of accidentally detonating mines.

At the same time, in the 5th Marines sector near the vicinity of truce corridor COP–2, the persistent voice of the Dragon Lady taunted Marines with such lackluster gambits as "Surrender now! What is your girl doing back home?" in the stepped-up pace of its midnight propaganda broadcasts.

The regular nightly patrols checked in and out, performing their mission routinely. Even during this last month of the war, when word of the final truce agreement was expected daily, fire fights ensued. On 12 July, a 5th Marines 13-man reconnaissance patrol clashed briefly north of COP Esther, while a 7th Marines platoon-size combat patrol brushed with a Chinese squad west of Elko in an 18-minute fire fight. The same night the 11th Marines reported increased enemy sightings of 318 CCF soldiers—the most seen since the Berlin probe of 7–8 July. No follow-up was made. The Chinese were busy with major offensives elsewhere along the UNC front devoting their primary efforts to ROK divisions on the central and eastern sectors of the Eighth Army line. Apparently they fully intended to "demonstrate to the South Koreans that continuation of the war would be a costly business."[17]

Along the Marine front, three patrol contacts took place on the night of 16–17 July. Two of them were grim reminders that despite the promising look (and sound) of the peace talks, for those men lost the toll of the war was as final and unremitting as it had been at any time during the past three years of combat. The first was a

routine maneuver for a 5th Marines 13–man combat patrol that, at 2252, engaged an enemy squad just north of outpost Hedy. After an eight-minute fire fight the enemy withdrew, with two Chinese soldiers counted dead and one wounded and no friendly casualties.

Not so lucky was a 2/5 reconnaissance patrol. At midnight, its 15 members encountered a band of 30 to 40 Chinese, deployed in a V-shaped ambush in the Hill 90 area, an enemy stronghold two miles east of Panmunjom. The Marines set up a base of fire, beating off the enemy with their rifles, BARs, mortars, and bare fists. Reinforcements and artillery fires were called in. The first relief unit was intercepted by vicious mortar shelling which wounded the entire detail. A second relief squad, also taken under mortar fire, continued the action in an intense fire contest that lasted nearly two hours. In the meantime, the direct support artillery battalion, 3/11, reinforced by 1/11, showered 280 rounds of countermortar on Chinese long-range machine guns and mortars barking from the surrounding hills.

During the engagement the Chinese made several attempts to capture prisoners. When the enemy finally began to withdraw, CCF casualties were 10 known dead, an estimated 9 more dead, and 3 wounded. Seven Marines were found to be missing after the Chinese broke contact. A 5th Marines platoon that extensively screened the battalion front during the hours of darkness on the 17th returned at 2210 with six bodies.

The third encounter took place not long after midnight in the 7th Marines territory. This brief skirmish was also to have an unpleasant aftermath and, inadvertently, fulfill the psywar broadcast of the previous day that had warned Marines “not to go on patrols or be killed.” As it was leaving the Ava Gate (250 yards northwest of the outpost proper) at 0045, a 30-man combat patrol from Company A was challenged on three sides by 40-50 CCF employing small arms, automatic weapons, grenades, and mortars. After a 15-minute fire exchange, during which the patrol lost communications with its MLR company, the enemy withdrew. Six CCF had been counted dead, and 12 more estimated killed or wounded.

Upon returning to the outpost, a muster of the men engaged in the action showed four Marines were missing. A rescue squad recovered three bodies. When, several hours later, daylight hampered movements of the search party, 2/11 laid down a smoke screen to isolate the sector. Between 0050 and 0455, its gunners also directed 529 rounds of close support and countermortar fire on Chinese troops and active weapons in the area. The recovery unit continued to sweep the area for the last missing man until 0545 when it was decided that the search would have to be terminated with negative results. Marine casualties from the encounter were 3 killed, 1 missing, 19 wounded (evacuated), and 2 nonseriously wounded.

The following day patrol activity and enemy contacts quieted down. Action shifted to the 1st KMC/RCT sector. Here, during the late hours of the 18th, four Korean combat patrols brushed quickly and briefly with Chinese squad and platoon units in light skirmishes of but a few minutes duration. The Korean Marines killed 2 of the enemy and estimated they accounted for 16 more.[18]

The only activity in the Marine right regimental sector occurred when a 7th Marines 36-man combat patrol, on prowl the night of 17–18 July, advanced at 0112 as far as hand-grenade range of the Chinese trenchline at Ungok. Undetected by the enemy, a patrol member fired a white phosphorus rifle grenade squarely at the CCF machine gun that was harassing the friendly MLR. The Marines then engaged 15 Chinese defending the position in a brief 20-minute skirmish. Although two men were wounded,[19] the Company C patrol members in a somewhat roguish gesture as they left also planted a Marine Corps recruiting sign at their FPOA (Farthest Point of Advance), facing the enemy.

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Chapter 9. Heavy Fighting Before the Armistice
Marine Air Operations[20]

If the monsoon rains of July hung like a shroud over the infantryman, they were an even more serious impediment to air operations of MAGs–12 and –33. There were 24 days of restricted flying when the weather at home base or target area was recorded as marginal to non-operational. On 12 full days air operations were cancelled entirely. Precipitation for July rose to 7.38 inches, with 22 days of rain recorded throughout the month. The generally unfavorable weather conditions not only limited the normal support missions flown by 1st MAW but delayed the arrival of VMA–251[21] en route from Japan to relieve VMA–323.

During July the wing's nearly 300 aircraft (250 operational, 43 assigned to pool status in Korea) flew 2,688 combat sorties[22] and 5,183.1 combat hours. The bulk of the sorties, 1,497, were CAS operations flown for 19 different UNC divisions. Nearly 900 supported the 12 ROK divisions involved in the heavy fighting on the central UNC sector. Approximately 250 of the CAS storties were for the 1st Marine Division, with more than 200 being day or night MPQ drops and the rest, daytime CAS runs. No night close support missions were conducted.

When nearly a week of inclement weather finally lifted, Colonel Arthur R. Stacy's[23] MAG–33 pilots based at Pohang welcomed a brisk change in the tempo of operations. In seven MPQ strikes on 11 July, they hurled 13 tons of ordnance on Chinese fortifications north of the 7th Marines sector. It was the wing's first active day in support missions for the 1st Marine Division, newly back on the line.

During the interim period of 9–18 July, between the two Berlin outpost attacks, F9F jet fighters from MAG–13 again carried out approximately 35 MPQ missions for the division. (MAG–12 attack planes, during this time, were assigned to the flaming central Allied line.) Nearly 20 of these were on a single day, 14 July, when VMFs–311 and –115 Panther jets roared over enemy country from morning to sundown unleashing 25 tons north of the Marine troubled right regimental sector and 9 more tons on hostile emplacements near the western end of the division line.

In middle and late July, however, the majority of missions by Marine fliers bolstered UNC operations in the central part of the Allied front where a major enemy counterthrust erupted. The peak operational day for MAG–33 pilots during this period occurred 17 July when 40 interdiction and MPQ missions (136 combat sorties) were executed for Army and ROK divisions. The corresponding record day for Colonel Carney's MAG–12 aviators was 19 July when 162 combat sorties were flown on heavy destruction missions to support UNC action.

Marine exchange pilot Major John F. Bolt, of VMF–115, chalked up a record of a different kind on 11 July. Attached to the Fifth Air Force 51st Fighter-Interceptor Group, he shot down his fifth and sixth MIG–15 (the previous four having been bagged since 16 May) to become the first Marine jet ace in history. Major Bolt was leading a four-plane F–86 flight in the attack on four MIGs east of Sinuiju and required only 1,200 rounds of ammunition and five minutes to destroy the two enemy jet fighters. Bolt thereby became the 37th jet ace of the Korean War.

Earlier in the month, Navy Lieutenant Guy P. Bordelon won a Silver Star medal and gold star in lieu of a second Silver Star. Attending the K–6 ceremonies were General Megee and Admiral Clark, 1st Wing and Seventh Fleet commanders. Bordelon, flying with the Marine Corsair night fighters, had downed four of the harassing "Bedcheck Charlie" planes. A member of VC–3 attached to MAG–12, Lieutenant Bordelon on 17 July made his fifth night kill and was subsequently awarded the Navy Cross.

On the minus side, the 1st Marine Air Wing this last month of the war suffered a higher rate of personnel losses on combat flights than in any month since June 1952.[24] Captain Lote Thistlethwaite and Staff Sergeant

W. H. Westbrook, of VMF(N)–513, were killed in an air patrol flight on 4 July. (Two nights earlier, the same squadron had lost a Navy pilot and crewman on temporary duty with the night-fighters when their F3D–2 similarly failed to return to Pyongtaek.) Another MAG–12 casualty was Captain Carl F. Barlow, of VMA–212, killed 13 July on a prebriefed CAS mission when he crashed while flying instruments.

On 17 July, Captain Robert I. Nordell, VMF–311, flying his third mission that day, and wingman First Lieutenant Frank L. Keck, Jr. were hit by intense automatic weapons fire while on an interdiction flight. Their planes reportedly went down, at 2000, over the Sea of Japan. After a four-day air and surface search conducted by JOC, they were declared missing and subsequently reclassified killed in action. Another MAG–33 pilot listed KIA was Major Thomas M. Sellers, VMF–115, on exchange duty with the Air Force, shot down 20 July in a dogfight after he had scored two MIG–15s. Two days earlier a VMO–6 pilot, First Lieutenant Charles Marino, and his artillery spotter, First Lieutenant William A. Frease, flying a flak suppression mission, were struck by enemy fire and crashed with their ship in the 5th Marines center regimental sector.

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Fall of the Berlins[25]

Despite their preoccupation with other corps sectors on the central front of the Eighth Army line, the Chinese had not forgotten about the Berlin complex held by the Marines. On the night of 19-20 July,[26] the enemy lunged against the two Marine outposts in reinforced battalion strength to renew his attack launched 12 days earlier. Beginning at 2200, heavy Chinese mortar and artillery fire struck the two COPs and supporting MLR positions of the 3d Battalion, which had advanced to the front on 13 July in relief of 2/7.[27] In the center regimental sector, 5th Marines outposts Ingrid and Dagmar, and the line companies were also engaged by small arms, mortar, and artillery fires. An attempted probe at Dagmar was repulsed, aided by 3/11.

Concentrating their main assault efforts on the Berlins, however, the Chinese forces swarmed up the slopes of the outposts at 2230, with more troops moving in from enemy positions on Jersey, Detroit, and Hill 139, some 700 yards north of Berlin. The Chinese struck first at East Berlin, where 37 Marines were on duty, and then at Berlin, held by 44 men. Both positions were manned by First Lieutenant Kenneth E. Turner's Company I personnel and employed the maximum-size defenses which could be effectively utilized on these terrain features.

By 2300 hostile forces were halfway up Berlin. Continuous volumes of small arms and machine gun fire poured from the defending MLR companies. Defensive boxes were fired by 60mm, 81mm, and 4.2-inch mortars. Eight Company C tanks augmented the close-in fires, with their lethal direct-fire 90mm guns tearing into Chinese troops and weapons. Within two hours after the initial thrust, the 11th Marines had fired 20 counterbattery and 31 countermortar missions. Artillerymen from 2/11 and 1/11 had expended 1,750 rounds. In addition, 4/11 had unleashed 124 of its 155mm medium projectiles. More countermortar fire came from the TAFC Field Artillery Battalion. Despite the heavy fire support, by midnight the situation was in doubt and at 0146 the twin outposts were officially declared under enemy control. Nearly 3,000 rounds of incoming were estimated to have fallen on division positions by that time, most of it in the 7th Marines sector.

During the early morning hours of the 20th, Marine tank guns and continuous shelling by six [28] artillery battalions wreaked havoc on Chinese hardware, reinforcing personnel, supply points, and fortifications. Reserve units from 2/7 were placed on 30-minute standby, with Companies D, E, and F already under 3/7 operational control. Battalion Operation Order 20–53, issued at 0400 by Lieutenant Colonel Jones, called for Easy and Dog to launch a two-company counterattack at 0730 to restore Berlin and East Berlin respectively. Incoming, meanwhile, continued heavy on the MLR; at 0520, Company I, located to the rear of the contested outposts, reported receiving one round per second.

The Marine assault was cancelled by I Corps a half hour before it was scheduled to take place. A decision subsequently rendered from I Corps directed that the positions not be retaken.[29]

Since the outposts were not to be recaptured,[30] efforts that day were devoted to making the two hills as untenable as possible for their new occupants. Heavy destruction missions by air, armor, and artillery blasted CCF defenses throughout the day. Air observers were on station from 0830 until after dark, with nine CAS missions conducted by MAG–12 pilots from VMA–121 and –212. The day's series of air strikes on the Berlin-East Berlin positions (and Vegas weapons em–placements) began at 1145 when a division of ADs from Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Penne's[31] –121 hurled nine and a half tons of ordnance on enemy bunkers and trenches at East Berlin.

The artillery was having an active day, too. Six firing battalions had sent more than 3,600 rounds crashing against the enemy by nightfall. The 1st 4.5-inch rocketeers also contributed four ripples to the melee.

Heavy fire missions were requested and delivered by the Army 159th Field Artillery Battalion (240mm howitzers) and 17th Field Artillery Battalion (8-inch howitzers) using 11th Marines airborne spotters. The precision fire on enemy positions, which the air spotters reported to be "the most effective missions they had conducted in Korea"[32] continued for several hours. By 1945 the big guns had demolished the bunkers and all but 15 yards of trenchline at East Berlin. For their part the Chinese had fired an estimated 4,900 rounds of mortar and artillery against the 3d Battalion right hand sector in the 24-hour period ending at 1800 on the 20th.

Armored vehicles, meanwhile, during 19-20 July had expended 200 rounds of HE and WP shells and 6,170 machine gun rounds.[33] Tank searchlights had also effectively illuminated enemy positions on the East Berlin hill. The tankers' performance record included: 20 Chinese bunkers and 2 57mm recoilless rifles destroyed; an estimated 30 enemy soldiers killed; a dozen more firing apertures, caves, and trenchworks substantially damaged.

Between noon and the last flight of the day, when a trio of AUs from Lieutenant Colonel Wallace's VMA-212 attacked a northern enemy mortar and automatic weapons site, 35 aircraft had repeatedly streaked over the Berlin territory and adjacent Chinese strongpoints. Strikes by VMA–121 at 1145, 1320, 1525, 1625, 1700, 1750; and VMA–212 at 1413, 1849, and 1930 had released a combined total of 69 1/2 tons of bombs and 6,500 rounds of 20mm ammunition on hostile locations.

The Chinese casualty toll during this renewed flareup in the fighting on 19–20 July was conservatively placed by 3/7 at 75 killed and 300 wounded. It was further believed that "the enemy battalion was so weakened and disorganized by the attacks that it was necessary for the CCF to commit another battalion to hold the area captured."[34] Regimental reports indicated that 6 Marines had been killed, 56 listed missing,[35] 86 wounded and evacuated, and 32 not seriously wounded.

As a result of the critical tactical situation and number of casualties suffered during the Berlins operation, the 7th Marines regimental commander requested that units of the division reserve be placed under his control to help check any further aggressive moves of the enemy. For it now appeared that the Chinese might continue their thrust and attempt to seize Hill 119 (directly south of Berlin and East Berlin) in order to be in position to deny part of the Imjin River to UNC forces after signing of the armistice.

While the lost outposts were being neutralized on the morning of the 20th, the CO of the incoming 1st Marines, Colonel Nelson, also ordered an immediate reorganization and strengthening of the MLR. This employed the defense in depth concept, used by the British Commonwealth Division in the sector adjacent to the Marines on the east. The wide front defense concept was fully developed with one company occupying a portion of the MLR to the rear of the Berlin complex, known as Hill 119 or more informally, Boulder City. Three companies organized the high ground to the right rear of the MLR east to Hill 111, the limiting point on the boundary between the Marine and Commonwealth divisions. Three more companies fortified the Hill 126 area to the rear and left of Berlin to its juncture with the western battalion sector held by Lieutenant Colonel Harry A. Hadd's 1/7. (See Maps 30 and 31.)

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The afternoon of the 20th, 2/1 (Lieutenant Colonel Frank A. Long) was transferred to 7th Marines control and positioned in the center of the regimental MLR, as the first step in the scheduled relief of the 7th, due off the line on 26 July. For the next three days the regiment continued to develop the sector defense to the rear of the MLR. Elements of the regimental reserve, 2/7, were employed to reinforce the 3/7 sector. Initially, on 20-21 July, F/2/7, under operational command of 3/7, was assigned the mission of reinforcing Hill 119. Later a 2/1 platoon was also ordered to strengthen the position.

Incoming 1st Marines platoons and companies from the 2d and 3d (Lieutenant Colonel Roy D. Miller) Battalions augmented the forces at the two critical Hill 119 and 111 locations. As it turned out, 1st Marines

personnel returning to the front from division reserve were to see the last of the war's heavy fighting in the course of their relief of the 7th Marines. Ultimately, the regimental forward defense, instead of being divided into two battalion sectors as before, now consisted of three—a left, center, and right sector. By 23 July the depth reorganization had been completed and these sectors were manned by 1/7, 2/1, and 3/7. (See Map 32.)
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Renewal of Heavy Fighting, 24–26 July[36]

Sightings of enemy troops for the next few days were light. A large scale attack expected on the 21st by the 5th Marines at Hedy and Dagmar failed to materialize. Instead, a token force of a dozen Chinese dressed in burlap bags made a limited appearance at Hedy before departing, minus three of its party, due to Marine sharp shooting skills. In the skies, MAG–33 fliers from VMF–115 and –311 had been transferred by Fifth Air Force from exclusive missions for the central and eastern UNC front (the IX, ROK II, and X Corps sectors) to join VMA–121 in MPQ flights supporting the 1st Marine Division. During the 21–23 July period, despite layers of thick stratus clouds and rain that turned off and on periodically like a water spigot, more than 15 radar missions were executed by the three squadrons.[37] They unleashed a gross 33-ton bomb load on CCF mortar and 76mm gun positions, supply areas, CPs, bunkers, and trenches.

The lull in ground fighting lasted until late on the 24th. Then, at 1930, a heavy preparation of 60mm, 82mm, and 120mm mortars combined with 76mm and 122mm artillery shells began to rain down on Boulder City. Men of G/3/1, under command of First Lieutenant Oral R. Swigart, Jr., were deployed at that time in a perimeter defense of the position having that morning completed the relief of G/3/7.

Enemy troops were reported massing for an assault. One regiment located by forward observers behind Hill 139, some 700 yards northwest of Berlin, was taken under fire at 1940 by artillery and rocket ripple. At 2030, following their usual pattern of laying down a heavy mortar and artillery barrage, the CCF began to probe the MLR at Hills 119 and 111 in the Marine right battalion sector. They hit first at Hill 111, the far right anchor of the division line, currently held by 7th Marines personnel. Then the CCF moved westward to Hill 119. Their choice of time for the attack once again coincided with the relief of 7th Marines units by the 1st Marines.[38] When the assault began, H/3/1 was moving up to relieve H/3/7 at the easternmost point of the line in the Hill 111 vicinity, and Company I was preparing to relieve 1/3/7, to its left.

The Communist troops temporarily penetrated Hill 111 positions. At Boulder City, where the main force of the CCF two-battalion unit had struck, they occupied a portion of the trenchline. Attempting to exploit this gain, the Chinese repeatedly assaulted the Berlin Gate, on the left flank of Company G's position and the East Berlin Gate, to its right. Marine units of the two regiments posted at the two citadel hills were heavily supported by MLR mortar, artillery, and tank fires. No artillery spotter or CAS flights were flown through the night, once again due to weather conditions.

By 2120, the bulk of Chinese soldiers had begun to withdraw from Hill 111, this attack apparently being a diversionary effort. But the enemy's main thrust continued against the central Hill 119 position. Here the close, heavy fighting raged on through the morning hours, with enemy troops steadily reinforcing from the Jersey Ridge and East Berlin, by way of the Berlin Gate, the best avenue of approach to forward positions of Hill 119. At approximately 2100, the Chinese hurled a second attack against Hill 119 in the strength of two companies, supported by intense mortar and artillery fire. An hour later hand-to-hand combat had developed all along the 700 yards of the forward trenches. Company G men of the 1st Marines were down to half their original number, ammunition was running low, and evacuation of casualties was slowed by the fact that two of the eight corpsmen had been killed and most of the rest were themselves casualties.

By midnight, the front, left, and right flanks of the perimeter had been pushed back to the reverse slope of the hill and a 1st Marines participant commented ". . . only a never-say-die resistance was keeping the enemy from seizing the remainder of the position."[39] At 0015, the thinning ranks of G/3/1 Marines (now down to 25

percent effectives) were cheered by the news that Company I men were about to reinforce their position. This latter unit itself suffered 35 casualties while moving into the rear area, when the Chinese intercepted a coded message and shifted a substantial amount of their mortar and artillery fires to the rear approaches of Hill 119.

In response to the enemy bombardment, Marine artillery fires crashed against the Chinese continuously from 2100 to midnight. Four ripples were launched in support of the Hill 119 defenders. In one of the regiment's most intense counterbattery shoots on record, the 11th Marines in three hours had fired 157 missions. By 2400, an estimated 6,000 to 8,000 hostile rounds had fallen in the division sector.

Meanwhile, the Chinese were also attempting to punch holes in the 5th regimental sector. In a second-step operation, rather than striking simultaneously as was customary, the enemy at 2115 had jabbed at outposts Esther and Dagmar in the right battalion of the 5th Marines. The reinforced Chinese company from the 408th Regiment quickly began to concentrate its attention on Esther, outposted by Company H Marines. During the heavy fighting both Marines and Chinese reinforced. By early morning, the enemy had seized part of the front trenchline, but the Marines controlled the rear trenches and reorganized the defense under rifle platoon commander, Second Lieutenant William H. Bates. The Chinese unsuccesssfully attempted to isolate the position by heavy shelling and patrolled vigorously between Esther and the MLR.

Marines replied with flamethrowers and heavy supporting fires from the MLR, including machine guns, 81mm and 4.2-inch mortar boxes. Three tanks—a section from the regimental antitank platoon and one from Company A—neutralized enemy targets with 153 rounds to assist the 3d and 2d Battalions. The 3/11 gunners supporting the 5th Marines also hurled 3,886 rounds against the Chinese in breaking up the attack. After several hours of strong resistance, the Chinese loosened their grip, and at 0640 on the 25th, Esther was reported secured.

By this time an enemy battalion had been committed piecemeal at the position. The action had developed into the heaviest encounter of the month in the 5th Marines sector. During that night of 24–25 July, more than 4,000 artillery and mortar rounds fell in the outpost vicinity; total incoming for the regimental sector throughout July was recorded at 8,413 rounds. Twelve Marines lost their lives in the battle, with 35 wounded and evacuated, and 63 suffering minor injuries. A total of 85 CCF were counted dead, 110 more estimated killed, and an estimated 250 wounded.

Back at the Berlin Complex area of the 7th Marines where the major action centered, intense shelling, fire fights, and close hand-to-hand combat continued through the early morning of the 25th. Chinese infiltrators had broken through a substantial part of the trench-work on the forward slope of Boulder City. For a while they temporarily occupied the rocky, shrub-grown hill crest as well.

A swift-moving counterattack launched at 0130 by 1st Marines from Companies G and I, led by Captain Louis J. Sartor, of I/3/1, began to restore the proper balance to the situation. At 0330 the MLR had been reestablished and the Marines had the controlling hand. By 0530 the Hill 119 area was secured, with four new platoons from Companies E of the 7th and 1st Marines aiding the defense. Scattered groups of Chinese still clung to the forward slopes, and others vainly tried to reinforce by the Berlin-to-Hill 119 left flank trenchline.

Direct fire from the four M–46s on position at Boulder City[40] had helped disperse hostile troop concentrations. The tanks had also played a major communication role. Although surrounded by enemy forces during the peak of the fighting, two of the armored vehicles were still able to radio timely tactical information to higher echelons. This Company C quartet, plus another vehicle from the 7th Marines antitank unit, between the time of the enemy assault to 0600 when it stabilized, had pumped 109 HE, 8 marking shells, and 20,750 .30 caliber machine gun bullets into opposition forces.[41] Five tanks from the 1st Marines AT company located to the west of the Berlin site meted out further punishment to enemy soldiers, gun pits, and trenches.

Sporadic fighting and heavy incoming (at the rate of 60–70 rounds per minute for 10 minutes duration) also rained down on eastern Hill 111 in the early hours of the 25th. Assault teams with flame-throwers and 3.5-inch rocket launchers completed the job of clearing the enemy out of Marine bunkers.

Altogether the Communists had committed 3,000 troops across the Marine division front during the night of 24–25 July. Between 2200 and 0400, a total of 23,725 rounds had been fired by the 11th Marines and 10 battalions under its operational control in the division sector. This included batteries from the 25th Division Artillery, I Corps Artillery, and 1st Commonwealth Division Artillery.[42] The artillery outgoing represented 7,057 rounds to assist the 5th Marines at outpost Esther and 16,668 in defense of Boulder City.

On the morning of 25 July, the Chinese at 0820 again assaulted Hill 119 in company strength. Marine mortar and artillery fire repulsed the attack, with heavy enemy losses. See-saw action continued for most of the rest of the day on the position. No major infantry attempt was made at Hill 111. Intense hostile shelling was reported here at 1100, however, when the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, still in operational control of the area, began receiving 125 to 150 rounds per minute. The last of the Chinese marauders were forced off the forward slope at Boulder City at 1335. For some welcomed hours both Marine positions remained quiet. A conservative estimate by 3/7 of the toll for the enemy's efforts were 75 CCF killed and 425 wounded.

Air support that morning was provided by 32 of the sleek, hard-hitting F9Fs from VMF–115 and –311. Working in tandem over Chinese terrain directly north of the right regimental sector, the two squadrons, between 0616 and 1036, flew nine MPQ missions. In the aerial assault, they bombarded the enemy with more than 32 tons of explosives.

Twelve Marine tanks had a workout, expending 480 HE and 33 WP shells and 21,300 rounds of machine gun ammunition in direct fire missions. The traditional inequity of battlefront luck was plainly demonstrated between a section (two) of armored vehicles near the Hill 111 company CP and a trio located at Boulder City. It was practically a standoff for the former. Together they were able to fire only 71 high explosive shells, drawing a return of 1,000 rounds of CCF 60mm mortar and 122mm cannon shells. Blazing guns of the three tanks in the Hill 119 area, meanwhile, during the 24-hour firing period had sent 158 HE, 10 WP, and 17,295 bullets to destroy hostile weapons and installations and received but 120 mortar and another 120 rounds of artillery fire.

The 11th Marines were also busy as heavy firing continued on Chinese policing parties and those enemy batteries actively shelling MLR positions. By late afternoon, 13,500 rounds of Chinese mortar and artillery had crashed against the 7th Marines right sector—the highest rate of incoming for any 24-hour period during the entire Berlin action. For its part, the regiment and its medium and heavy support units completed 216 counterbattery missions and sent 36,794 rounds of outgoing into Chinese defenses between 2200 on 24 July and 1600 on the 25th.

Meanwhile, during 25 July, Colonel Nelson's men continued with their relief of the 7th Marines. At 1100 Major Robert D. Thurston, S–3 of 3/1, assumed command of Hill 119 and reorganized the embattled Company G and Company I personnel, 1st Marines. That night, at 1940, E/2/1 and F/2/7 effected the relief of the composite George-Item men. At the eastern Hill 111 Company H, 1st Marines had assisted Company H, 7th Marines during the day in clearing the trenchworks of the enemy; then at 1815, the 1st Marines unit completed its relief of H/3/7 and took over responsibility for the MLR right company sector. Not long after, beginning at 2130, 1st and 7th Marines at the critical Hill 119 complex were attacked by two enemy companies. MLR fire support plus artillery and tank guns lashed at the enemy and he withdrew. Between 0130 and 0300 the Chinese again probed Hills 111 and 119, gaining small parts of the trenchline before being driven out by superior Marine firepower. Marine casualties were 19 killed and 125 wounded. The CCF had suffered 30 known dead, an estimated 84 killed, and 310 estimated wounded.

With dawn on the 26th came the first real quiet the battlefield had known for two days. Small enemy groups tried to reinforce by way of the Berlin trenchline, only to be stopped by Marine riflemen and machine gunners. Hostile incoming continued spasmodically. At 1330 the 1st Marines assumed operational control of the right regimental sector, as scheduled, and of the remaining 7th Marines units still in the area.[43] By this time Marine casualties since 24 July numbered 43 killed and 316 wounded.

That night the Communists, knowing the armistice was near and that time was running out for seizing the Boulder City Objective, made their final attempts at the strongpoint. Again they attacked at 2130. Defending 1st Marines were now under Captain Esmond E. Harper, CO of E/2/1, who had assumed command when Major Thurston was seriously wounded and evacuated. They fought off the Chinese platoon-size drive when the enemy advanced from Berlin to the wire at Hill 119. Shortly after midnight another Chinese platoon returned to Hill 119 in the last skirmish for the territory, but Marine small arms and artillery handily sent it home. At 0045, a CCF platoon nosed about the Hill 111 area for an hour and twenty minutes. Again the Marines discouraged these last faltering enemy efforts. Action at both hills ceased and what was to become the concluding ground action for the 1st Marine Division in Korea had ended.

Despite impressive tenacity and determination, the Chinese Communist attacks throughout most of July on the two Berlin outposts and Hills 119 and 111 achieved no real gain. Their repetitive assaults on strongly-defended Boulder City up until the last day of the war was an attempt to place the Marines (and the United Nations Command) in as unfavorable a position as possible when the armistice agreement was signed. While talking at Panmunjom, the Communists pressed hungrily on the battlefront for as much critical terrain as they could get under their control before the final cease-fire line was established.

Had the enemy succeeded in his assaults on the two hill defenses after his earlier seizure of the Berlins, under terms of the agreement UNC forces would have been forced to withdraw southward to a point where they no longer had free access to all of the Imjin River. If the Chinese had taken Boulder City this would have also provided the CCF a major high ground position (Hill 126) with direct observation into Marine rear areas and important supply routes.

From the standpoint of casualties, the last month of the Korean War was a costly one, with 181 infantry Marines killed in action and total losses of 1,611 men.[44] This was the highest rate for any month during 1953. It was second only to the October 1952 outpost battles[45] for any month during the year the 1st Marine Division defended the line in West Korea. The closing days of the war produced the last action for which Marines were awarded the Navy Cross. These Marines were Second Lieutenant Bates, H/3/5; First Lieutenant Swigart, G/3/1; Second Lieutenant Thodore J. Lutz, Jr., H/3/1; and Sergeant Robert J. Raymond, F/2/7, who was mortally wounded.

The 7th and 1st Marines, as the two regiments involved during July in the Berlin sector defense, sustained high monthly losses: 804 and 594, respectively. Forty-eight men from the 7th Marines and 70 from the 1st Marines were killed in action. In contrast, the 5th Marines which witnessed little frontline action during the month (except for a sharp one-night clash at Outpost Esther), suffered total monthly casualties of 150 men, of whom 26 lost their lives. Chinese losses were also high: 405 counted killed, 761 estimated killed, 1,988 estimated wounded, 1 prisoner, or 3,155 for the month of July.

In their unsuccessful attempts to dislodge the Marines from their MLR positions the Chinese had pounded the right regimental flank with approximately 22,200 artillery and mortar shells during the last 24-27 July battle. In reply, 11th Marines gunners and supporting units had expended a total of 64,187 rounds against CCF strong-points. The enemy's increased counterbattery capabilities in July, noted by division intelligence, also received particular attention from the artillerymen. A record number of 345 counterbattery missions were conducted during the period by Marine and Army cannoneers.

More than 46,000 rounds of outgoing had been fired by the Chinese in their repeated attempts of 7-9, 19-20, and 24-27 July to seize the Berlin posts and key MLR terrain. Operations during this final month, as the 2/11 commander was to point out later, on numerous occasions had verified the wisdom of leaving "direct support artillery battalions in place during frequent changes of frontline infantry units." [46]

Armored support throughout the 24-27 July period consisted of more than 30 tanks (Company C, AT Company elements of the 1st and 7th Marines, a section of flames, and Company D platoon) on line or in reserve.

Marine tankers used a record 1,287 shells and 54,845 bullets against the CCF, while drawing 4,845 rounds of enemy mixed mortar and artillery.

The enemy's attack on Marine MLR positions, beginning 24 July, constituted the major action in the I Corps sector the final 10 days of the war. During this period the Chinese probed I Corps positions 25 times (8 in the Marine, 5 in the 1st Commonwealth, 6 in the 1st ROK, and 6 in the 7th Infantry Division sectors).

In other parts of the Eighth Army line, the last large-scale action had broken out east of the Marine sector beginning 13 July when major elements of six Chinese Communist divisions penetrated a ROK unit to the right of the IX Corps. As the division's right and center fell back, units withdrew into the zones of the IX and ROK II Corps on the east. General Taylor directed that a new MLR be established south of the Kumsong River, and a counterattack 17–20 July by three II Corps divisions attained this objective.

Since the armistice agreement was imminent, no attempt was made to restore the original line. The Chinese had achieved temporary success[47] but at heavy cost. Eighth Army officials estimated that CCF casualties in July reached 72,000 men, with more than 25,000 of these dead. The enemy had lost the equivalent of seven divisions of the five Chinese armies committed in attacks upon the II and IX Corps sectors.

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Chapter 9. Heavy Fighting Before the Armistice
The Last Day of the War[48]

Representatives of the Communist Forces and the United Nations Command signed the armistice agreement that marked the end of the Korean War in Panmunjom at 1000 on Monday, 27 July 1953. The cease-fire, ending two years of often fruitless and hostile truce negotiations, became effective at 2200 that night. After three years, one month, and two days the so-called police action in Korea had come to a halt.

Actually, final agreement on the armistice had been expected since late June. By mid-July it was considered imminent, even though the CCF during these waning days of the war had launched several major counteroffensives against ROK troops defending the central part of the Eighth Army line as well as the Marines in the western I Corps sector.

With the final resolution of hostilities at 1000, a flash message went out immediately to the 26,000 Marines of General Pate's division directing that there be "no celebration firing related in any way to the advent of the armistice."[49] Fraternization or communication with the enemy was expressly forbidden. Personnel were reminded that firing of all weapons was to be "restricted to the minimum justified by the tactical situation."[50] No defensive firing was to take place after 2145 unless the Marines were actually attacked by enemy infantry. Each frontline company was authorized to fire one white star cluster at 2200, signalling the cease fire.
Click here to view map

The signing of the armistice agreement on 27 July thus ended 36 months of war for the Marines in Korea. On that date, the 1st Marine Division initiated plans for its withdrawal to defensive positions south of the Imjin River. One regiment, the 5th Marines, was left north of the river to man the general outpost line across the entire division front. A transition was made at this time from the customary wide-front linear defense to a defense in depth, similar to that employed in the July Boulder City battle.

Briefly, the armistice agreement decreed that both UNC and Communist forces:

Cease fire 12 hours (at 2200, 27 July) after signing of agreement;

Withdraw all military forces, supplies, and equipment from the demilitarized zone (2,000 yards from line of contact) within 72 hours after effective time of ceasefire;

Locate and list all fortifications and minefields in the DMZ within 72 hours, to be dismantled during a subsequent salvage period;

Replace combat personnel and supplies on a one-for-one basis, to prevent any build-up; and

Begin repatriation of all POWs, with exchange to be completed within two months.

The 1st Marine Division began that afternoon to close out its existing MLR[51] and withdraw to its designated post-armistice main battle position located two kilometers to the south, in the vicinity of the KANSAS Line. This tactical withdrawal was to be completed no later than 2200 on 30 July.

By early afternoon the three infantry regiments had been ordered to furnish mine teams to mark, remove, and clear minefields. For units of the 1st and 7th Marines deployed at the Boulder Hill Outpost—quiet only since 0300 that morning—the cease-fire news understandably carried a "let's see" reaction as the men "waited cautiously throughout the day in their fortifications for the White Star Cluster which would signify the end . . ."[52] Convincing the men at shell-pocked Boulder City that a cease-fire was to take place within a few hours would have been a difficult task that day, however, even for the Commandant.

The Marine infantrymen who had been the target of the last heavy Communist attacks of the war might well have had a special sense of realism about the end of hostilities. Between the skirmish with Chinese attacking

units in the early hours of the 27th and mine accidents, a total of 46 Marines had been wounded and removed from duty that last day of the war and 2 others declared missing in action.

For the more free-wheeling artillerymen of the 11th Marines, that final day was one of fairly normal operations. During the day, 40 counterbattery missions had been fired, the majority in reply to Communist batteries that came alive at dusk.[53] A total of 102 countermortar missions were also completed, bringing the total outgoing that last month to 75,910 rounds. Action of the regiment continued until 2135, just ten minutes before the preliminary cease-fire which preceded the official cease-fire at 2200.

For the 7,035 Marine officers and men on duty with General Megee's 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, the day was also an active one. That final day of the war Corsairs, Skyraiders, and Pantherjets from the wing mounted 222 sorties and blasted the enemy with 354 tons of high explosives along the front. Banshees from VMJ–1 flew 15 reconnaissance sorties during the day for priority photographs of enemy airfields and railroads. Last Marine jet pilot in action was Captain William I. Armagost of VMF–311. He smashed a Communist supply point with four 500-pounders, at 1835, declaring his flight felt "just like the last winning play of a football game." [54]

The wing closed out its share of the Korean War 35 minutes before the cease-fire. A VMA-251 aviator, Captain William J. Foster, Jr., dropped three 2,000-pound bombs at 2125 in support of UN troops. The distinction of flying this final Marine mission over the bombline had gone, fittingly, to the wing's newly-arrived "Black Patch" squadron. At sea, U.S. and British warships ended the 17-month naval siege by shelling Wonsan for the last time, and at 2200 the ships in the harbor turned on their lights. In compliance with the terms of the armistice, full evacuation of the WCIDU and ECIDU islands north of the 38th Parallel started at 2200. Island defense forces off both coasts at this time began a systematic destruction of their fortifications as they prepared to move south.

As early as 2100 Marine line units reported seeing Chinese soldiers forward of their own positions, policing their areas. An hour later large groups of enemy were observed along the division sector. Some "waved lighted candles, flashlights, and banners while others removed their dead and wounded, and apparently looked for souvenirs."[55] A few attempts were made by the Chinese to fraternize. One group approached a Marine listening post and asked for water and wanted to talk. Others hung up gift bags at the base of outpost Ava and shouted, "How are you? Come on over and let's have a party," while the Marines stared at them in silence.[56] The last hostile incoming in the 1st Marine Division sector was reported at 2152 when five rounds of 82mm mortar landed on a Korean outpost, COP Camel.

Marines on line that night warily scanned the darkness in front of their trenches. Slowly at first, then with increasing rapidity the white star cluster shells began to burst over positions all along the line. Thousands of flares illuminated the sky and craggy hills along the 155-mile front, from the Yellow Sea to Sea of Japan. The war in Korea was over. Of the men from the one Marine Division and air wing committed in Korea during the three-year conflict, 4,262 had been killed in battle. An additional 26,038 Marines were wounded. No fewer than 42 Marines would receive the Nation's highest combat decoration, the Medal of Honor, for outstanding valor—26 of them posthumously.

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Chapter 10. Return of the Prisoners of War
Operation BIG SWITCH[1]

BETWEEN AUGUST 1950, the month that the first Marine was taken prisoner and July 1953, when 18 Marine infantrymen were captured in final rushes by the CCF, a total of 221 U.S. Marines became POWs.[2] The majority of them—nearly 90 percent—ultimately returned. After the conclusion of hostilities, Marine POWs were among the UNC fighting men returned in Operation BIG SWITCH.

The new mission of the 1st Marine Division, with the cease-fire, called for organization of the Post Armistice Battle Positions and establishment of a No-Pass Line approximately 200 yards south of the Demilitarized Zone boundary. In addition to maintaining a defensive readiness posture for full-scale operations if hostilities resumed, the Marine division was charged with control of the Munsan-ni area and assisting in repatriation of prisoners of war. Obviously, since the Panmunjom release point for receiving the POWs was located in the Marine zone of action, the division—as in the earlier LITTLE SWITCH prisoner exchange—would play a major part in the final repatriation.

With the armistice and ending of the war expected almost daily, the Munsan-ni Provisional Command was activated and reorganized in June. Once again, the 1st Marine Division was responsible for the United Nations Personnel and Medical Processing Unit, organized along lines similar to those used during the preliminary exchange. The division inspector, Colonel Albert F. Metze, was designated Processing Unit Commander. Sections under his direction were staffed by Marine and naval personnel. The normal command structure was reinforced by special engineer, medical, interpreter, food service, chaplain, security, signal, supply, and motor transport teams. Planning for the project, like all military operations, was thorough and continuous.

As in April, the Munsan-ni Provisional Command assumed responsibility for handling the UN repatriation at Panmunjom as well as supervision of the receiving and processing of ROKA personnel. Brigadier General Ralph M. Osborne, USA, was placed in charge of the command, with headquarters at the United Nations Base Camp. The RCT landing exercise for the 1st Marines, scheduled in July, was cancelled because of shipping commitments for Operation BIG SWITCH, as the Navy Amphibious Force readied itself for the repatriation of prisoners. By the end of July, the 1st Marine Division was supporting “approximately 42,400 troops with Class I [rations] and 48,600 with Class III [petroleum products] due to the influx of units and personnel participating in Operation BIG SWITCH.”[3]

Several days before the exchange, however, it became evident that the old site of the Gate to Freedom used in the April exchange would have to be abandoned. It was found inadequate to handle the larger number of returning prisoners—approximately 400 daily —to be processed in the new month-long operation. The new site, Freedom Village, near Munsan-ni contained an old Army warehouse which was renovated by the 1st Division engineers and transformed into the 11th Evacuation Hospital where the UN Medical and Processing Unit was located. Members of the division Military Police Company provided security for the exchange area. Marines from practically every unit of the division were assigned duties at the United Nations Processing Center. As General Clark, UNC Commander later recalled:

“Preparations for Big Switch were necessarily elaborate. At Munsan we had a huge warehouse stocked high with clothing, blankets, medical equipment and other supplies for the returning POWs. At Freedom Village nearby we had a complete hospital unit ready. It was one of the Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals (MASH) which had done such magnificent work close to the front through most of the war.”[4]

On 5 August, the first day of BIG SWITCH, Colonel Metze took a final look around the processing

center. Readiness of this camp was his responsibility. If anyone had real understanding of a prisoner's relieved and yet shaken reaction to new freedom it was this Marine Colonel. Chosen by the United Nations Command to build and direct the enlarged Freedom Village, Colonel Metze himself had been a prisoner of war in World War II. He knew from personal experience how men should be treated and what should be done for them early in their new freedom. For many, this was after nearly three long years in Communist prison camps. That morning, as described by an observer:

"Members of his [Colonel Metze's] command stood by their cubicles, awaiting the first signal. The 129 enlisted Marines, corpsmen, doctors and other UN personnel had held a dress rehearsal only the day before. Everything was ready."[5]

Fifteen miles northwest another group of Marines assigned to the Provisional Command Receipt and Control section waited almost in the shadow of the famous "peace pagoda" at Panmunjom. UNC receiving teams, each headed by a Marine Corps major, "watched the road to the north for the first sign of a dust cloud which would herald the approach of the Communist convoy."[6] The United Nations POWs had been assembled at Kaesong and held there in several groups, preparatory to the return. The exchange agreement had specified that the repatriation would begin at 0900. Precisely at 0855 the Communist convoy, led by three Russian-made jeeps, each carrying one CCF and two NKPA officers, moved out from the Communist side of the peace corridor. Trucks and ambulances followed the jeeps.

As they approached the exchange site, "a Marine officer bellowed the familiar naval command, 'Marines, man your stations!'"[7] Rosters of the UNC prisoners in the trucks and ambulances were then presented to the Marine team captains who checked the lists. As they called the names, "thin, wan, but smiling men shuffled from the trucks to the medical tents."[8]

Official receipt of the POWs at Panmunjom was by the Munsan-ni Provisional Command Receipt and Control Officer, assisted by 35 officers and enlisted men from the 1st Marine Division. After their screening by medical officers, UN returnees not in need of immediate medical aid were transferred by ambulance to Freedom Village at Munsan-ni for further processing. Helicopter priority went to litter patients too weak to travel by ambulance. POWs requiring prompt treatment were loaded aboard the HMR–161 carriers and flown to the 11th Evacuation Hospital at Freedom Village.

Seriously injured men were transferred directly to the Inchon hospital ships for embarkation to the United States, or were air-evacuated to Japan. South Korean repatriates were processed and went their way to freedom through nearby Liberty Village, the ROK counterpart of Freedom Village. A huge map was used to check progress of the POW convoys en route from Panmunjom to Freedom Village. The departure of ambulances and helicopters from Panmunjom was radioed ahead to Freedom Village, where medical personnel and vehicles lined the landing mat.

At Munsan-ni, the newly-freed men received a more thorough physical exam and the rest of their processing. Here they were again screened by medical officers to determine their physical condition. Able-bodied POWs were escorted to the personnel data section where necessary administrative details were recorded and their military records brought up to date. Those medically cleared were available for press interviews. New clothing issue, individually tailored, probably as much as anything emphasized to a prisoner that his particular Korean War was over. And nearly all of them found news[9] awaiting them in letters from home. When all basic details were completed, returnees went into the recreation and refreshment section. Commonplace iced tea, coffee, ice cream (the favorite), milk, sandwiches, cigarettes, and the latest periodicals were luxuries. In their weakened condition, the POWs could be served only light fare; the big steaks would come later.

The first Marine and fifth man in the processing line on the initial day, 5 August, was Private First Class Alfred P. Graham, Jr., of H/3/5. Although too weak to enter the press room, the 21-year-old repatriate told newsmen later in Tokyo of being fed a diet of cracked corn during his prison camp stay and of being forced to

carry firewood 11 miles each day. The second Marine returned that day, and the 34th man to enter Freedom Village, was Sergeant Robert J. Coffee, of the 1st Signal Battalion. Captured in November 1950, he had been wounded just before being taken prisoner and had received little medical treatment. Like other returnees, Coffee stated that the treatment had been very poor while he was in the hands of the North Koreans but that it had improved somewhat after he was turned over to the Chinese.

Third and last Marine to come through the line was Private First Class Pedron E. Aviles, previously with the Reconnaissance Company of Headquarters Battalion. Knocked unconscious with a rifle butt while battling the enemy on a patrol on 7 December 1952, he regained consciousness to find himself a prisoner of the CCF.

On the second day, three more USMC infantrymen traveled that final road to freedom. They were Private First Class Francis E. Kohus, Jr., of A/1/7; Corporal Gethern Kennedy, Jr., I/3/1; and Private First Class Bernard R. Hollinger, H/3/5. Like the preceding three, their stories bore a similar pattern: usually they had been captured only after having been wounded or clubbed unconscious. As with other UNC prisoners being released daily, they told of the physical cruelty of their North Korean captors and the mental strain under the Chinese. Observers noted that many of the men released this second day were in much poorer physical condition than the initial returnees. In fact, one ROK prisoner was found to have died in an ambulance while en route to Liberty Village.

Mostly the repatriates asked questions about their old outfits: “Do you know if any of the other guys on the outpost got back off the hill?” and “Did we finally take the damn thing?” “Where’s the 24th Division now?”[10]

Technical Sergeant Richard E. Arnold was one of the two Marine combat correspondents at Freedom Village during BIG SWITCH. He described his impressions of the returning men—in some cases, coming home after 30 months’ confinement in North Korean POW camps, and others, as little as 30 days:

“All are relieved and some a little afraid . . . It’s their first hour of freedom, and most tell you that they can still hardly believe it’s true. Some are visibly shaken, some are confused—and all are overwhelmed at the thought of being free men once again.”[11]

As in prison life everywhere, the POWs told of the hated stool pigeons, the so-called “progressives.” These were the captives who accepted (or appeared to accept) the Communist teachings and who, in turn, were treated better than the “reactionary” prisoners who resisted the enemy “forced feeding” indoctrination. Continued the Marine correspondent:

“They don’t talk much. When they do, it’s . . . mainly of progressives and reactionaries—the two social groups of prisoner life under the rule of Communism, the poor chow and medical care, and of the desire to fight Communism again.

“When you ask, they tell you of atrocities committed during the early years of the war with a bitterness of men who have helplessly watched their friends and buddies die. Of forced marches, the bitter cold, and the endless political lectures they were forced to attend.”[12]

One of the last—possibly *the last*—Marine captured by the Chinese was Private First Class Richard D. Johnson, of G/3/1. The 20-year-old machine gunner had been in the final battle of the war, the Boulder City defense, and was taken 25 July, just two days before the signing of the truce. Private First Class Johnson was returned the 19th day of the exchange. Another Marine seized in that same action was Private First Class Leonard E. Steege, H/3/7. As he entered the gate, he momentarily shook up Corporal James E. Maddell, a military policeman on duty at Freedom Village. Maddell said the last time he saw Steege was during the fighting for the outpost. “He was a dead Marine then,” Maddel said, “but I guess it was just a case of mistaken identity.”[13]

Captain Jesse V. Booker of Headquarters Squadron 1, the first Marine POW of the war, who had been captured on 7 August 1950, was also one of the earliest MAW personnel released. Booker and First Lieutenant Richard Bell, VMF–311, were returned to UNC jurisdiction on 27 August, the first Marine aviators to be sent back.

In addition to the regular issue of Marine utilities, gold naval aviator's wings, donated by 1st MAW fliers, were pinned on the chests of returning pilots by Wing General Megee and Division General Pate. Also welcoming Marine returnees at Freedom Village were Brigadier General Verne J. McCaul, the new Assistant Wing Commander; General Burger, ADC; and Colonel Metze, who also "found time during the busy days to greet and talk with every Marine and Navy Corpsman who passed through."[14] Among those dignitaries[15] present for the occasion were General Taylor, EUSAK CG; General Clarke, I Corps Commander; Secretary of the Army, Robert T. Stevens; and various U.S. senators.

During August enlisted POWs were recovered in large numbers. Officers, generally, did not arrive at Kaesong—the first step to Panmunjom—until about 21 August. After that date they were gradually returned to friendly control.

Even as late as 26 August there was considerable concern over the fate of hundreds of Allied officers not yet repatriated. Some early returning officers told of colonels, majors and captains who had been sentenced up to ten years for forming "reactionary groups" in camp. One field grade officer had been sentenced to a long prison term on the eve of the armistice.[16] A similar thing nearly happened to Captain John P. Flynn, VMF(N)–513, long a thorn in the side of his Communist captors. Like a number of UNC airmen falsely charged with waging germ warfare, he vigorously denounced these allegations. "Even as late as the end of August the Marine was threatened with nonrepatriation, and his experience formed the basis for an episode in the novel *A Ride to Panmunjom*."[17]

Between 5 August–September, 3,597 U.S. servicemen were returned during Operation BIG SWITCH, including 129 ground and 28 air Marines. This 157 figure represents a total of 42 officers and 115 enlisted repatriated during this second and final POW exchange. Of the 27 Naval personnel freed, at least 6 were hospital corpsmen serving with the 1st Marine Division when they were taken. Counting the 157 Marines released in Operation BIG SWITCH and the 15 wounded POWs sent back in April, a total of 172 division and wing Marines were returned in the two POW exchanges.

Although the switch took place over a five-week period, 38 Marines, or 24 percent, were not released until late in the proceedings, in September. As one author noted, "It was Communist policy to hold the 'reactionaries' . . . to the last."[18]

Two of the best-known Marine "reactionaries" who had openly defied their Communist jailers during their entire period of captivity, were then-Lieutenant Colonel William G. Thrash, a VMA–121 pilot, and then-Major John N. McLaughlin, taken POW in November 1950. McLaughlin was released on 1 September and Thrash on 5 September in a group of 275 Americans returned, the largest number for any single day's transfer since the exchange began. The most famous U.S. prisoner held by the Communists was Major General William F. Dean. Formerly commander of the U.S. Army 24th Division, he had been captured in August 1950 after the fall of Taejon.

Ever since Operation BIG SWITCH got under way, every returnee had been asked if he had seen or heard of General Dean. None had. Many UN officers felt—uneasily—that he would probably be the last officer to be sent back. In fact, he emerged from imprisonment on 4 September "to be greeted with cheers at Freedom Village."[19] Major Walter R. Harris and the most senior Marine captured during the war, Colonel Frank H. Schwable, later to be the central figure in a Court of Inquiry, were among the last nine Marines returned on 6 September, the final day of the switch. And so, one by one, the last 160 American POWs passed through Panmunjom. All were men marked by the enemy as "war criminals."

One Army sergeant, who freely admitted he could "never adequately describe how he felt when he knew he was going home"[20] recalled those final moments as a newly-freed prisoner:

"At 1100 his truck pulled up at Panmunjom, the last convoy of American POWs to be exchanged. A huge, moustached Marine master sergeant walked up beside the truck, called out: 'I will call out your last name.

You will answer with your first name, middle initial, and Army serial number . . .'

"'Schlichter!'

"Schlichter [Charles B., Sgt.], barked out his response, and stepped down.

"'Sergeant,' the big Marine said gravely, 'glad to have you home.'

"'Fella, you don't know how glad *I* am,' Schlichter said."[21]

In the preliminary prisoner exchange, the week-long "LITTLE SWITCH" in April 1953, all of the returned Marine personnel were men who had been wounded at the time of their capture. They were recently-captured POWs, deliberately segregated by the enemy from early captives. All of these home-coming Marines had been captured since May 1952. Generally speaking, they had all been fairly well-treated.

During Operation BIG SWITCH, by contrast, 41 Marines were repatriated who had spent nearly three years as Communist prisoners of war. The majority of USMC returnees in this second exchange, however—a total of 91—had been captured relatively recently, in 1952 and 1953, and 25 had been held since 1951.

Throughout Operation BIG SWITCH, the Allied Command transferred a total of 75,799 prisoners (70,159 NKPA and 5,640 CCF) seeking repatriation. The Communist returned 12,757 POWs. In addition to the 3,597 Americans, this total represented 1,312 other UNC troops (including 947 Britons, 228 Turks, and small numbers of Filipinos, Australians, and Canadians) and 7,848 South Koreans.

The BIG SWITCH exchange went relatively smoothly, marred for a while only by the unruly behavior of some Communist diehard POWs. In a manner reminiscent of their earlier camp riots, the Communist POWs put on a blatant propaganda show for the benefit of world newsreel cameras. As the train carrying CCF and North Korean prisoners moved into the Panmunjom exchange point, enemy POWs noisily shouted Communist slogans, defiantly waved Communist flags, and hurled insults at UN forces. Some POWs stripped off their [U.S. provided] uniforms, "tossing them contemptuously to the ground."[22] Others spat in the faces of U.S. supervising officers, threw their shoes at jeep windshields, and sang in Korean and Chinese "We will return in the Fall."[23]

Marine division and wing elements were designated responsible for the security of nonrepatriated enemy POWs. By terms of the armistice agreement, these were held by UNC custodial forces from India. In commenting on the airlift operations, performed largely by HMR–161, the UNC Commander noted:

"We had to go to great lengths to live up to our pledge to Syngman Rhee that no Indian troops would set foot on South Korean soil. Therefore, we set up an airlift operation which carried more than six thousand Indians from the decks of our carriers off Inchon by helicopter to the Demilitarized Zone. It was a major undertaking which just about wore out our helicopter fleet in Korea."[24]

One of the recommendations made by military officials after the April LITTLE SWITCH exchange was that all interrogation of returning POWs be done either in America or on board ship en route home, rather than in Tokyo. This system was followed and worked out well. The POWs boarded ships at Inchon, following their clearance at Freedom Village. Interrogation teams, in most cases, completed this major part of their repatriation processing before docking at San Francisco. Two weeks of recuperation, good food and rest aboard ship enabled many POWs to arrive home in far better shape for reunion with their families than they had been in when received initially at Panmunjom.

As in LITTLE SWITCH, Marine and Navy personnel were processed by members of the Intelligence Department of Commander, Naval Forces Far East, augmented by officers from other Marine staffs. Marine officers who conducted the shipboard interrogations again included Lieutenant Colonel Fisher, ComNavFE liaison officer, as well as Lieutenant Colonel William A. Wood, Major Stewart C. Barber, and First Lieutenant Robert A. Whalen. All returning POWs were queried in depth by counterintelligence personnel about enemy treatment and atrocities, questionable acts committed by that small proportion of our own men whose conduct was reprehensible, and routine military matters. A security dossier was prepared on each prisoner, and all data about him went into his file case. The LITTLE SWITCH reports had indicated earlier—and this was subsequently

confirmed—that some U.S. servicemen were definitely marked for further detailed questioning and scrutiny.

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Chapter 10. Return of the Prisoners of War
Circumstances of Capture [25]

As the Commandant, General Shepherd, was to testify later during an investigation, "the prisoner of war question had never been a major problem [in the Marine Corps] due to the extremely limited number of Marines taken prisoner."[26] As one returnee at BIG SWITCH bluntly put it: "You fought until they reached you with a bullet or a rifle butt—that was the end."[27]

Of the 221 U.S. Marines captured during the Korean War, more than half—121—were seized after 20 September 1951. For the Marine Corps this date marked the time when "warfare of position replaced a warfare of movement throughout the remaining 22 months of the conflict in Korea."[28] Both in the X Corps sector in eastern Korea where the 1st Marine Division was located at that time, as well as later on the Korean western front, the Marine Corps was denied its traditional aggressive fighting role. The Marines (along with the rest of the UNC forces) ceased offensive operations, were reduced to making limited attacks, and were under order from higher echelons to "firm up the existing line and to patrol vigorously forward of it."[29]

The mission of the Marine division thereby evolved into "an aggressive defense of their sector of responsibility" as records duly phrased it. On a larger scale, the nature of the Korean War, from about November 1951 on, reverted to that of July and August,[30] characterized primarily by minor patrol clashes and small unit struggles for key outpost positions. This became the pattern for the remainder of the war. It changed only when the decreed mission of an "active defense of its sector" by a UNC unit became this in fact. Normal defense then escalated into sharp, vigorous fighting to retain friendly key ground positions being attacked by the enemy. One American writer, in a discussion of the British defense in depth concept (adopted by the Marine Corps late in the war), went so far as to blame heavy Marine casualties in Korea on EUSAK'S outpost system.[31]

Approximately half of the 100 Marines taken prisoner by September 1951—43—had fallen into enemy hands during the last two days of November 1950. They had been part of the ill-fated Task Force Drysdale,[32] a composite Royal Marine-USMC-Army convoy that was ambushed by the Chinese en route to the Chosin Reservoir. These facts are relevant to a better understanding of the Commandant's statement that, traditionally, few Marines become prisoners of war.

Overall, the survival rate for Marines taken captive during the Korean War was 87.8 percent. Even for the worst year, 1950, when NKPA treatment was more ruthless and brutal than the CCF (and in any event, for those men longest-held), the Marine survival rate was 75 percent. Marine Corps statistics show that of 221 Marines captured, 194 (43 officers, 151 enlisted) returned, and 27 or 12.2 percent died.[33] Only a few Marines were afflicted with "give-up-itis," the malady that struck countless POWs and took a heavy toll of lives. Included among these 194 returnees were the 172 men from the two POW exchanges, as previously noted; plus a group of 18 Marines captured in 1950 who escaped and rejoined USMC units in May 1951; two enlisted men who escaped less than a week after being taken; and two others released by the enemy after less than a month's captivity.

In a pure statistical oddity, the survival percentage for both Marine officers and enlisted (as well as the overall return rate) turned out to be the same: 87 percent.

Without going into an analysis here of the possible relevant factors, it is interesting to note that 62 percent of all U.S. captured military personnel returned after the Korean War and that roughly 38 percent died while imprisoned.[34] During World War II, the death rate for U.S. prisoners held by the Axis powers was approximately 11 percent.

Circumstances accounting for the capture of Marines during the Korean War were, as in every war, an

occupational hazard. In most cases, prisoners were taken in one of two situations. One occurred when overwhelming numbers of hostile forces suddenly surrounded and overran a small outpost, and either killed or captured a high proportion of its defenders. The second resulted from the well-known increasing accuracy of CCF antiaircraft fire. Halfway through the war it began to take its toll of 1st MAW pilots with similarly predictable results: either death or capture. Simple mischance and the human error of confused directions caused at least two ground Marines to blunder into enemy territory.[35]

A brief review of the Korean War, chronologically, illustrates how some of the men of the 1st Marine Division wound up as prisoners. In the first week of August 1950, leading elements of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the 1st MAW air squadrons arrived in Korea. Soon thereafter the Marine Corps was in the thick of these early-moving offensives: at the Pusan Perimeter; the September Inchon-Seoul amphibious landings; Fox Hill at Toktong Pass, Yudam-ni, the Task Force Drysdale operation, all in November; and the October-December Chosin Reservoir campaign, including the two-day movement from Hagaru to Koto-ri in early December. Marine infantry, military police, tankers, motor transport personnel, and artillerymen were listed MIA in these operations.

Altogether, 79 Marines were captured during the first year. November 1950, when 58 Marines were lost to the enemy, would rank as the most costly month of the entire war in terms of Marines seized in combat. The first air POW, Captain Booker, was shot down 7 August while flying a reconnaissance mission from the USS *Valley Forge.* (This was the same date that infantrymen of the Marine Provisional Brigade saw their initial heavy fighting in what was then considered only a “police action.”) Captain Booker was to remain the only Marine pilot in enemy hands until April 1951.

One ground Marine captured during the hectic days of August 1950 escaped before ever becoming listed as a casualty. Although Private First Class Richard E. Barnett thus does not technically qualify as a POW statistic, he still holds the distinction of being both one of the first Marine captives and one of the few to escape.[36]

Few Marines were taken during 1951. Of the 31 seized throughout the entire year, 13 were from the division and 18 from the wing. The Marines were engaged in antiguerrilla activities until late February when a general advance was ordered by U.S. IX and X Corps to deny positions to the enemy. The 1st Marine Division was committed near Wonju, as part of the IX Corps. A second offensive, Operation RIPPER, was launched in March, and for the next six weeks small inroads were made against CCF forces. Relieved in the Hongchon area the next month by elements of the U.S. 2d and 7th Divisions, the Marines continued to operate as part of the IX Corps. Their mission was to secure objectives north of the 38th Parallel. On 21 April the 1st Marine Division launched its attack, on IX Corps order, encountering moderate to heavy resistance. Throughout the first half of 1951, only five Marine infantrymen were captured.

Truce negotiations, as earlier noted, began at Kaesong on 10 July 1951 and ground fighting slowed. When the Communists broke off the truce sessions in late August General Van Fleet, then EUSAK commander, ordered an offensive by the X Corps to seize the entire Punchbowl. Along with other X Corps divisions, the Marines attacked on 31 August. They secured initial objectives, and then moved north to the Soyang River to seize additional designated objectives. Following the bitter action in the Punchbowl area, the Marines were involved in consolidating and improving their defenses.

As the battle lines became comparatively stabilized in 1951, the enemy began to develop his AA defenses to peak efficiency. Marine pilots engaged in CAS, observation, interdiction, and armed reconnaissance missions began to encounter accurate and intense ground fire.[37] Aircraft losses increased, and with them, the number of USMC aviators who fell into enemy hands. More than half of the Marine POWs taken during the year—18 of 31—were on 1st MAW station lists. Captive airmen represented VMF–323, VMF(N)–513, Hedron MAG–33 (Headquarters Squadron 33), VMO–6, VMF–312, VMF–311, and VMA–121.

The year 1952, like 1950, saw a large number of Marines taken into hostile custody—a total of 70. As the year began, CCF and UNC ground forces had settled down to a bunker warfare system often compared to the

trench warfare of World War I. Air activity remained much as it had the preceding year. Air losses decreased, however, with only 11 pilots becoming POWs, in contrast to the 59 infantry Marines captured. In March, the 1st Marine Division moved from the X Corps zone of action on the east-central front to the I Corps western coastal flank. Here the Marines encountered "steadily increasing aggressiveness as the enemy launched larger and more frequent attacks against outpost positions."[38] Probes, patrol actions, and aggressive defense of the MLR and its outposts took their toll.

Enemy pressure reached its height in October, when 41 Marine infantrymen were seized, the second highest number taken in any month during the war. In the COPs Detroit and Frisco defense of 6–7 October, the 7th Marines listed 22 MIA, of whom 13 became POWs, practically all of them being wounded prior to capture. On 26 October, the Communists lunged at 7th Marines COPs Ronson and Warsaw, adjacent to the main battle position, the Hook. In the ensuing action, 27 Marines were "marched, carried, or dragged off the hill and taken into the Chinese lines."[39] Surprisingly, all 27 were recovered alive in the prisoner exchanges the following year.

Of the 11 Marine airmen who became statistics on a POW list in 1952, 4 were shot down in an ill-fated 10-day period beginning 6 May. Again, all-too-accurate hostile AA fire was the villain. In similar incidents during the year, two Marines engaged in "good Samaritan" aerial activities became POWs for their efforts. In February, First Lieutenant Kenneth W. Henry, an AO assigned to the Marine detachment aboard the light cruiser USS *Manchester*, and Lieutenant Edwin C. Moore, USN, whirled off in the cruiser's HO3S to attempt rescue of a downed Navy fighter pilot, Ensign Marvin Broomhead. In the bright early afternoon, as Henry was maneuvering the helicopter sling, their ship suddenly crashed—apparently from enemy machine gun fire intended for a combat air patrol operating in the vicinity. Two of the three men—Broomhead and Henry—were injured, but managed to drag themselves to a hidden position and waited to be rescued. Instead, they were discovered shortly before midnight by a Chinese patrol.

A similar mishap occurred on 16 May to First Lieutenant Duke Williams, Jr., of VMF–212. Searching for a crashed pilot, his plane was struck by AA and he managed to jump. His parachute blossomed down into the midst of 15 waiting Koreans who had gathered to take him prisoner.

During the last seven months of hostilities in Korea, from January–July 1953, 41 Marines were captured. These included a VMO–6 pilot and air observer in the little OE-1 spotting planes shot down in two separate incidents, plus 39 ground Marines trapped in the vicious outpost struggles of March and July. Except for two Marines who died, the rest were freed a few months after their capture during Operation BIG SWITCH.

Summarizing it another way, of the 221 Marines captured during the three-year conflict:

—49 were officers and 172 enlisted;

—190 were ground personnel and 31 aviators;

—of the 190 ground troops, 19 were officers and 171 enlisted;

—of the 31 aviators, 30 were officer pilots and 1 was enlisted.

The 7th Marines, which was the unit on line at the time of several major CCF attacks, had the highest number of POWs in the division. A total of 70 men, or 59.3 percent[40] of the 118 infantry Marines taken, were from the 7th. The record during this 1950–1953 period for the others is as follows: 1st Marines, 15 POWs; 5th Marines, 33; and the division artillery regiment, the 11th Marines, 14. Six pilots from Marine Fighter Squadron 312 found themselves unwilling guests in North Korea. Four other units—VMO–6, VMF–323, VMF–311, and VMF(N)–513—each had five members who served out the rest of the war as POWs.

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Chapter 10. Return of the Prisoners of War
The Communist POW Camps[41]

The Communist POW camp system, under Chinese direction, began in late December 1950. Marines captured in November and December, along with U.S. Army troops, British Commandos, and other Allied personnel, were forced-marched north to Kanggye, not far from the Manchurian border.[42] In the bitter cold, while winter howled through North Korea, the column of prisoners limped its way to its final destination, arriving the day after Christmas. Several of the group, including Marines, perished during the four-day march—victims of malnutrition, untreated combat wounds, pneumonia, the stinging, freezing wind, and subzero temperatures. Usually, "the Communists moved them [the prisoners] by night, because they feared the United Nations air power which . . . ranged over the whole of North Korea."[43]

During the first three months of 1951, a network of POW camps was developed along the southern shores of the Yalu River. Occupants of the forlorn villages were evacuated, and newly captured UNC prisoners moved in. The main camp operation at this time was in the Kanggye area. This was a temporary indoctrination center established in October 1950 before the development of regular POW camps. (For various CCF camp locations, see Map 34.) Ultimately a group of a half dozen or so permanent camps were developed northeast of Sinuiju, along a 75-mile stretch of the Yalu.

Click here to view map

By early 1951, Major McLaughlin, a captured Marine staff officer previously attached to X Corps, was senior officer among the Kanggye prisoners which included a heterogeneous collection of U.S. 7th Division soldiers, U.S. Marines, 18 Royal Marine Commandos, and Navy hospitalmen. UN personnel were scattered throughout several farmhouses, with no attempt made to segregate the enlisted and officers. The Chinese designated prisoner squads of 8–12 men, depending on the size of the room to which they were assigned. CCF-appointed squad leaders were those prisoners who appeared more cooperative.

In direct opposition to orders, Major McLaughlin set about establishing communication between the small scattered POW groups, despite ever present surveillance. He tried to achieve effective control of the POWs so that a united front of resistance against the enemy could be maintained. At mass indoctrination meetings, held regularly every few days, the Marine officer issued instructions to enlisted personnel through five Marine noncommissioned officers. As one ex-prisoner recalled, the "cold, smoke-filled barn was the locale for wide-spread exchange of information between the many little groups."[44] Daily routine at Kanggye stressed study and political indoctrination. Squad leaders were responsible for lectures and discussions on assigned topics in Marxian dialectical materialism. The curriculum was more intense than most college courses. On the other hand, physical treatment of inmates—except for chronic malnutrition and grossly inadequate medical care—at Kanggye was less brutal than at most of the other prisoner compounds.

Interrogations went hand-in-hand with indoctrination. Prisoners were grilled regularly on order of battle, close air support, naval gunfire methods, UN aircraft, weapons, unit locations, and other tactical information. The Chinese were even more interested in the life histories and biographical data of their captives. POWs were required to answer "economic questionnaires" and at frequent intervals compelled to write elaborate self-criticisms of their political attitudes and class backgrounds. The CCF were satisfied only when prisoners—whose original truthful answers had been rejected—revised their own family status and income statistics downward. POWs, being interrogated, often found the Chinese arguing with them over such far-away matters as the prisoner's parents or his own family annual income and social level.

In March 1951, after an indoctrination period of about eight weeks, the Kanggye POWs were transferred, and the camp itself was later abandoned. The officers were relocated at Camp 5, Pyoktong, while the majority continued the march westward to the newly opened Camp 1, at Chongsong.

Despite its numerical designation as Camp 5, the Pyoktong compound had been organized two months earlier and was the first of the permanent CCF centers. It became the headquarters of the entire prison-camp system. Approximately 2,000 UNC prisoners were interned here by the early part of the year. They were housed in native huts. New inmates arrived regularly from temporary collection centers in the south, where they had been held for months. Sometimes they were marched to the Yalu during the Korean winter while still wearing their summer fatigues. Pyoktong offered little chance for escape. The compound, situated on a barren peninsula that jutted out into the Yalu Reservoir, was so secure that the Communists did not even surround it with barbed wire or employ searchlights. It was hemmed in on three sides by fast water currents, while the one exit from the peninsula was closely guarded.

Conditions were far more severe here than at Kanggye. A starvation diet and complete lack of medical care quickly had their inevitable effect. Pneumonia, dysentery, and malnutrition were rampant. The basic diet of boiled corn or millet resulted in associated deficiency diseases, such as beriberi and pellagra. Between 20 and 30 prisoners died daily. Many experts, nonetheless, felt that “if the Chinese during the winter of 1950–51 killed their prisoners by deliberate neglect, the North Koreans who had handled the captives before they became primarily a Chinese responsibility killed them by calculated brutality.”[45]

Although now junior to some Army and Air Force officers, Major McLaughlin was elected by his fellow officer-prisoners to represent them. Recognized by the Chinese as a staunch non-cooperative and dedicated trouble-maker, the enemy concentrated their pressure on the Marine officer—and he was subjected to intimidation, maltreatment, and threats of death.

As they had at Kanggye, the CCF attempted to organize progressive groups to write peace appeals, propaganda leaflets, and articles condemning the United States for the war. Typically, progressive POWs (usually weaker, less resilient members) who went along with the Communist propaganda conditioning, received better rations and treatment. Rugged resisters, on the other hand, could dependably expect to stand a considerable amount of solitary confinement, usually in an unspeakably foul, vermin-infested “hole.” Here a POW was forced to remain in a debilitating, crouched position usually 56 hours or more. Throughout the war a good many Marines were to know this particular enemy treatment. One Marine artilleryman, Second Lieutenant Roland L. McDaniel, tied to a Korean POW in the hole for 10 days, emerged with pneumonia and tuberculosis.

In addition to the POW compounds at Pyoktong and Chongsong, other sites where Marines were held were Camp 3, at Changsong (nearby and with a nearly identical name to Camp 1), primarily for enlisted personnel, and at “The Valley.” This was a temporary medical processing center in the Kanggye area. Marine inmates here were often confined to a pig pen. Largely because of the filthy conditions of this camp, the death rate quickly earned the Valley the opprobrious name of Death Valley.

Another cluster of POW camps was located further south. These were primarily run by the North Koreans, and were transit camps where prisoners were collected and interrogated before being moved north by truck or on foot to the permanent establishments. Among them were collection centers at Kung Dong and Chorwon, and Camp 10, south of the North Korean Capital Pyongyang. The latter was also known variously as the Mining Camp, the Gold Mine, or Bean Camp—this due to its prevailing diet. At this southernmost Communist camp, POWs were required to dig coal in the nearby mine shafts. Loads of coal were then hauled in small hand carts over icy roads to the camp, a task made more difficult by the prisoners’ skimpy mealtime fare.

The most notorious of all the camps, however, was Pak’s Palace,[46] the interrogation center near Pyongyang. POWs also called it Pak’s Death Palace for its chief interrogator, a sadistic North Korean officer, Major Pak. Captain Martelli, a F4U fighter pilot from VMF–323 shot down in April 1951, was the first Marine

processed through Pak's, where POWs were continuously threatened and beaten with little or no provocation. Another Marine aviator, Captain Gerald Fink, VMF–312, upon being asked during interrogation here why he had come to Korea won a sentence of several days solitary confinement in the hole for his forthright answer: "to kill Communists." Second Lieutenant Carl R. Lindquist, also of VMF–312, was the only one of 18 Marine officers captured in 1951 not processed through Pak's before being sent north.

Gradually the Chinese developed the policy of segregating officer and enlisted personnel. Commenting on this procedure, one British observer offered the following:

"By this means the lower ranks were deprived of their leaders and for a short time this had a depressing, and generally bad, effect. It was not long, however, before the natural leaders among the rank and file asserted themselves. The standard of leadership naturally varied in different compounds; but in all there was some organization and in some it was highly efficient. It was . . . the policy of the Chinese . . . to discourage the emergence of thrustful leaders.... Consequently, clandestine rather than open leadership was usual."[47]

By midyear, noncommissioned officers were also separated from the enlisted men, in an attempt to better control prisoners. In October of 1951 another one of the Yalu River Camps was set up. This was CamP 2, at Pi-chong-ni, which thereafter served as the main officers camp. The next month a POW column of nearly 50 men, including 6 Marines, left Kung Dong for these northern camps on a death march that covered 225 miles in two weeks. During the excruciating march, prisoners had been forced to strip naked and wade across the Chongsong River, a procedure which caused several deaths and cases of frostbite. One British participant, however, recalled that the "Marines banded together during the terrible march, and the Royal Marines were drawn close to the U.S. Marines."[48]

In December 1951 the Communist and UNC forces exchanged lists of captured personnel. The list of 3,198 American POWs (total UNC: 11,559) revealed that 61 Marines were in enemy hands. Nine others, captured late in the year, were still in temporary collection points and thus not listed. Although Marines represented only a small portion of the total POWs, they were present in most of the nearly dozen regular camps or collection points then in existence. In any event the 1951 POW list[49] gave a picture of the growing Communist camp system.

As 1951 was drawing to an end, the Camp 2 commandant, a fanatical Communist named Ding, ordered UNC prisoners to prepare and send a New Year's greeting to the commander of the CCF, General Peng Teh-huai. Senior UN officer, Lieutenant Colonel Gerald Brown, USAF, was determined that the prisoners would not sign the spurious holiday message. Major McLaughlin voluntarily organized Marine resistance, and senior officers of other nationality groups followed suit. No greetings were sent. As usually happened, an informer reported the organized resistance and furnished names of the reactionary leaders. The following month, the six ranking officers were sentenced to solitary confinement, ranging from three to six months, for their "subversive activities."

The episode marked the first really organized resistance to the Chinese. "Although the principals were subjected to months of solitary confinement, coercion, torture, and very limited rations during the bitterly cold months of early 1952, their joint effort laid the foundation for comparatively effective resistance within Camp 2 during the remainder of the war."[50]

In January 1952, Major McLaughlin and the other five officers were removed to begin their long tours of solitary confinement. Although the remaining Marine officers at Pi-chong-ni had "formed a tightly knit group and consulted among themselves on every major issue,"[51] the atmosphere within the camp itself became highly charged and strained. Suspicion of informers and opportunists was rampant. The officers at Camp 2 were generally agreed that Marine Lieutenant Colonel Thrash, who arrived in June, was largely responsible for restoring discipline. He issued an all-inclusive order about camp behavior for all personnel which read, in part:

"Study of Communist propaganda would not be countenanced. If study was forced on them, POWs were to offer passive resistance and no arguments.

"If prisoners were subject to trial or punishment they were to involve no one but themselves.

"There would be no letters written using any titles or return address which might prove beneficial to the Communists for propaganda value."[52]

Expectedly, it was not long before Lieutenant Colonel Thrash's efforts to influence and organize his fellow officers outraged CCF officials. In September he was removed from the compound, charged with "Criminal Acts and Hostile Attitude against the Chinese People's Volunteers." The Marine airman spent the next eight months in solitary. Here he was subjected to constant interrogation, harassment, and duress. On one occasion he was bound, severely beaten, and thrown outside half naked in sub-zero weather. Shock of the severe temperature rendered him unconscious, and he nearly died. Throughout his eight-month ordeal there were demands that he cooperate with the "lenient" Chinese upon his return to the compound.

During 1952, the Communists developed the system of keeping newly-captured Marines (and other UNC troops) apart from those taken prior to January 1952 who had suffered more brutal treatment. Beginning in August, noncommissioned officers were also segregated. They were removed from Chongsong (Camp 1) and taken further north along the Yalu to the "Sergeants Camp" (Camp 4) at Wiwon. Although a few Marines had been interned at the Camp 2 Annex, at Obul, from late 1951 on, they were not sent there in any sizable number until mid-1952.

Adjacent to a steeply-walled valley, the Obul camp was also known as "No Name Valley." Although the inmates of the annex were aware of other POWs in the main compound and throughout the valley, they were under heavy guard to prevent contact between the groups. An Air Force officer, the senior member, and Major Harris, the ranking Marine, went about organizing the prisoners in a military manner. In order to exchange information, notes were hidden under rocks at common bathing points or latrines. Messages were baked in bread by POWs on kitchen detail, and songs were loudly sung to convey information. Hospitalized POWs, meanwhile, were held at the Pyoktong (Camp 5) hospital or, in the southern sector, at a second hospital a few miles north of Pyongyang. Other locations where prisoners were confined in 1952 were "Pike's Peak," also in the same general southern area, and the Manpo Camp on the Yalu.

For POWs incarcerated behind the bamboo curtain, 1952 marked several other developments. It was the year that American airmen began to receive special grilling and threats from their Communist captors. This was in connection with the germ warfare hoax, to be discussed later. It was also the year that Marine POWs at Pi-chong-ni (Camp 2) observed their own traditional 10 November Marine Corps birthday ceremony. Eggs, sugar, and flour were stolen for a cake surreptitiously baked and suitably decorated with the Marine Corps globe and anchor. Another group accomplished the task of bootlegging rice wine. When the special date arrived, the Marine officers toasted the President, Commandant, and Marine Corps and spiritedly sang the National Anthem and Marine Corps hymn. One of the invited guests, Quartermaster Sergeant James Day of the Royal Marines, later recalled the reaction of other prisoners:

"Firstly some were apprehensive in case of trouble with the Chinese, and its always consequent rash of gaol [jail] victims. Some thought it a little childish, and not worth the trouble of interrupting the daily routine of the place. And I feel that quite a lot were rather envious that the small band of USMC should be able to get together and do this sort of thing quite seriously, quite sincerely, and with no thought of any consequence."[53]

This same month the Chinese staged a "Prisoner of War Command Olympics" at Pyoktong. Although most Marines opposed the idea of participation in the event, because of its inevitable propaganda exploitation by the CCF, the decision rendered by the senior UN officer was that POW athletes would be represented. Much improved quality food was served for the occasion, Communist photographers were everywhere, and a CCF propaganda brochure

(with articles written by POW turncoats) was later distributed in Geneva purportedly to show the healthy recreational activites available to UNC prisoners. An Air force pilot, in describing the performance of Major McLaughlin, noted that "his skill as an athlete helped restore the prestige of the officers torn down by the enemy's

propaganda."[54]

More important, he defied the guards by deliberately circulating among the enlisted men (often younger, impressionable, less mature individuals) to point out lies in enemy propaganda tactics designed to slander the U.S. government and its leaders. The Marine officer also collected names of American POWs held in isolated places who it was suspected the enemy might attempt to hold as hostages at the end of the war—possibly as a bargaining tool for the granting of a seat to Red China in the UN.

During the last year of the war although a number of prisoners were still being captured in some of the most savage attacks unleashed by the enemy, the lot of the average POW had improved. More attention was being paid to the former pitiful medical care. The men were more warmly clad, even though still huddled into filthy, crowded huts. And the monotonous poor chow had improved. Most POWs, although carefully kept from learning developments of the outside world, naturally suspected that some reason lay behind the changes. And so there was: the Communists had no desire to repatriate skeletonized prisoners.

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Chapter 10. Return of the Prisoners of War
CCF "Lenient Policy" and Indoctrination Attempts[55]

As early in the war as July 1951, the CCF was seeking propaganda benefits out of its so-called "lenient" policy toward captured United Nations personnel. Basically, this could be described as "calculated leniency in return for cooperation, harassment in return for neutrality, and brutality in return for resistance."[56] Others have characterized the CCF psychological techniques of indoctrination as monotonous and single-minded "repetition, harassment and humiliation."[57] In some respects, it is true that the Chinese treatment of prisoners appeared to be more humane than that of the North Koreans. The latter freely used physical cruelty and torture, to the point of being barbaric.[58] Sometimes it appeared that Allied POWs did not receive any harsher treatment from the CCF than did local civilian prisoners.

Whereas the NKPA regularly resorted to physical brutality, the Chinese "introduced a more insidious form of cruelty."[59] Although they used physical violence less often, it was usually more purposeful and combined with deliberate mental pressure. CCF officials announced that treatment of captives would be "fair and lenient," but that wrongdoers would be publicly punished. Usually this CCF punishment took the form of less drastic methods—solitary confinement, prolonged interrogation, and a reduced diet. Even under this decreed lenient policy, however, no relief parcels were delivered to POWs, nor were any neutral observers ever allowed to inspect the prison camps.

In any event, the Chinese were considerably more effective than the NKPA in their intelligence activities. Often their skilled interrogators were officers who spoke excellent English. Occasionally, they had even attended such U.S. schools as the University of Chicago and had considerable insight into American psychology, customs, and values—even slang. Interrogation sessions usually employed recording devices and sometimes were further equipped with one-way mirrors. One Marine, subjected to frequent interrogation, was kept awake by the Chinese who slapped his face and blew smoke in his eyes.

From early 1951 to the end of the war UNC prisoners were subjected to a systematic attempt at mass conversion to Communism. This intensive indoctrination effort—like the riots of Communist prisoners in Allied POW camps and the CCF germ warfare fabrications—was designed to gain a propaganda advantage. From highest-ranking officer to lowly private, no one was immune to this thought-reform process. General Dean, prize Communist captive, who was subject to three years of intense Marxist-Leninist indoctrination, upon his release commented wryly, "I'm an authority now on the history of the Communist Party and much of its doctrine."[60]

English-speaking POWs, both American and British, particularly became the target for Communist thought-control conditioning. Many experts have discussed glowingly the superb example and iron discipline—both on the battlefield and in POW camp—displayed by the Turkish soldiers. This is true, and their outstanding performance is to their credit as a national group. The fact remains, however, that the Turks were long-term professional soldiers. Usually they were left alone by the Communists who neither spoke their language nor needed them for propaganda purposes. As a rule all non-American troops of the United Nations received better treatment than American and British personnel.

The basic tenet of the Communist party line was that this aggressive war against the peace-loving people of Korea had been caused by American imperialists seeking additional foreign markets. All UNC soldiers were, therefore, by simple definition war criminals who deserved no better treatment than death. But as most UN soldiers were misguided and misled by their capitalist rulers they would "not be shot if they admitted their mistakes and showed themselves to be progressive"[61] by becoming properly indoctrinated.

Often, the thought-reform processing started long before prisoners reached their permanent camps, while they were under initial interrogation in the transit collection center. Captain Samuel J. Davies, Anglican Chaplain of the British Gloucestershire Regiment,[62] noted that lecture subjects presented to his officer group at one North Korean temporary collection center included:

"Corruption of the UN by the American warmongers;

"The Chinese Peoples' right to Formosa;

"The Stockholm Peace Appeal;

"Progress in Peoples' China;

"Churchill, tool of the Truman-MacArthur-Dulles Fascist clique;

"The Soviet Union heads the World Peace Camp."[63]

Systematically the enemy ground away at theory and practice of Communism, with its superiority to American democracy. From emphasis on the Korean War as imperialist aggression, the programmed thinking then dealt with shortcomings of western countries (particularly Southern lynchings, poor treatment of Negroes, and colonialism) to the idyllic socialism in people's democracies where "everyone is equal." "Together with the emotional pressures involved, this dramatic presentation of Marxism-Leninism to prisoners who often not only failed to comprehend why they had fought in Korea, but even the rudiments of democracy itself, was bound to have some sort of effect."[64]

Compulsory lectures and discussions often went on until 2200. Together with the unceasing indoctrination efforts, the CCF attempted to maintain complete control over every aspect of POW life. Each camp was divided into POW companies (ranging from 60 to 300 men), platoons, and squads. Squad leaders, appointed by the Chinese, reported regularly to authorities the opinions of men in their group. "Converted" progressives were responsible for much of the internal policing. Every prisoner with reactionary tendencies was isolated. The varied pressures of hunger, fear, constant threats of torture, coercion, nonrepatriation, anxiety, and guilt[65] were used to break him down.

In an attempt to convert the Marines and other prisoners to their own beliefs, the Communists prohibited the use of the term "prisoner of war." Instead they used the phrase "newly liberated friends" and insisted the POWs do likewise. They also denounced religion as a superstition and device for controlling people's minds. Curiously, POWs were often permitted to retain whatever religious articles they had on them when captured, so that Bibles, rosaries, etc., were available for squad groups that sought to hold informal religious discussions and readings. Such religious expression was, of course, strictly forbidden. It might be noted here that Marines, as a group, did not appear to be any more or less interested in religious services than other POWs.

By mid-1952 the compulsory lectures were considered a failure, and the emphasis shifted to "voluntary" study groups led by progressives. More insidious methods of indoctrination were being used—books, papers, and articles written by camp progressives. Personal interrogation and indoctrination had proved it could have a more powerful effect than attempts at mass conversion. Then, too, the Chinese had by this time perfected another propaganda tool that admirably suited their purposes. It was to have even still more effective, far reaching results.

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Chapter 10. Return of the Prisoners of War
The Germ Warfare Issue[66]

Besides their routine interrogations and indoctrinations, by 1952 the Communists had found a new angle to exploit. This was to have strong repercussions on the treatment of some captured personnel. And, ultimately, it was to affect American public reaction to the entire Korean War and to shake the nation's confidence in some of its fighting men who became POWs.

The germ warfare issue developed from an incident in January 1952 when the Communists shot down a U.S. Air Force B–26 bomber. Several months later, in May, the enemy propaganda campaign moved into high gear when the navigator and pilot both purportedly confessed that they took part in a raid in which germ bombs were dropped on North Korean towns. After the CCF successfully extracted false confessions from the two USAF officers, the enemy exposed both prisoners to a select group of Oriental medical specialists and newspapermen. The two Americans apparently performed according to plan, and a relentless flood of Communist propaganda was unleashed on the world.

While the allegation of bacteriological warfare was not new in the Korean War, it was not until 1952 that the Chinese successfully exploited it. After suffering their first reverses in Korea in September 1950, the Communists charged that Americans were waging germ warfare. Even after they regained the tactical initiative in late 1950 they continued their campaign of vilification. In early 1951, while the UNC battled epidemics of smallpox, typhus, and amoebic dysentery prevalent among the civil population and within the POW camps, the CCF branded medical efforts to curb the diseases as experiments in germ warfare. A formal complaint was made by the CCF to the United Nations in May 1951; thereafter, the germ warfare charges lay dormant for the rest of the year.

The effect of the two airmen's "confessions" in 1952 was far-reaching. From that time until the end of hostilities "captured aviators of all services were subjected to a degree of pressure and coercion previously unknown by prisoners of war. Prior to the turn of the year aviation and ground personnel received relatively the same treatment in Communists' hands. After January 1952, aviators were singled out for a special brand of treatment designed to wring bacteriological warfare confessions from them."[67] North Korean officials joined the CCF spokesmen in loudly denouncing American bacteriological attacks. As the campaign gained momentum, an elaborate, cleverly-concocted "War Crimes Exhibit" was set up in Peiping in May. Similar displays were later on view at the UNC officers' camp at Pi-chong-ni, including hand-written and sound-recorded confessions by the two American pilots, as well as a convincing array of photos depicting the lethal "bomb containers."

All the while air personnel were being put under acute stress to confess alleged war crimes. Captured Marine aviation personnel encountered this new subject in their interrogations. Lieutenant Henry, captured in February, was asked about germ warfare. Major Judson C. Richardson, of VMF(N)–513, during interrogations at Pak's was told he would never leave Korea when he denied that the U.S. was waging bacteriological warfare. Master Sergeant John T. Cain, VMO–6, a well-known Marine enlisted pilot whose plane was shot down in July 1952, was questioned, confined to the hole, and taken before a firing squad when he refused to acknowledge American participation. Captain Flynn was also subjected to intensive and brutal interrogation by North Korean and Chinese Communist Air Force personnel who sought a confession. Others were to meet similar pressure and be questioned until their nerves shrieked.

On 8 July 1952, the first of a chain of events occurred that was to link the Marine Corps with the spurious bacteriological warfare propaganda. Colonel Frank H. Schwable, 1st MAW Chief of Staff and Major

Roy H. Bley, wing ordnance officer, were struck by Communist ground fire while making a reconnaissance flight. The enemy had little difficulty in compiling Colonel Schwable's biography. Although he repeatedly maintained he had just arrived in Korea and had not yet received an assignment, he was in uniform with insignia and full personal identification. A Department of Defense press release issued two days later gave considerable data, correctly identifying him as the Marine Wing Chief of Staff. The Chinese knew they had a prize.

Two weeks after his capture, the colonel was taken to an interrogation center where he remained in solitary confinement until December. He quickly became aware of CCF intentions to utilize him for their propaganda mill. He was interrogated relentlessly, badgered, accused of being a war criminal, fed a near-starvation diet, denied proper latrine privileges, refused medical and dental attention, and subjected to extremes of temperature. Ultimately the discomfort, almost constant diarrhea, extreme pain from being forced to sit in unnatural positions, fatigue, and naked threats wore him down. At the same time he was also convinced that had he continued to resist Communist demands for a confession the enemy would have affixed his forged signature to a document to achieve their ends.

He later commented:

"In making my most difficult decision to seek the only way out, my primary consideration was that I would be of greater value to my country in exposing this hideous means of slanderous propaganda than I would be by sacrificing my life through non-submission or remaining a prisoner of the Chinese Communists for life, a matter over which they left me no doubt."[68]

General Dean, held in solitary confinement for much of his three years' captivity, stated the greatest problem facing a prisoner of war is "maintaining his judgment—he has no one on whom he can try out his ideas before turning them into decisions."[69] Possibly this was also Colonel Schwable's problem. Many drafts of his confession were made before the Chinese were satisfied that specific details reinforced the information earlier obtained in other prisoners' false statements. The confession that finally evolved in December cleverly combined factual order of battle data and technical terminology to create a most convincing lie. It was more sophisticated than efforts of earlier captives and was, unquestionably, damaging.

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Problems and Performance of Marine POWs[70]

Problems faced by Marine and other UNC prisoners ranged from the fundamentals of sheer survival to more abstract questions involving honor and duty that have less sharply defined interpretations. Was it, for instance, a prisoner's duty to overtly resist the enemy at all costs and on all possible occasions? Or was an attitude of passive resistance that created less hostility and attention better in the long run? Were such passive techniques liable to render a POW unable to continue making fine distinctions in his conduct and behavior so that he unwittingly went over the line to become a collaborator with the enemy? What about a ranking POW's responsibility of leadership?

In a practical, day-in, day-out way, every prisoner had to decide for himself as to how actively or passively he would resist the enemy. In a number of cases Marine (and other Allied) POWs gave deliberately false or misleading information in response to threats, coercion, or maltreatment. Three Marines at Pak's regularly held counsel "to determine their courses of action and to coordinate their false stories." [71] Captain Fink's list of ships, all sunk in World Wars I and II, was similar to the story told by an Air Force officer of the new B–108 bomber (three B–36s).

Not infrequently a POW faced threats of death, reduced rations, still worse medical care, solitary, or physical beatings and torture if he failed to make some response to questions. Major Richardson finally wrote untruthful answers to five questions about the Navy, although his NPKA interrogators told him his lies were detected. Master Sergeant Cain authored a fanciful report about the Fleet Logistic Wing, an organization about which he knew nothing, not too surprisingly since it did not exist. He later admitted, however, that he felt he'd "made a mistake at that time [his first interrogation] by lying about inconsequential things."[72]

Expressed in simplistic terms, a spirit of cohesion and of group identity seemed to be the key factor in—to use a bromide that is particularly apt here—separating the men from the boys. Even when avowed reactionary leaders were removed to serve one of their many solitary tours, there seems little doubt that their example served to instill a spirit of resistance (either open or underground) in fellow POWs. This was particularly true when the leadership gap was filled by the next senior man and the chain of command remained unbroken.

Prisoners who were able to rise above their own personal situation (*i.e.*, to adjust, without giving in) and to assist others seemed, unquestionably, to have gained greater resiliency and determination. Whether this is a cause-or-effect reaction, however, might be a grey area difficult to pinpoint precisely. In any event, glimpses of Marines from behind the barbed wire indicated that steadfastness under pressure, ingenuity, and outstanding leadership earned them the respect of fellow prisoners as well as a place in Marine Corps history.

Even in a situation as inhospitable and hazardous as a POW camp, it is not surprising that characteristic behavior and certain distinctive personality traits tend to show through, no matter what. Captain Fink, captured early in the war, endured unspeakable humiliations at the hands of the North Koreans. Although he felt his morale was at its lowest point at this time, and was not sure he could go on, he was later responsible for providing a high degree of civility for POWs confined to Camp 2. His most notable artistic and mechanical achievement was probably the construction of an artificial leg[73] for USAF Major Thomas D. Harrison. This prosthetic was so expertly fashioned that its owner could play volley ball using his new limb! Fink also built stethoscopes for POW doctors, using resonant wood and tubing stolen from Chinese trucks. After a discussion with other POWs on the need for a religious symbol in camp, the resourceful Marine made a 22-inch crucifix, christened "Christ in Barbed Wire."[74] His efforts on behalf of religion earned him a 10-day sentence in the hole.

Captain Arthur Wagner, VMF(N)–513, spent an unusually long six-month tour at Pak's during 1951. For new captives headed in that direction, the word via USMC grapevine was that he "could be trusted."[75] Captain Wagner counselled other prisoners at Pak's, helped chop wood, draw water, cook, ease the burden of sick POWs, and resisted the Communists at every turn.

Another member of the same squadron, Captain Flynn, had completed 59 combat missions against the enemy in North Korea before being shot down in May 1952.[76] While captive, the veteran Marine fighter pilot withstood intense interrogation, influenced others to suppress CCF-inspired talks made by progressives, and strengthened morale by planning a group escape. He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment by a mock court. Throughout it all, according to Master Sergeant Cain, the POWs "owed much to Flynn who kept them amused."[77] First Lieutenant Robert J. Gillette's "reactionary" attitude resulted in his being placed in the hole on several occasions. Once, at No Name Valley, he managed to scribble a novel on toilet paper which subsequently provided some light moments for fellow prisoners. And First Lieutenant Felix L. Ferranto, 1st Signal Battalion, spent more than two years of his 33 months' imprisonment in solitary confinement or isolated with small units of "non-cooperative" POWs. The CCF pronounced him a "hopeless capitalist, an organizer with an 'unsincere attitude.' "[78]

The type of amiable accommodation that could sometimes be made, without compromising one's standards, was once successfully demonstrated by Captain Jack E. Perry, VMF–311 briefing officer. On a bombing run his F9F fuel tank was hit, and he parachuted down. Seized almost immediately by the Chinese, his captors "showed him bomb holes from numerous strikes in the area, and they pointed out several wounded soldiers. Then, as he describes it, 'They laughed like hell.' Although Captain Perry failed to see anything funny, he laughed along with them.' "[79]

Three Marines captured during the Korean War had suffered a similar fate in World War II. Ironically, Staff Sergeant Charles L. Harrison, of the Military Police Company; Warrant Officer Felix J. McCool, of 1st Service Battalion; and Master Sergeant Frederick J. Stumpges, Headquarters Company, were all captured in the same 29 November 1950 action. Comparisons of treatment by the Communists and Japanese were inevitable. A survivor of the Bataan Death March, Stumpges felt that although the Japanese confinement was more difficult physically, imprisonment in North Korea was a far worse mental ordeal. "They [the Communists] were around all the time and you could never speak your mind."[80]

The other two Marines similarly thought that the Japanese were more brutal but had more character. Harrison, captured at Wake Island, said he admired them because "they really believed in their cause and were loyal to it."[81] The Chinese, on the other hand, he characterized as employing "false friendship and deceit."[82] McCool, who had spent 70 hours in a slimy, lice-infested hole for refusing to confess to a phony charge of rape and pillage, knew that he "hated the Chinese Communists far more than he had hated the Japanese."[83]

Master Sergeant Cain had distinguished himself by flying little OE reconnaissance planes 184 hours and had 76 combat missions in one month. Just before his capture, Cain had paid for six months' education for nine Korean youngsters who lived near his air base. Because of his graying hair and lack of rank insignia, Sergeant Cain was mistaken for a senior officer. In fact, the Chinese insisted that he was Lieutenant Colonel Cain, CO of VMF–121. His equal amount of insistence that he was not a Marine officer, plus his refusal to reveal any significant information, made him a particular nuisance to the CCF. He was subjected to intensive interrogation sessions, confined to the hole, and stood at attention for periods of five to eight hours. Describing the occasion on which he thought it was all over, Sergeant Cain related that he:

". . . was taken to a hillside, blindfolded, and placed in front of a firing squad. He heard rifle bolts click. The commander of the firing squad asked if he was ready to tell all."[84]

When the Marine sergeant replied that he was not going to talk, the Chinese returned him to solitary confinement. Eventually, after questioning him for 84 days, the CCF gave up trying to indoctrinate him in the

ways of Communism. Major Harris, senior officer of the Obul complex, freely acknowledged that Sergeant Cain "assumed more than his share of duties and responsibilities and set an example for all to follow."[85]

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Chapter 10. Return of the Prisoners of War
Marine Escape Attempts[86]

As the Korean War came to a close, assessments were being made of America's role in it. Operation BIG SWITCH swung into high gear and national attention focused on the returning POWs and their experiences in Communist camps. The widely-accepted statement was that no prisoners had escaped. Even more discrediting was the prevailing belief that, "worse, not a single American attempted to escape from captivity."[87] These reported facts are not borne out by the actual record.

In May 1951, a group of 18 Marines and a U.S. Army interpreter found their way back to American control through a combination of fortuitous events and quick thinking. All of the Marines had been captured several months earlier, in the 28 November 11 December period, the majority on the night of 29-30 November. There were peculiar circumstances connected with their escape. In early April, a group of nearly 60 UNC prisoners had been brought south by the enemy from the Majon-ni area. Presumably they were to perform working details in the rear of Communist front lines.

While a larger number of prisoners, both Army and Marine, were marched westward to Pyoktong, First Lieutenant Frank E. Cold and a group of 17 enlisted were sent further south to the general Chorwon area, not far from the 38th Parallel. In the meantime the Chinese launched their spring counteroffensive on 22 April. It appears that, subsequently, the Marines and Army interpreter, Corporal Saburo "Sam" Shimamura, who had been attached to the 1st Marine Division, were told they would be taken to the area in which the Marine division was operating and released there.

The group was then trucked southeast to Chunchon, just below the Parallel, under guard, and marched toward the vicinity of the front lines. On 24 May, while in proximity to the main battle area, an artillery preparation suddenly registered nearby. The CCF guards fled, while the prisoners ran in the opposite direction, heading for high ground where they successfully eluded the guards. For the rest of that day and night the escapees quietly watched Communist troops retreat past them. The next day, 25 May, the Marines fashioned make-shift air panels from wallpaper they stripped from a ruined Korean house in the area. They spelled out "POWS—19 RESCUE." Their signal attracted the attention of an Army observation pilot who radioed their position to an Army reconnaissance unit.

Three Army tanks were dispatched and escorted the ex-prisoners to safety. They entered friendly lines in the vicinity of Chunchon, "the first and only group of prisoners to experience Communist indoctrination and to reach freedom after a prolonged period of internment."[88] Two members of the unit [89] were of special interest. One man was 56-year-old Master Sergeant Gust H. Dunis, who had barely survived the brutal, frozen death march to Kanggye in late December. The other was Staff Sergeant Charles L. Harrison, previously introduced as a unique two-time prisoner of war.

An additional four enlisted Marines returned to military control after a brief period of capture. Corporal William S. Blair, B/l/7, and PFC Bernard W. Insco, D/2/11, were taken prisoner on 24 April 1951 while the 1st Marine Division was operating as a component of IX Corps. Although originally sent north to a POW camp, both were released on 12 May by the enemy after less than a month's captivity. Another pair of lucky Marines were PFC Richard R. Grindle and Corporal Harold J. Kidd, both of B/1/7. Seized on 11 May in patrol actions, they were the only Marines captured in ground fighting that month, and escaped to return to the division four days later.

At least six escape attempts are known to have been made by Marine POWs, and another elaborate plan

late in the war was foiled before it got under way. The incidents follow:

#1. In the early winter months of 1951, Sergeant Donald M. Griffith, F/2/5, became increasingly upset by the filth, steady attrition of POWs, and semi-starvation diet at The Valley. He vowed to escape. Late one night he pretended to go to the latrine and finding the guard asleep, instead hurried down the path leading out of the valley. He walked until dawn, then found a hut where he hid among a pile of rice bags for some much-needed sleep. Later, he knocked at a hut, asking for food. While he ate, however, his genial host's son was out contacting a military patrol which even then was on Griffith's trail.

A group of Communist soldiers closed in to recapture him. As early punishment, Griffith's shoe pacs were taken from him and he was forced to walk back to the Valley in his threadbare ski socks. Returned to the camp, the Marine sergeant was beaten across the face. He was also directed to walk up a nearby hill and for three successive times a rifle bullet tearing by his head barely missed him. Later he learned that plans of his escape were leaked to the CCF by an informer, thus triggering an early search.

#2. In May 1951, Captain Bryon H. Beswick, VMF–323, was a member of a large POW column being marched north. Although still suffering severe burns on his face, hands, and leg incurred while bailing out of his plane that had caught fire, Beswick and four others attempted to outwit their guards while on the march. All the would-be escapees were placed in solitary confinement.

#3. Shortly after his capture in July 1951, PFC Alfred P. Graham, Jr., H/3/5, was interned temporarily at what appeared to be a divisional headquarters. One afternoon when the guards seemed slack, Graham and another Marine sneaked off. Ultimately they approached a farmhouse to get food and there stumbled into a half dozen Koreans who took them into custody. The two Marines were beaten with a submachine gun and their hands were bound behind their back with communications wire. On their forced reappearance at the original site of escape, a Korean officer beat and interrogated them for three days.

#4. A short-lived escape attempt at Pak's Palace, not long after his capture in October 1951, had earned Lieutenant Gillette a solitary confinement tour. Arriving at Officers' camp in Pi-chong-ni the following spring, the former VMF (N)–513 squadron member and a South African air force pilot laid plans for a mutual escape. Gillette deliberately set himself on a course of reduced rations to prepare himself for the coming feat. When the two men made their break, they were shot at but managed to safely clear the camp.

The first night out the other pilot so badly injured himself in a fall that Gillette had to leave him and go on alone. Although the apparent escape route lay to the west, nearer the coast, the Marine chose to go east across rugged mountains that offered little in the way of cover, concealment, or food. His unorthodox planning nearly paid off. "Whereas most escapees were recaptured within hours, or at best within days, Lieutenant Gillette was free for several weeks before the Communists found him halfway across Korea."[90] One Royal Marine described the attempt as "the finest and most determined one he knew of."[91]

#5. In July 1952, three Marine officers were involved in an abortive escape attempt at Camp 2. They were Lieutenant Colonel Thrash, Major McLaughlin, and Second Lieutenant Richard L. Sill, 1st 90mm AAA Gun Battalion. When detected outside of camp they were able to get back inside the compound, but the Chinese did identify Lieutenant Still. His escape attempt earned him a three-month sentence in the hole from which he later "emerged unbothered and steeled against the Communists."[92]

#6. Captain Martelli escaped from the Camp 2 compound in September 1952. Retaken 10 days later, he was put in the same hole for two months. On release from the confinement, he was visibly upset by the experience, but quickly recovered. As a matter of interest, Martelli, like the other men whose exploits are recounted here, returned home in Operation BIG SWITCH.

#7. In the spring of 1953 a group of 30 officers, including two British Marines, at Camp 2 organized classes in mathematics, physics, and survival lectures. Conferences on escape and evasion techniques were held and the men formed escape groups. The teams drew straws to pick priorities for escape, and each one presented its

plan to a senior body for approval. On 1 July, with support of the other teams, the first group went over the fence surrounding their house. Their freedom was brief, however, and the camp guard doubled. When rumors of armistice began circulating, further escape plans were cancelled. Clandestine prisoner escape committees—although unsuccessful in terms of actual results achieved—had existed at various camps. Second Lieutenant Rowland M. Murphy had been a member of such an organization at Obul. Major McLaughlin had assumed similar responsibilities at Camp 5, in 1951, and later at Camp 2 served on the secret all-UNC prisoners escape committee and senior officers' organization within Camp 2. In early 1953 Major Harris became senior officer at the Camp 2 Annex. He organized Spanish classes as a facade for having a regular meeting place to announce policy and issue orders. Maps of North Korea were prepared for use in escape attempts and counter-Chinese political indoctrination was disseminated.

The Camp 2 officers performed another useful service. As rumor leaked out of the impending truce, they drafted a policy guide on POW behavior that was secretly circulated to other camps. UNC prisoners were directed to refrain from any appearance of fraternizing with the enemy, or acts of exuberance or violence. Specifically, they were reminded not to show any great enthusiasm upon their release, to prevent the Communist cameras on the scene from recording this as another propaganda victory.

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Evaluation and Aftermath [93]

With but a few exceptions, circumstances indicated that capture of most Marines was unavoidable. Theoretically, it can be argued that several seized in bunkers might have avoided captivity had they been occupying fighting-holes instead. On the other hand, they might just as readily have become statistics on a KIA list, instead, by falling victim to preparatory fire that preceded the enemy's main assault.

As Marine historian, then-Major, MacDonald has noted:

"A shadow fell over American POWs in the aftermath of the Korean War. Courts-martial and other official inquiries revealed that a small segment of the Americans captured by the Communists had been guilty of behavior ranging from questionable to treasonable."[94]

Both the Secretary of Defense Advisory Committee on Prisoners of War and the United States Congress, which investigated the entire POW issue, returned favorable verdicts for Marine POW conduct. The U.S. Senate report summarized its findings:

"The United States Marine Corps, the Turkish troops, and the Colombians as groups, did not succumb to the pressures exerted upon them by the Communists and did not co-operate or collaborate with the enemy. For this they deserve greatest admiration and credit."[95]

In commenting on prisoner attitudes and activities that seemed to account for those men who became "survival types", an Army psychiatrist, Major William F. Mayer, observed:

"The Marines were a statistically significant group from the standpoint of size, something over two hundred; the only thing I can say about them is that more of them survived than we. I think this is a function of discipline and morale and espirit; and the attitude in the Marine Corps I expressed a little while ago, that if something happens to me, these jokers will take care of me."[96]

In the nature of self-judgment, Sergeant Griffith referred to "that certain 'something' that seems to weld men together prevailed more among the Marine POWs than it did with the other captured UN Troops."[97] The Marine with probably more experience as a POW than anyone else, Sergeant Harrison, noted that "without USMC training I would never have lived through several tight spots. I am not talking strictly about physical training as I am mental conditioning. It is something that causes you to think . . . about what the other guy will think or how it [your action] might affect or endanger them."[98]

A senior Air Force officer, Lieutenant Colonel Gerald Brown, who headed POW units at Camp 2 and 5 between his tours of solitary confinement, declared:

"I was extremely proud of the conduct of U.S. Marine Corps personnel with whom I came in contact during my period of confinement. Their esprit de corps was perhaps the highest of any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States during this period."[99]

And Navy Chief Duane Thorin, a former inmate of the Camp 2 annex, who later inspired the character of the helicopter pilot in James A. Michener's *The Bridges of Toko-ri*, pointed out:

"The Navy and Marine Corps POWs were generally excellent. The Marines who left something to be desired were more than compensated for by the majority of them."[100]

Another view was offered by a prominent neurologist and consultant to the Secretary of Defense Advisory Committee, Dr. Harold G. Wolff. After investigating the performance of American POWs in Korea, Dr. Wolff concluded they had not "behaved much differently from other men in other armies and places" but that Americans had been made to appear much worse "by the enemy's propaganda devices and our own initial

ineptitude in countering the Communist propaganda."[101]

As a postscript to the POW story, five Marines received awards, on 11 January 1954, for their exceptionally meritorious conduct while serving as prisoners of the Communists in Korea. They were:

Lieutenant Colonel Thrash—awarded a Gold Star in lieu of a second Legion of Merit;

Major McLaughlin—awarded the Legion of Merit;

Major Harris—also awarded the Legion of Merit;

Captain Flynn—awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal; and

Master Sergeant Cain—awarded a Letter of Commendation with Ribbon.

On the negative side, one enlisted Marine was disciplined for his cooperation with the enemy in writing a pro-Communist magazine article. A Court of Inquiry, convened in March 1954, did not recommend a court-martial for the 45-year-old pilot, Colonel Schwable. After a month-long review of circumstances involved in the case, the court opined that he had resisted Communist pressure and torture "to the limit of his ability before giving in."[102] Its final judgment was that Schwable—a Naval Academy graduate, veteran of 20 years' military service, and distinguished WW II night-fighter pilot and squadron CO—not be subjected to disciplinary action. At the same time the court held that his future usefulness as a Marine officer was "seriously impaired" by his conduct as a war prisoner.

On a larger scale, 192 Americans were found guilty of misconduct against fellow prisoners or various degrees of collaboration with the enemy. None of these was a Marine. In comparison with some 22,000 Communists who refused repatriation, 21 U.S. and 1 British prisoner succumbed to CCF brainwashing tactics. Twelve of the Americans have since returned to the U.S., apparently disenchanted with the Communist version of "people's democracy" after getting a closer look at it.

Investigations later showed that "only a handful of the POWs in Korea were able to maintain absolute silence under military interrogation. Nearly all of the American prisoners went beyond the [Geneva Convention] 'absolute', name, rank, serial number, and date of birth restriction."[103] Although giving false or misleading information was a common occurrence in POW camps, such testimony was usually quickly detected. American military authorities, drawing up a revised Code of Conduct (1955) subsequently recommended against making untruthful statements. Further, even though several Marines seemed to have suffered none the worse for giving false information, in at least one case a prisoner's own situation was weakened by enemy detection of his lie and increasing pressure was brought against him.

It was found too, that in every group of prisoners there were always gradations of those more cooperative with the enemy ("progressives") and those who offered open or passive resistance ("reactionaries"). One Korean War analyst, in seeking the final explanation of what POW tactics succeeded best against a dedicated enemy, cited the Turkish "chain of command that was never broken" and which helped to mold them together. He noted the "permissive" culture and background of Americans where freedom of choice and individual decisions are basic tenets. Despite the effect of military indoctrination and discipline, this concept of individualism and freedom appeared to be so strongly engrained that unless there was a corresponding emphasis on responsibility and strong beliefs it tended to weaken a man when his action and values were put to a prolonged test—as in the POW compound. The analyst concluded:

"Only an extremely cohesive group, with tight leadership and great spiritual strengths, coupled with inner toughness and concern for one another, could have survived the shocks visited upon their minds and bodies. . . They [the Turks] remained united against the enemy, and they survived."[104]

This judgement, to a large degree, tells the Marine POW story.

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Chapter 11. While Guns Cool
The Postwar Transition[1]

TERMS OF THE Armistice Agreement required EUSAK components, including the 1st Marine Division, to carry out a number of major tasks in the months following the end of active hostilities. As stipulated by the cease-fire, UNC troops all along the front withdrew to a new main battle position (MBP) south of the main line of resistance. A military demarcation line (MDL) was established between enemy and friendly positions, corresponding to the end-of-war battle lines. Each side pulled back 2,000 yards from this MDL, with the combined 4,000-yard buffer strip on both sides being known as the demilitarized zone (DMZ).

A continuous double-strand barbed wire fence, known as the No-Pass Fence, or No-Pass Line, was erected 200 yards below the southern boundary of the DMZ by infantry units manning the MLR at the time of the cease-fire. Appropriate marking signs, in Chinese, Korean, and English, were placed at regular intervals along the fence, prohibiting unauthorized entry into the Demilitarized Zone.

Strict requirements by I Corps enjoined that the "fence on the southern boundary of the DMZ must present a continuous unbroken line except for gates and where it crosses large streams."[2] Beginning late on 27 July 1953, the 1st Marine Division's modified mission became that of withdrawal to and organization of the post-armistice MBP, establishment of the No-Pass Line, and defense of the new position in readiness for any possible resumption of hostilities by the enemy.

Division officers, from commanding general to platoon leader level, repeatedly emphasized that the armistice agreement was only a cessation of active fighting. As such, it could be violated by the enemy at any time. The armistice was not a peace, but had simply paved the way for a political conference. As the UNC commander, General Mark W. Clark, had stated, the 27 July document was merely "a military agreement between opposing commanders to cease fire and to permit the opposing sides to arrive at a peaceful solution of the conflict."[3] Since many felt the cease-fire might be only temporary and not necessarily a permanent peace, all hands showed an attitude of skepticism and watchful waiting. There was little disposition or time for celebration. The response of many men to the complete lack of noise across the front was one of simple restlessness and expectancy.

From the 7th Marines just engaged in the vicious Boulder City battle, the reaction

". . . was one of disbelief and caution. Extensive movements of the enemy during the night of 27 July only bolstered the feeling of wariness and suspicion. Only after dawn broke on 28 July, without any shots being fired, did the realism [reality] of the truce become apparent, followed by a wide-spread sensation of relief."[4]

A 5th Marines representative noted:

"The fact that negotiations had been going on for some time with numerous false alarms dulled the edge for most people, and a prior announcement that the agreement would be signed took most of the steam away from the actual culmination of the fighting . . . in effect [the cease-fire] meant 'we're giving you ten dollars but don't spend it for we might take it back'."[5]

The view expressed by a Korean regimental commander was that:

"Many of the officers and men were relieved to see the fighting cease; others, particularly among the officers, would rather have seen the fighting continue until the country could be united. However, the officers and men accepted the cease-fire as a military order and acted accordingly."[6]

Division MLR units on 27 July had been the 1st KMC, the 5th Marines, and 1st Marines in the left, center, and right regimental sectors, respectively. With the pullback of the division to new defensive positions, the

5th Marines—the infantry regiment that had not been heavily engaged in recent combat—was assigned the mission of defending the forward general outpost (GOP) line across the division front. In addition, the 5th Marines, or Northern Regiment as it came to be called since it was the only one remaining north of the Imjin River, was also charged with police duties and security of the UNC part of the DMZ located in the division sector.

Marine regiments, battalions, and companies began withdrawing from the DMZ to move to their new MBP early on the morning of 28 July, less than 24 hours after the signing of the Korean armistice. To some extent, the relocation of units was facilitated by the fact that the forward part of the division sector had been defended by the three MLR regiments. Since the lateral boundaries, initially, would remain the same, the three 5th Marines battalions were to occupy positions held by the three line regiments. Orders called for 2/5 to occupy the left regimental sector previously held by the 1st Korean Marine Corps Regimental Combat Team; 1/5 to man the 5th Marines center sector; and 3/5 to assume the right regimental sector.

Whereas 5th Marines battalions were directed to occupy their new positions by D+ 84 hours (or 2200, 30 July), other units in some cases were not required to pull out of their respective positions until D+108 hours (2000, 1 August). This was done to insure that no portion of the division front was left unmanned during this very critical period. It did, however, force small units to make two moves and "in one instance, a battalion and a regimental headquarters were occupying the same area."[7] Because of the need to move almost immediately, only a hasty physical reconnaissance was made. Small unit leaders were not always familiar with the area and this gave rise, in some instances, to confusion about exact unit boundaries. This resulted in a later relocation of several units.

For the first 72 hours after the armistice, Marines were engaged in a maximum effort to tear down installations, salvage fortification materials, and physically move out of the Demilitarized Zone. Infantry units were responsible for this destruction and salvage work within assigned sectors, with 1st Engineer Battalion assistance and supervision, as available. For the nearly 50 Marine infantry companies and attached KMC units, the order of priorities for those first three days generally appears to have been:

(1) Recovery of ordnance and removal to company supply dumps;

(2) Removal of all combat equipment to supply dumps; and

(3) Destruction of field fortifications and salvage of all bunker timbers and other building materials from the old MLR sector.

Specifications of the initial armistice agreement, as originally drawn up in August 1952, had called for a complete withdrawal of all military personnel, supplies, and equipment from the DMZ within 72 hours after the cease-fire. Destruction of all fortifications within the DMZ likewise was to be accomplished within this 72-hour deadline. It subsequently became evident, however, that it would be impossible to complete the entire job of dismantling and salvaging MLR fortifications within a three-day period. In mid-June 1953, CinCUNC had advised major commands that Communist and UNC negotiators had agreed to extend the original 72 hours to an additional 45-day period, or until 13 September.[8]

Division order 1MARD–OP–11–53, issued at 1600 on 27 July, clearly stated that all "removable materials"[9] would be taken out of the DMZ within the immediate 72-hour period following the effective date of the armistice (2200, 27 July). The end-of-war order further directed that division personnel would "locate and list all valuable materials which should be salvaged but cannot be moved during this prescribed time . . . an additional period of 45 days, after the initial 72-hour period, will be used to complete salvage operations within the Demilitarized Zone under the supervision of the Military Armistice Commission. . . ."[10]

From top to lower echelons, however, a breakdown in communications seems to have taken place in the maze of post-truce orders. At the pick and shovel level, initial instructions were sometimes to the effect of:

"Salvage everything possible in the 72 hours we have to get out of here. If unable to salvage; then destroy. . . . No word was passed that there would be a period following the truce in which we could conduct a

thorough salvage operation. Had this information been available, a more systematic process could have been devised. . . .”[11]

One regiment commented that early directives from higher authorities did not clearly establish the relative priority for salvage operations.”[12] More specifically, 1/7 related:

“Periodically, messages would be received stressing certain items of salvage as critical. This required revision of working schedules and shifting of men to other jobs . . . if all salvageable material had been designated as critical at the commencement of salvage operations, the work could have been completed more expeditiously. . . .”[13]

A 5th Marines observer commented on the confusion in these words:

“It is evident, however, that in dissemination to some of the lower echelons, pertinent information was either ignored or improperly passed . . . some Company Commanders were under the impression that the entire job of dismantling and salvaging was to be completed in 72 hours. The result of this misconception was that in some areas bunkers were filled in with earth and then later had to be evacuated [excavated] in order to salvage the materials.”[14]

Initial salvage operations were conducted from 28–30 July. Trenchlines were filled in; tank slots dozed under; bunkers torn down and usable timbers carried to salvage collecting points.

Beginning on 28 July, 1st Marines line units on the division right flank came under operational control of the 5th Marines, with their new mission being to “man an outpost line on the most formidable ground south of the southern boundary of the newly planned Demilitarized Zone in the MLR regimental sector.”[15] Movement to the new outpost positions was under way by 29 July.

As the Marine units moved south to establish their new outpost positions in previously undeveloped areas, the limited engineering equipment available for simultaneously dismantling bunkers and constructing new camps tended to slow the latter job. Personnel of 1/1, which had utilized 124 vehicles for the transfer, were among those housed in widely scattered areas for several days during the moving and setting up of new camps. Torrential rains, of several days’ duration, which had engulfed the division’s transport operations on so many occasions in the past, caused the new campsites to turn into a muddy quagmire. Men of 2/5, during part of the relocation period, lived in shelter tents until regular tentage became available.

A short moratorium on salvage activities took place between 31 July–3 August while the details for entry into the DMZ were being settled. Marine division salvage efforts encompassed an area extending from the MLR to the sector rear, in the vicinity of the Kansas Line, as far as the Imjin River. Work in the areas south of the DMZ did not begin, in most cases, until after 13 September, and fortifications of secondary defense lines were left in place.

All salvage materials removed from the DMZ were placed in battalion and regimental dumps where they would be readily available for use in building the new battle positions. Recovery of ammunition was accomplished in some sectors early on the 28th. At the far right flank of the division line, the scene of the Marines’ final action in the Korean War, salvage efforts took on an additional task. Most of the first day was alloted to recovery of the dead at Hills 119 and 111 and the removal of their bodies to rear areas.

Although the enemy had policed in front of Marine lines on the night of 27–28 July, at first light the CCF indicated the desire to recover their dead from Marine positions. Enemy parties were thus permitted to temporarily enter 3/1 lines to retrieve these bodies. This procedure provoked some consternation and renewed vigilance by Marine personnel upon “seeing the enemy moving around within a stone’s throw of our front lines so soon after his determined attacks.”[16]

As soon as the Marines’ own corresponding unhappy task was completed, ammunition was removed to supply dumps, a laborious task not finished in the 1st Marines sector until noon on 29 July. The fierce fighting that had started after dark on 24 July and lasted until the morning of the ceasefire also accounted for the large

amount of salvageable items found in the area including M–1 rifles, helmets, armored vests, and quantities of blood serum. All ordnance, equipment, and building materials were separated into stockpiles of good or nonrepairable items. Ammunition in excess of a one-half a basic JAMESTOWN fire unit (a unit of fire is the amount of ammunition a weapon will use in a day of combat), was placed in company and battalion dumps for collection by regimental ordnance teams.

On occasion, salvage of friendly ammunition was made more difficult because COP stockpiles struck by enemy mortar fire contained both damaged and live, usable ammunition mixed together. Although 1st Engineer Battalion ordnance disposal teams covered the positions thoroughly, unexploded mortar and artillery rounds were often unearthed by Marines filling in the old trenches, knocking down bunkers, or recovering wire. Anti-personnel mines forward of the protective wire prevented full salvage operations in some cases.

Three Marine combat outposts required special attention. These were Bunker Hill and Esther, in the central part of the MLR, and Ava, in the right sector. Although occupied by Marines at the time of the cease-fire, the COPs fell north of the MDL and thus became inaccessible for salvage after the initial 72-hour period. The positions were reduced and materials salvaged in the allotted time.

During the first night, Marines of 3/5 (originally the right battalion, center sector) removed more than 11 truckloads of ammunition. Outposts Hedy and Bunker offered a particular problem due to the distance from the MLR and nearest road. As described by some veterans of 24-hour work crews, the trail to Bunker was "particularly tortuous and made the packing of first the ammunition and later the fortification materials a physical ordeal."[17]

At Hedy the extreme proximity of CCF and Marine lines posed an additional difficulty. On the afternoon of the 28th, an interval of 20 yards separated the two; by the following day the enemy had completed his work in the area and was never again that close. Operations here were also somewhat delayed "by an influx of visitors: newspapermen and newsreel cameramen all interested in the great numbers of enemy visible to our front engaged in the same tasks that we were."[18]

Dismantling bunkers was the single biggest problem of the entire salvage program. This operation began at dawn on the 28th and was not completed until the second week of September. Ultimately, more than 500 bunkers were reclaimed from MLR materials and installed in the new division position. Most of the bunkers were built of 12x12 timbers, buried deep in the ground, fastened together with 10- to 16-inch spikes. Infantry organic tools and equipment were inadequate to dismember bunkers so constructed. Crowbars, picks, shovels, pinch bars, and sledge hammers were all in short supply. Engineer equipment and other tools were not stockpiled in sufficient quantity to buttress a demolition program of such magnitude.

In places where the terrain permitted operation of bulldozers, their use drastically shortened the time spent uncovering bunkers. Where these had been emplaced on reverse slope positions of steep hills, however, the timbers had to be removed by hand. The latter was the generally prevailing situation.

Not surprisingly, throughout the demolition program "basic equipment was usually the Marine himself and his ingenuity."[19] Effective on–the–spot, problem-solving was seen in the many "jury-rigged" levers or prybars fashioned from timbers and crowbars from scrap steel. The "Korean Sling Method," with heavy rope and carrying poles, was often used to move heavy timbers. Trucks equipped with winches and wreckers were effective for this purpose. Dozer tanks were also used, but only after having their guns removed as required by the armistice agreement. Division engineers experimented at some length with three different ways to pull apart the larger 12x20 bunkers, in which the cross beams were secured to columns with two-feet spikes. The least technical approach which involved "winching the bunkers out of their positions and bouncing them down a steep slope until they broke apart proved the most successful and the quickest method."[20]

Besides the lack of engineering tools, limited motor transport facilities and manpower shortages also created difficulties. Heavy commitments across the front, with virtually every division unit displacing to a new

location, resulted in a shortage of trucks that slowed both salvage and logistics operations. Assignment of personnel to around-the-clock shifts during the critical initial 72-hour period and use of lighting trailers produced maximum results from the available equipment. Company G, 3/5 reported that its men were allowed "ten minute breaks every hour and, because of the heat, they were given from 1200 to 1500 hours for sleep and worked all through the darkness."[21] During this three-day period alone, the 1st Tank Battalion transported 275 tons of ammunition and fortification material, or a total of 111 loads in 2 1/2-ton trucks.

At this time, the restrictive provisions of the truce agreement led to a problem involving the use of heavy engineer vehicles. After 3 August, it was difficult to bring into the DMZ any hauling or motorized gear that could be construed as "combat equipment." The 2 1/2-ton trucks, however, continued to be employed for much of the motor transport operations.

By 0930 on 1 August, the 1st Marine Division had completed its withdrawal and manned the new MBP south of the DMZ. The 5th Marines continued its mission as the northern outpost regiment. South of the Imjin, the 7th Marines occupied the right regimental sector; the 1st KMC moved into the center of the MBP; and the 1st Marines became the division reserve.

Between 3 August–13 September, each rifle company sent daily working parties into the DMZ to excavate those sectors occupied by Marine units on 27 July. Depending on available transportation, the size of the working parties varied from 25 to 100 men. These shortages were alleviated, to some extent, by KSC (Korean Service Corps) personnel.[22] The heavy-duty, "pure drudgery without glamour," monotonous tasks performed in tropical weather, 103 degree–plus temperatures and high humidity, caused one Marine infantryman to comment ruefully:

"Close officer supervision proved to be absolutely necessary due to the nature of the work, which made the maintenance of interest and enthusiasm in the average individual, very difficult."[23]

In another 5th Marines unit the motivation gap was partially solved by "use of a graph posted on the bulletin board showing the money value of materials salvaged each day, with the exhortation to better the previous day's total."[24]

Throughout the month of August and until 13 September, destruction of MLR positions and removal of materials took place concurrently with organization of defensive positions in the new sector. After the initial three-day period and its top priority of physical withdrawal of troops from the DMZ, division tactical requirements called for completion of the MBP as rapidly as possible. This now became the first priority. New company perimeter defense sites, battalion blocking positions, coordinated fire plans in event of attack, counterattack orders, and evacuation routes were mapped out. Construction began immediately. By 5 August, the new battalion camps had begun to take form and work on the blocking positions was in progress. Marine units, like other UNC forces, had to be prepared at all times for any act of enemy aggression. Whether the Communists would continue to respect the cease-fire agreement or not remained an open question.

Stockpiling, meanwhile, had been accomplished at company, battalion, and regimental dumps. All materials were stacked by size to facilitate reissue during construction of new positions. As much as 90 percent of the materials salvaged were usable in the new fortification. Although a certain amount of inter-battalion exchange took place, battalion stocks—with the exception of sandbags—were usually adequate to provide sufficient fortification materials for the rebuilding. For 5th Marines units that had the least distance to relocate, timbers moved from the old MLR in the morning were sometimes emplaced in the new defensive positions by late afternoon. Helicopters, as well as trucks, were used extensively to move stockpiles from company and battalion areas to rear regimental supply dumps.

Division MLR supplies salvaged by the 5th Marines represented:

T/E material: 12 tons

Signal equipment (wire): 2,000 miles

Engineer items—
barbed wire: 2,850 rolls
concertina: 340 rolls
pickets, 6-foot: 11,000
pickets, 3-foot: 8,000
sandbags: 339,000
timbers (from 3x8 to 12x12): 150,000 linear feet
TOTAL TONNAGE: 2,000 short tons

The 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines estimated that wire rolls, sandbags, timbers, and other materiel "recovered by this battalion and assisting units was valued at approximately $150,000."[25]

By early September, the 1st Marine Division work priority once again had reverted from camp construction to salvage operations. It had become apparent that another maximum effort period would be necessary if all salvageable materials were to be removed from the DMZ no later than the 13 September deadline reaffirmed by I Corps on 2 September. During this last phase of salvage work, participating battalions again came under operational control of the 5th Marines. Elements of the 1st and 11th Marines, neither of which at that time had a sector of responsibility for salvage, as well as KMC troops, augmented the organic units. One battalion alone, 1/1, detailed 400 men in work parties. At 2130, on 13 September, the division completed its salvage mission in the Demilitarized Zone, thus meeting the specified time limit. Under terms of the armistice agreement, after 13 September all personnel were prohibited from entering the Korean Demilitarized Zone. The only exceptions were members of the DMZ police companies of the Allied and Communist sides and other persons specifically authorized passage by the Military Armistice Commission (MAC).

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Chapter 11. While Guns Cool
Control of the DMZ and the Military Police Company[26]

Since the late July signing of the armistice, one of the missions of the 5th Marines GOP regiment had been the marking, control of entry, and policing of the DMZ. At the time the No-Pass Fence was constructed, roadblocks, called "crossing stations" were located at each route leading into the DMZ. Initially, 21 crossing stations were opened across the regimental front. When it later became apparent that not all of these security points would be needed, some were closed and the roads barricaded. Each crossing station was manned by a minimum of two sentries who insured that no weapons were carried into the DMZ. Along the fence itself, signs printed in three languages prohibited unauthorized entry into the southern boundary of the DMZ. On roads and trails approaching the southern boundary fence, additional signs placed 200 yards from the fence warned of the proximity to this southern end of the military zone. Air panels and engineer tape also marked the DMZ.

After 31 July, entry into the DMZ was limited to those persons holding a valid pass, issued under the auspices of the Military Armistice Commission. Authority was also delegated to CG, U.S. I Corps to issue passes for the I Corps sector. With salvage operations requiring a large number of passes, authority was further delegated to the CO, 5th Marines, to issue permits for the regimental sector, good only for unarmed[27] working parties engaged in salvage operations. The regimental S–2 established a pass control center, and anyone desiring to enter the DMZ made application through that office. Each pass contained the bearer's name, rank, service number, organization, number of personnel and vehicles in the working party, and reason for entry.

Security procedures also required that a log book of all zone entries and exits be kept by crossing station guards. This information was ultimately telephoned or radioed to higher echelons. At battalion and regimental levels a master log or "status board" indicated the number of people, vehicles, passes, and pass identification numbers present in the DMZ at all times. As the salvage program reached its height in August and early September, just the "issuance and recording of passes and the checking of the working parties into the zone became a major operation."[28] Between 4 August–13 September, a total of 3,523 vehicle passes and an unknown number of personnel permits were issued. With the ending of salvage operations on 13 September, the Marine regiment no longer issued DMZ passes, although I Corps continued to authorize MAC personnel entry permits.

A stipulation set by the armistice agreement was that both the Communist and UNC sides police their respective sections of the DMZ with "civil police," not to exceed 1,000 in the zone at any one time across the entire front. With further allocation of police personnel to army and I Corps units, the number of 1st Marine Division police on duty within the DMZ at any one time was originally set at 50. Since no civilian police were available to either side, requirements were modified so that a specially designated military unit, in lieu of civil police, could be employed and the original quota enlarged if this became feasible.

Due to the delicate political aspect of the DMZ as well as the non-repatriated POWs in the custody of Indian forces, security measures were of utmost importance. The Marine division activated a new unit, the 1st Provisional Demilitarized Zone Police Company at 0800 on 4 September. The new unit, charged with maintaining security throughout the 1st Marine Division sector, became operational three days later. Commanding officer was Captain Samuel G. Goich, formerly of F/2/7. Each regiment from the division furnished 25 enlisted men and 1 officer to form the company, including standby personnel. On 21 September, the DMZ Police Company was attached to the 5th Marines. Police Company personnel were required to have had at least three months' Korean service, a General Classification Test score of at least 95, a minimum height of 5 feet 10 inches, and were "selected for physical stature and mental capacity required in coping with the delicate situation existing within the

Demilitarized Zone."[29] The average DMZ company member was said to know "map-reading on an officer level, first aid, radio, and understand the fine print of the cease-fire agreement like a striped-trouser diplomat."[30]

The mission of the Marine provisional police company as set up by the truce agreement was to furnish military police escort for special personnel visiting the DMZ and to apprehend truce violators or enemy line crossers. Visitors who rated a military escort were members of MAC, Joint Observer Teams, Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission personnel,[31] NNSC inspection teams or agency assistants, or other VIPs authorized to enter the UN half by the Military Armistice Commission.

Six Marine DMZ military policemen, each armed with a .45 caliber pistol and M-1 rifle, accompanied UN joint observer teams to the demarcation line, midpoint between enemy and friendly boundaries, but did not cross the DML. I Corps orders directed that military police were to be "responsible for the safety of the United Nations members of the team and, when meetings are held south of the demarcation line, they will be responsible for the safety of the CCF members of the team as well."[32]

Major tasks performed by the 104-man company operating within the 2,000-yard wide, 28-mile-long zone were:

To maintain surveillance over civilians within the UN half of the DMZ;

To apprehend and deliver to the Division Provost Marshal any line crossers encountered who did not possess an authorized pass, regardless of the direction from which such persons entered the DMZ; and

To provide check points on known routes through the zone and observation posts, especially during the hours of reduced visibility, and telephone all suspicious incidents to Regimental S-2.

DMZ Police Company personnel operated in motorized patrol teams and traveled the entire division sector in radio or cargo jeeps. One platoon was kept on a standby basis at camp to serve as a mobile reserve in the event of an emergency. The roving patrols submitted reports of all incidents, which were then compiled in a company report. A copy was submitted to the S–2, the Northern Regiment, and 1st Marine Division G–2.

UNC security measures at all times were strict and uncompromising in the Korean DMZ buffer zone. This included the salvage period, the BIG SWITCH prisoner exchange that took place within the division sector at Freedom Village from 5 August–6 September, and the lengthy nonrepatriate POW settlement that extended through January 1954. In places where the military demarcation line was not marked on the ground or clearly recognizable, the conservative ruling was to stay at least 500 yards south of its estimated location. This applied both to body recovery and salvage operations. The No-Fly line was scrupulously verified.

Alleged violations charged by the CCF/NKPA were checked out with the Marine ground observation posts set up in August to record all movements of fixed-wing (reconnaissance) and rotary aircraft in the area. Helicopters were allowed to fly in the DMZ but no closer than the 500 yard limit from the MDL. Helicopters operating forward of CPs of 5th Marines units having sector responsibility were required to obtain clearance from the ground unit concerned for each flight. Medical evacuation copters, generally, were exempted from this restriction and authorized a standing clearance.

Commitments for the DMZ Police Company increased substantially with arrival of the nonrepatriated POWs at their camp in the DMZ corridor west of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines area. The Communist "explainers," as well as Polish and Czech members of the neutral Nations Commission, had to be escorted while in the UN half of the DMZ. This required that a 24-hour checkpoint and escort cadre be established in the zone. As the number of enemy sightings, a daily occurrence in the DMZ, continued to increase, the size of the police patrols increased correspondingly. A typical example was related by a member of the police company:

"It was common practice of the Communists to have a group of their men, supposedly their DMZ Police, walk up to the Military Demarcation Line and either stand close to it or step across. When one of our patrols approached in superior numbers to attempt to apprehend them, the Communists would immediately reinforce with

more men. This made it necessary to have our patrols at sufficient strength that they could protect themselves from being kidnapped."[33]

As these requirements for security increased, the original complement of approximately 5 officers and 99 men became inadequate to patrol the DMZ. By late October the T/O strength of the 1st Provisional Demilitarized Zone Police Company had been increased to 6 officers and 314 men. Authorization for the number of police personnel on duty in the DMZ had similarly been augmented from 50 to 175.

During the September salvage operations, five Marines in the DMZ were taken into custody by the Chinese Communists. Charged with being in unauthorized territory and violating terms of the armistice agreement, they were later returned to United Nations jurisdiction.

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Chapter 11. While Guns Cool

Organization of New Defense Positions[34]

Upon withdrawal from the demilitarized zone and organization of the MBP, the Eighth Army established its plan for defense on a wide front. This was based on the organization of strongpoints disposed in depth, with planned counterattacks by mobile reserves.

As it had during active hostilities, the 1st Marine Division in the post-armistice period continued as one of the four UNC divisions manning the general outpost and MBP in the U.S. I Corps sector. Immediately east of the division was its long-time neighbor, the 1st Commonwealth Division. Still further east in I Corps were the 1st ROK and U.S. 7th Infantry Divisions.

Since 1 August, the Marine division had continued to outpost the most favorable terrain in its sector below the southern boundary of the DMZ. The division manned the No-Pass Line and prepared its defenses to resume full scale military operations, if necessary. The Munsan-ni Provisional Command, composed of the Marine-Navy-Army personnel responsible for implementing the final prisoner exchange, was also headquartered in the 1st Marine Division sector.

The strongpoint organization of the division's main battle position was accomplished by the deployment of the 5th Marines at the general outpost line of resistance (or OPLR, a term and concept not in use since April 1952). The outpost defense concept embodied a number of forward positions, lightly held in actual numbers of men but strongly defended in numbers of automatic weapons and firepower. (This capability was possible due to the excess number of automatic weapons on hand, above normal T/E allowances, which previously had been required by MLR defenses.) In the organization of the positions, emphasis was placed on construction of bunkered observation posts, the emplacement of automatic weapons with flanking fires, and clearing of fields of fire for these weapons.

Basically, the general concept of OPLR defense was to establish mutually supporting defensive positions across the front, as well as to develop additional defense in depth positions whose strength increased from front to rear. The positions thus formed successive defense lines, from the southern DMZ boundary—the new Marine division front—south to the KANSAS Line, the Main Battle Position. (These defense lines were the old secondary defensive lines of WYOMING, KANSAS, and KANSAS SWITCH.) The KMC, 1st Marines, 7th Marines, and other units located in the KANSAS vicinity engaged in bunker construction and trench improvement. Battalion fire plans coordinated the organic, attached, and supporting weapons. Construction of the new positions and development of the KANSAS Line would be a continuing process throughout the rest of the year.

The 1st Marines received the assignment of developing the blocking positions, most of these battalion-sized strongpoints. As in the past, division support units continued to be located in the old rear supply areas south of the Imjin. In early August the division had stationed the 7th Marines in the right sector; the 1st KMC in the center; and the 1st Marines, to the south of the KMC sector. The 11th Marines, to the rear of the 7th Marines, had displaced its artillery, relaid, and was prepared to fire in support of the general outpost and MBP. (Map 35.) Additional artillery battalions included I Corps and army units. Essentially these were the positions held until early October when, during a period of political unrest resulting from the prisoner exchange, the 1st Marines relieved the 1st KMC/RCT in the center sector (which held the southern approaches to Freedom Bridge and the nonrepatriate war compound). The Korean unit then relocated to blocking positions and assumed the mission of reserve regiment.

Click here to view map

Marine support units—motor transport, tank, service, medical, aerial liaison (VMO/HMR)—were in the same general rear area, as was the headquarters of the U.S. 25th Infantry Division. The Marine Division CP continued to be located at Yongji-ri, although construction of a new site further south at Chormyon was due to be completed by engineer personnel on 1 October. The division railhead and truckhead remained, respectively, at Munsan-ni and Ascom City. To the left of the KMC sector was the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion. Still further west, separated from other units by the Han River, was the Kimpo Provisional Regiment, in its former wartime sector.

As the division OPLR regiment, the 5th Marines held a line 36,000 yards in length—about 21 miles—roughly corresponding to the front manned by three regiments during the war. The OPLR sector included the entire area in the divisional zone of responsibility north of the Imjin. Boundaries of the 5th Marines territory were the southern DMZ truce line on the west and north, the Samichon River to the east, and that major water barrier, the curving Imjin River, to the rear.

After establishment of the DMZ, the division occupied unfavorable low ground poorly suited to the defense and inferior to that held by the enemy—continuing the same situation that had existed during the period of stabilized combat operations in West Korea. Almost without exception the southern boundary of the DMZ prohibited the Marines from moving onto the commanding terrain, as the No-Pass Line was behind or along the reverse slopes of the high ground. On the other hand, in most cases the CCF had the advantage of having forward slope positions as well as the crests plus most of the commanding terrain in the area.

Communist territory in the northern DMZ sector included the former strongholds of Yoke, Bunker Hill, Carson, Reno, Vegas, Berlin, East Berlin and Warsaw. Within the Marine division postwar area were the Panmunjom Corridor and outposts Marilyn, Kate, the Boulder City hills, and the Hook. Much of the terrain between the major hill positions along the 5th Marines regimental front and the Imjin River consisted of low-rolling hills rising abruptly out of the rice paddies.

Construction of new positions and the defense system of the 5th Marines was based on several assumptions about enemy capabilities, made by G–2 and the new regimental CO, Colonel Rathvon McC. Tompkins, who had assumed command on 2 August. These were: that in the event of resumption of hostilities by the CCF the enemy would use his jet fighters and bombers in support of operations; that he would continue to have numerical superiority in artillery; and that the northern outpost regiment would have no reinforcement or surface resupply from units south of the Imjin.

The defense plan for the forward part of the 5th Marines sector in event of a resumption of hostilities called for furnishing patrols equipped with radios and FO teams to occupy Hills 155, 229, and 181. (Hill 155 was dircetly south of the DMZ in the 2/5 left battalion sector; Hills 229 and 181 were, respectively, just inside and just outside the southern boundary of the truce line in the center 1/5 sector.) From these three elevations the patrols would then have the mission of bringing down artillery fire on enemy concentrations and relaying communications about the situation to the friendly main attack force. Other critical hill masses in the OPLR regimental sector were Hill 126 (in the 3/5 eastern battalion sector, just inside the Marine side of the DMZ) and Hill 163, in the Hook area. The latter hill was not as suitable for defense since it was located south of the military demarcation line and was thus less accessible.

These hill masses so completely dominated the major enemy approaches through the division sector to the Imjin, the lower river crossing sites and bridges, that their occupation by Marine personnel was considered essential in the event of any attack. Hill 229, adjacent to the Chan-dang corridor and part of the 229–181 axis, was considered the most critical terrain feature in the entire northern section.

Key areas to the rear of the 5th Marines' sector were the two operating bridges (Freedom in 2/5 territory and Libby on the 3/5 right) and the two interior crossing sites (Honker and Spoonbill). All provided access to the

Imjin and division support units deployed on the south side of the river. In the event of threatened hostile attack, the Northern Regiment was under orders to destroy the bridges to prevent their use by the enemy on any attempted advance to the rear.

Strong perimeter defenses, called “Bridgehead Positions” were to be built by 5th Marines’ battalions. Two were to protect the two bridges and a third, to include both ferry sites. Between the forward defended localities and the rear bridgehead positions, alternate and secondary sites were organized to create mutually supporting defenses in depth. The bridgeheads were a combination of linear and strongpoint defense, capable of withstanding severe pressure.

Organization of the defensive positions in the 5th Marine sector was complicated both by peculiarities of the terrain and political restrictions due to proximity of the DMZ. In addition to the regiment’s excess frontage, the demilitarized zone immediately to the front precluded use of either aerial or motorized reconnaissance for early warning. Security measures for the OPLR were less than ideal. Neither proper patrols nor a covering force in front of the OPLR was possible; the best that could be done was to maintain patrols along the friendly side of the No-Pass Line.

As the regimental left battalion pointed out: “Location of the DMZ and the No-Pass Line made the trace of the OPLR follow an artificial and arbitrary line rather than that of the best terrain.”[35] The most critical terrain feature in the sector, Hill 155, was located just outside the southern boundary of the DMZ. Although its possession was essential to successful defense of the OPLR and the bridgehead defense positions being developed to the interior and rear of the battalion sector, Hill 155 could not be occupied because of the armistice agreement. The solution to the problem was simply to occupy the best ground adjacent to the No-Pass Line.

Placement of automatic weapons was a factor of great importance in organizing the defensive positions. In order to accomplish the mission of an OPLR, weapons had to be situated to bring the enemy under fire at maximum ranges. Accordingly, machine guns and other weapons were placed on high ground well to the front. Some Marines commented that:

“Many individuals having the MLR concept in mind insisted that weapons should be located forward on low ground to provide grazing fire. A period of education was required. For the same reason, it was necessary to place 81mm mortar and 4.2-inch mortar positions further forward than they would normally be in support of the MLR.”[36]

The problem of establishing depth to the defensive positions was never solved to the satisfaction of everyone. This was due primarily to the extended front which necessitated using more units for support elements than would normally be done. This situation was partly alleviated by establishing some unit defensive sectors further to the rear in the company areas.

Another difficulty was the inadequate allocation of ammunition: one-half JAMESTOWN load on position, and another half-load available at the regimental dump. The JAMESTOWN load unit had been developed for use in a stabilized defense situation where automatic weapons were aimed as the enemy came in close proximity to the MLR. On the other hand, OPLR machine guns and weapons were required to open up at maximum ranges and might well be fired for extended periods of time. It was calculated that A4 machine guns firing at medium rate (75 rpm) would expend the one-half JAMESTOWN load in 22 minutes, while an A1 machine gun at medium rate (125 rpm) would exhaust the same load in 13 minutes. A partial improvement was obtained by moving the ammunition loads from regimental to battalion dumps although the basic problem of limited allocation—shared also by rear infantry regiments—continued to exist.

An unique situation that had confronted the 2d Battalion and at times the adjoining 1st Battalion stemmed from the large numbers of Army engineer personnel building the nonrepatriate POW camp in the DMZ immediately west of the 2/5 sector. During August and the first part of September, the area in front of 2/5 had been used as a base camp for 5,000–7,000 construction personnel. Although their area was crowded with these

additional units, the Marine battalions could not exercise any control over them. The Marines were still responsible for security of the sector, however. Presence of as many as 22,000 nonrepatriate CCF and NKPA prisoners as well as the Indian custodial forces further complicated the matter. It was noted that:

"At the same time the Army engineers were building the camp, the prisoners were situated in the middle of the 2/5 area and the MSR to Panmunjom led completely across the battalion position into the 1/5 sector [and thence] into the DMZ. Upon completion of the camp, the engineers withdrew from the area but as they withdrew the 5,500 troops of the Custodial Forces India were brought in to guard the nonrepatriate prisoners. With the arrival of the prisoners, the number of personnel in the regiment'ssector of responsibility rose to 28,000–30,000. Thus, the problem of having a GOP mission and at the same time having never less than 5,000 and as many as 30,000 friendly, neutral, and/or prisoner personnel in front of our most forward defended localities was always present."[37]

Camp construction and development of the new positions south of the river continued at a furious pace from August through early October. Since the new camp sites were in civilian populated areas, "it was necessary to secure real estate clearance before they could be occupied or improved."[38] After clearance was obtained on 29 July, division engineers immediately began work on five separate camps. These camp building activities and reconnaissance of assigned blocking positions continued until 10 August. At this time, construction began on the major blocking positions, so organized and developed as to be self-sustaining for several days. Whether squad, platoon, or company, all positions were organized using a perimeter type defense and were mutually supporting laterally and in depth. Connecting trenches, bunkers, ammunition holes, and tank slots were also built.

By early October, construction of the blocking positions was completed by the 1st Marines despite the fierce summer heat, the numerous rock formations in the area that were difficult to dig out with limited tools and demolitions, and the shortage of personnel due to units participating in the new series of division MARLEX exercises, resumed in October. Within three months, the Marine division had thus largely completed building of a solid defense in its new main battle position. The importance of maintaining combat readiness for any renewed hostility on the part of the enemy demanded continuing vigilance at all times.

Defense specifications throughout the 5th Marines northern general outpost sector called for some 1,560 individual fighting positions, 400 automatic weapons sites, 8 bunkered infantry OPs, 30 bunkered CPs, 15,400 yards of trenchlines, and 70,000 yards of protective and tactical wire. In construction of the MBP, all bunkers were so blended and camouflaged with the natural terrain that they were almost impossible to be seen.

To the division rear, the location of recoilless rifle positions, FDC bunkers, and tank slots in the blocking positions and bridgeheads was the major priority. In the antimechanized defense plan, tanks covered likely avenues of approach into the general outpost area and also overlooked critical river crossing sites. Wherever possible old firing positions which had been previously prepared to support the secondary lines WYOMING and KANSAS were utilized. By the end of the year, 204 tank firing positions had been emplaced throughout the Marine division sector.

Three rehearsals for the occupation of the main battle position were held by the 1st Marine Division in September. All division units, both combat and service, participated in these exercises. Tactical units were required to occupy the MBP and be fully prepared for combat on four hours' notice; service units were to provide additional local security required for the elimination of enemy infiltrators or guerrilla agents. Divisional and I Corps test exercises indicated that three hours were necessary to man the MBP during daylight and approximately three and one half hours at night.

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Chapter 11. While Guns Cool
Postwar Employment of Marine Units in FECOM[39]

The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing Post-Armistice Plan, as part of Fifth Air Force operations, was effective at 2200, on 27 July. Its purpose, basically, was to insure that wing elements carried out provisions of the armistice and yet continued to maintain a high level of combat readiness in the uneasy truce period.

Two major operational restrictions had been imposed on the UNC air force by the armistice. The first was establishment of the "No-Fly Line" south of the Allied southern boundary of the DMZ. Any flight beyond that point had to be authorized by JOC and a barrier patrol was maintained by FAF to apprehend any violators of the truce provisions. The 1st MAW contribution to this aerial security team was night patrols performed by F3D–2s from VMF(N)–513 and radar-configured AD aircraft from VMC–1 (later, by the new VMA–251 squadron).

The second post-truce restriction, which affected wing logistic movements, limited the entry and departure of all Korean air traffic to five airfields. These aerial ports were K–2, K–8, K–9, K–14, and K–18. (K–16 was later added.) Neither K–3, the east coast home field of MAG–33 nor K–6, located just inland from the west coast and the site of MAG–12 operations, was included. All Marine traffic landed either at K–9 or K–2 for inventory, a procedure which subsequently developed into a bottleneck, and caused supply delays due to the substantial reduction in payload made to accommodate the necessary extra fuel due to greater overland distances between airfields. When the CG, 1st MAW requested that K–3 be made a port of entry to avoid the difficulties involved in use of the two FAF fields, ComNavFE disapproved the request with the following rationale:

"ComNavFE feels that to ask for designation of K-3 as an additional port of entry would be politically inadvisable. It would provide the Communists with a basis for a propaganda claim that the United Nations were attempting to further delay an armistice agreement. Should the Communists propose an additional port of entry for their side, COMNAVFE states the UN Military Armistice Commission will offer designation of K–3 as a *quid pro quo*."[40]

Removal from Korea to Japan of operational combat aircraft for routine maintenance runs and their return thus had to be made through the same port of exit and reentry. Inspections were conducted by the USAF combat aircraft control officer at the port.

The post-truce 1st MAW mission, in part, comprised the following:

". . . to maintain assigned forces in a state of combat readiness, provide for security of assigned forces, areas, and installations; observe the conditions of the Armistice Agreement; support other elements of the United Nations Command as required; be prepared to counter any attempt on the part of the enemy to resume active hostilities; continue current missions other than combat; insure that 1st MAW personnel and combat material are not increased beyond the level present at the instant of the effective time of the Armistice Agreement; submit reports on 1st MAW personnel and controlled items of Wing equipment entering or leaving Korea; be prepared to disperse air units within or from Korea as necessary to provide maximum security during an Armistice. . . ."[41]

The strict interpretation of replacing combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition that were destroyed, worn out, or used up during the period of armistice was, of course, due to the sensitive political considerations. It was felt that replacement of combat equipment by UNC forces:

". . . would result in the Communists adopting the same liberal interpretation which is undesirable since it will lessen the control of combat material in North Korea and could permit them to replace phenomenal unauthorized quantities of material damaged, destroyed, worn out or used up prior to the effective date of the Armistice Agreement."[42]

In August, postwar procedures were mapped out for 1st MAW personnel, as part of the overall quota limitations prescribed by FECOM (Far East Command) through FEAF and FAF echelons. A 1st MAW headquarters section, designated as 1st MAW, rear echelon, was established at Itami AFB, Japan, two hours' flight from Korea. All incoming or outgoing aviation personnel on permanent change of station orders were to report to the rear echelon, 1st MAW. Announcement of Marine Corps plans to initiate future postwar rotation on a stretch-out basis (for both air and ground personnel) was also made in August. Preliminary plans called for changing the current 11-month combat tour in Korea to 14 months by March 1954, and possibly 16-month tours by July 1954, if extension of Korean service proved necessary. As with division personnel, monthly cumulative arrivals were not to exceed the number of departing aviation Marines. The quota set by FEAF for 1st MAW rotation for the month of August was 600, compared to the Marine division quota of 3,000 for ground personnel.

With the 1st Marine Division engaged for an unknown length of time in its postwar mission as an occupation force and 1st MAW units continuing to operate under FAF in Korea, new Marine ground and air units were assigned to the Far East theater shortly after the conclusion of Korean hostilities. On 23 July, the 3d Marine Division, together with supporting air units, was readied for deployment from Camp Pendleton to Japan the following month. On 13 August the division CP was opened afloat and units proceeded to Japan between 16–30 August. The mission of this division and the two major air units, MAGs–11 and–16, was to maintain a high state of readiness in the Far East Command and to assist in the air defense of Japan. As explained by the Commandant, their redeployment was accomplished "in order to provide the amphibious capability which is an important element of national strategy in that predominantly maritime theater."[43]

The new Marine units thus joined in the Pacific, the 1st Provisional Marine Air-Ground Task Force[44] that had been activated in Kaneohe, Hawaii in January of 1953. Commanded by Brigadier General James P. Risely, it was to include a headquarters company, reinforced regiment, and reinforced aircraft group. The special task force was designated as a hard-hitting, air-ground team that could respond immediately as a force-in-readiness to any emergency in the Pacific area.

Commanded by Major General Robert H. Pepper, the 21,100-man 3d Marine Division was called the "Three-Dimensional Division," in reference to its training in airborne, amphibious, and atomic warfare. Within six months, its components were to stretch from Kobe to Tokyo, with division headquarters and the 9th Marines at Gifu, the 4th Marines at Nara, and other units at Otsu.

New Marine air units, which included Marine Transport Squadron 253 and Marine Observation Squadron 2, as well as MAGs–11 and–16, all came under 1st MAW operational control. Commanded by Colonel John D. Harshberger, the all-jet MAG–11, formerly based at Edenton, N.C., arrived at NAS Atsugi on 10 September. It comprised three F9F squadrons, VMFs–222, –224, and –314. Also at Atsugi, the Marine Corps aerial gateway to Japan, was the new transport squadron, VMR–253, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Carl J. Fleps, which reported in to CG, 1st MAW, on 16 August. Following numerous FMFPac requests for additional air transport capability, the Commandant had authorized transfer of the squadron from El Toro to assist the veteran wartime carrier VMR–152 in the enormous postwar airlift program.

Flying new R4Q Fairchild Packets, which could carry 42 troops, the squadron from August to May 1954 logged more than 5,000,000 passenger miles in transporting Marine replacements for the 1st and 3d Marine Divisions. Additional air capability was provided by Marine Helicopter Transport Group 16 (at Hanshin AFB) under Colonel Harold J. Mitchener, with its two HRS–2 (HMR–162, HMR–163) and service squadrons (MAMs–16, MABS–16) and VMO–2, commanded by Major William G. MacLean (based at Itami). Both units reported to 1st MAW and FECOM on 13 August.

Major command changes within the 1st MAW that month were: Brigadier General Verne J. McCaul, vice Brigadier General Alexander W. Kreiser, Jr. as ACG, 1st MAW, effective 16 August; and Colonel William F. Hausman, vice Colonel Carney, CO, MAG–12, on 8 August. (The new MAG–33 CO, Colonel Smith, had

succeeded Colonel Stacy in late July.)

In the immediate post-armistice period, extensive training programs were instituted by MAGs–12 and –33 to maintain high operational efficiency. Marine aircraft remained on JOC alert as required by the Fifth Air Force and flew training missions scheduled by 1st MAW and FAF. These consisted of practice strikes against heavily-defended targets, practice CAS for Eighth Army units, GCI (ground control intercept) flights under MGCIS–3 control, and bombing practice using the Naktong Bombing Range. Other training sorties were scheduled in reconnaissance navigation, weather penetration, determining fuel bingos,[45] target location and identification, air defense patrolling, and coordination of tactical procedures in the target area. The training schedules provided a well-balanced indoctrination program for new squadron flight leaders, pilots, radar operators, and other crew members arriving in Korea on the postwar personnel drafts.

A new work day schedule of 0700–1500 implemented in August made more time available for athletics, swimming, studying, and R&R (Rest & Recreation). That same month the MAG–12 softball team won the Fifth Air Force "All Korea" softball championship. Following this achievement, the team left for Japan to compete in the FAF "Far East" softball tournament which included teams from all the major Pacific bases. Subsequently, the K–6 players "disguised in Air Force uniforms, went onward and upward to become FEAF champions in September."[46] MAG–33 pilots, meanwhile,participated in Operation SPYGLASS, a FAF training exercise in August and Operation BACK DOOR, the following month. Both emphasized interception flying and work with GCI squadrons. As "aggressors," the Pohang-based airmen made simulated attacks on South Korean targets "defended" by Air Force and other land-based Marine units. In October, MAG–33 pilots flew CAS missions for the 1st Marine Division training problem, MARLEX IV, a battalion landing exercise staged by 1/7 on Tokchok-to Island. Beginning that month a new procedure was inaugurated by MAG–33 and the recently-arrived MAG–11. Every week, four MAG–11 pilots came to Korea for a week of orientation flying with a MAG–33 squadron to gain a better picture of typical flying conditions in the Korean theater.

Early in 1955 the 1st Marine Division, which had been in the Korean front lines almost continuously since September 1950, returned to Camp Pendleton. Redeployment by echelons began in February. By June, all units had returned to CONUS. The transfer from Korean occupation duty was effected in order that the division's "valuable capability as a highly trained amphibious force in readiness may be fully realized."[47] Now under Major General Merrill B. Twining,[48] the division had been a part of Eighth Army occupying postwar defense positions in Korea until its relief on 17–18 March 1955 by the U.S. 24th Infantry Division.

In addition to its official mission in the Eighth Army line, the 1st Marine Division had conducted an active small-unit amphibious training program during its postwar Korea duty. All but two of its infantry battalions had carried out assault landings on Tokchok-to, off the Korean west coast south of Inchon, prior to its departure for the United States. The 3d Marine Division had also conducted an active training program, with numerous small-unit exercises and regimental landings staged at Iwo Jima and Okinawa as part of its continuous readiness conditioning.

For Marine air personnel, their official departure from Korea following the 1st MAW wartime assignment there, came the next year. Beginning in June 1956, initial units of the Marine aircraft wing were withdrawn from Korea and relocated at NAS Iwakuni, Japan. Plans called for the wing, then under Brigadier General Samuel S. Jack[49] and occupying bases in both Korea and Japan, to be permanently headquartered at Iwakuni and revert to CinCPacFlt control. The wing remained on station in the Far East as a component of postwar United States defense strength in that area.

The prewar Fifth Air Force and Eighth U.S. Army commands, under which Marine Corps air and ground units had functioned during the Korean War, were permanently deployed in the Far East as operative military echelons. EUSAK-FAF transferred from its wartime JOC location at Seoul to Osan-ni in January 1954 and in September of that year relocated to Nagoya, Japan. Eighth Army headquarters remained at Seoul.

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Chapter 12. Korean Reflection

Marine Corps Role and Contribution to the Korean War: Ground[1]

GROUND OPERATIONS of the 1st Marine Division during the Korean War can be divided into six periods. These are the Pusan Perimeter defense (August–September 1950), Inchon-Seoul assault (September–October 1950), the Chosin Reservoir campaign (October–December 1950), East-Central Korea (January 1951–March 1952), West Korea (March 1952–July 1953), and the post-armistice period (July 1953–February 1955).

Marine Corps traditional concepts of readiness and fast, effective deployment were never better illustrated than in the hectic weeks following 25 June 1950. The NKPA invasion of South Korea came at a time when U.S. military forces were in the final stages of a cutback to peacetime size. Ships and planes were being "mothballed"; personnel of all the Armed Services were being reduced in number to the lowest possible effective manpower levels.

From the peak of its six-division, five-wing wartime strength of 475,600 in 1944–1945, the Marine Corps at the outbreak of the Korean emergency had only two skeletal divisions and two air wings. There were but 74,279 Marines on active duty, 97 percent of the Marine Corps authorized strength. Although a ceiling of 100,000 had been established for the Corps by law, it was a period of tight purse strings for all defense components. Fiscal austerity in the post-World War II period had whittled Corps numbers from 85,000 in FY 1947 to what was projected at 67,000 by the end of FY 1950.

This critically reduced strength found the normal Marine triangular infantry organization cut back to two companies per battalion, two battalions per regiment, and two regiments per division. The 1st Marine Division, at Camp Pendleton, and 2d Marine Division, at Camp Lejeune, were structured along the regular peacetime T/O of 10,232 USMC/USN vice the wartime minimum T/O of 22,355. No Marine units of any size were located in the Far East.

Despite its lean numbers in late June 1950, the Marine Corps once again would be in the forefront of American military response to the Communist aggression 6,000 miles across the Pacific. As hard-pressed South Korean forces and understrength U.S. occupation troops from Japan attempted to halt the Communist invaders, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, on 2 July, requested the JCS to send immediately a Marine RCT with supporting air to the Far East. On 7 July, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was formed at Camp Pendleton from units of the 1st Division. Major components of the brigade—a balanced force of ground, service, and aviation elements—were the 5th Marines and MAG–33. Five days later, the 6,534-man brigade had mounted out from San Diego to answer the CinCFE plea for Marines to help turn the Communist tide engulfing Korea.

The brigade buttressed the faltering UNC defense in the Pusan Perimeter. Employed as a mobile reserve it helped prevent three enemy breakthroughs—at Chinju and the two Naktong River battles. On 7 August, a month after its activation, the brigade launched an attack toward Chinju. The Marine brigade was the first unit sent from CONUS to see combat in what was then considered a short-term police action. Later, in leading the way to destruction of an enemy bridgehead at the Naktong, the Marine brigade gave the defending Eighth Army its first victory against the NKPA in the Korean conflict.

Even before the brigade had been dispatched to the Far East, as the Korean situation continued to deteriorate, MacArthur had requested the JCS to expand the brigade to a full war-strength division. Between 10–21 July MacArthur, now CinCUNC, had made three separate requests for a Marine division. This persistence was reinforced by his growing determination to conduct a tactical amphibious operation to the rear of the over-extended NKPA lines and thereby seize the initiative from the enemy.

In the States, meanwhile, authorization was received to bring the badly understrength 1st and 2d Marine Divisions up to full 22,000-man war levels. By stripping posts and stations, reassignment and rerouting of units, and callup of additional reserve personnel, major elements of the 1st Marine Division were on their way to Korea by mid-August. Timing was critical in order to meet the projected D-Day target date of 15 September.

Pulled out of the Pusan line on 12 September, the brigade was absorbed by the newly arrived 1st Marine Division in preparation for the coming Inchon invasion. As the brigade commander, Lieutenant General Edward A. Craig, USMC, later reminisced:

"Although the 1st Provisional Brigade and the 1st MarDiv had never actually trained or worked together, they still combined and executed a successful landing. To me, this simply emphasized the fine training and techniques laid down for amphibious landings by the Marines."[2]

Organized as a unit less than four months, the brigade left behind it a reputation for mobility, effectiveness, and rapid deployment in the face of national emergency. Although Marine air and ground forces had operated together since 1919 in Haiti, formation of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade "marked the first time that the air and ground elements, task organized under a single commander, had engaged in combat."[3]

In the brilliant Inchon landing of 15 September 1950, Major General Oliver P. Smith's 1st Division Marines led the X Corps attack in the first major counterstroke by United Nations forces on Communist-held territory. This maneuver was closely timed against enormous odds of personnel, logistics, and hydrography (tidal fluctuations of 31 feet) which made 15 September the only suitable assault date until mid-October. When outlined in earlier planning sessions by General MacArthur, the mammoth difficulties of the operation had been so unsettling that the designated Attack Force Commander for the landing, Rear Admiral James H. Doyle, expressed the view that "the best I can say is that Inchon is not impossible."[4]

Despite all the difficulties, the landing at Inchon and recapture of Seoul, the South Korean Capital, and its adjacent Kimpo airfield by the Marines was a stunning tactical blow by the UNC that broke the backbone of the North Korean People's Army 1950 offensive. The 1st Marine Division, in its successfully executed amphibious landing, had offered UNC forces an opportunity to defeat the enemy decisively before a Siberian-like Korean winter set in. Accomplished under the most adverse weather and geographic conditions, the assault proved anew the decisive power of amphibious forces employed at a critical time and place. This capability and readiness of the Marine Corps had totally reversed the military situation, and a battered enemy was on the run. The subsequent routing of the NKPA divisions in the Inchon-Seoul campaign by X Corps and the Eighth U.S. Army forces would have led to an early UN victory had not the Chinese Communists intervened to support their Korean counterparts. The operation had validated Far East Commander General MacArthur's early premise that:

". . . air and naval action alone could not be decisive, and that nothing short of the intervention of U.S. ground forces could give any assurance of stopping the Communists and of later regaining the lost ground."[5]

The Inchon operation, moreover, had been planned in record time—approximately 20 days. This was one of the shortest periods ever allotted to a major amphibious assault, involving the planning, assembly of shipping, and mounting out of a combined force of 29,000 Marines and support personnel.

With the Inchon-Seoul operation ended, the 1st Marine Division (including the 7th Marines which had reached Inchon in time for the liberation of Seoul) reembarked on 12 October for deployment to the east coast of Korea. A new military operation was envisioned north of the 38th Parallel against Pyongyang, the North Korean Capital. As part of the drive, X Corps was to make an amphibious envelopment on the east coast, in the area of the enemy-held port of Wonsan. From here X Corps would advance westward toward Pyongyang, to link up with Eighth Army troops and trap NKPA forces withdrawing from the south.

While the Marines were en route to the objective, word was received that ROK troops had overrun Wonsan and were pushing north. The revised X Corps plan of operation called for a three-pronged attack towards the Yalu. The Marine division would advance on the left, the U.S. Army 7th Division in the center, and 1st ROK

Division on the right flank. This drive to the north and subsequent action at the Chosin Reservoir would rank as one of the most rigorous campaigns in the entire history of the Marine Corps.

Fighting as part of EUSAK, by this time fanned out throughout North Korea, the 1st Marine Division did not meet the expected NKPA resistance. Instead, large-scale Chinese Communist Forces had entered the war. As X Corps swept north toward the Yalu River in November 1950, the Marines became the first United States troops to defeat the Chinese Communists in battle. At Sudong, after four days of savage fighting, the Marine RCT–7 so badly crippled major elements of the 124th CCF Division that it was never again committed as an organic unit.

When the Chinese forces struck in full force at the Chosin Reservoir, X Corps units were forced back. Elements of a nine-division assault force, the CCF 9th Army Group, which had been sent into Korea with the specific mission of annihilating the 1st Marine Division, began to attack. On 27 November, the Chinese directed a massive frontal assault against 5th and 7th Marines positions at Yudam-ni, west of the reservoir. Another CCF division, moving up from the south, cut the MSR held by the 1st Marines so that the division at Yudam-ni, west of the reservoir, was completely encircled by Communist forces. Many experts considered the 1st Marine Division as lost. Others thought the only way to save it was to airlift it out, leaving its equipment behind. Instead, the Marines seized the initiative at Yudam-ni and cut a path through CCF units blocking a route to Hagaru. The division battled its way out in 20-degree-below-zero weather 78 miles over icy, winding mountain roads from the reservoir to the Hamhung-Hungnam area where, on 15 December, it redeployed to South Korea.

Integrated ground and air action enabled the 10,000 Marines and attached 4,000 Army-Royal Marine troops to break out of the entrapment and move south. During 13 tortuous days the Marines had withstood hostile strength representing elements of six to eight CCF divisions. The major result, from the military view, was that the Marine division properly evacuated its dead and wounded, brought out all operable equipment, and completed the retrograde movement with tactical integrity.

Not only had the Chinese (with a total of 60,000 men in assault or reserve) failed to accomplish their mission, destruction of the division, but the Marine defenders had dealt a savage blow to the enemy in return. POW debriefings later revealed that assault units of the CCF 9th Army Group had been rendered so militarily ineffective that nearly three months were required for its replacement, re-equipment, and reorganization.

Early in 1951, the 1st Marine Division was reassigned to IX Corps for Operation KILLER, a limited offensive ordered by the EUSAK Commander, General Matthew B. Ridgway. In Operation RIPPER, in March, the division led another IX Corps advance as it drove toward the 38th Parallel on the east-central front. When the Chinese struck back with their spring offensive on 22 April, the Marines were transferred to operational control of X Corps and counterattacked to restore the UNC defensive position in the far eastern sector. During May and June, the 1st Marine Division continued to punish the enemy in the Punchbowl area of eastern Korea, driving the CCF back to Yanggu and the Soyang River corridor.

Activity all along the UNC front came to an uncertain halt in July 1951 when Allied and Communist negotiators met at Kaesong for truce talks initiated by the enemy. In August the MLR flared into action again, and the Marine Division was engaged in new counter-thrusts in the Punchbowl area. Fighting during the next three weeks involved the division in some of its hardest offensive operations in Korea. It also developed that this would be the last offensive for the Marines. In November 1951, as a result of the truce talks and possibility of ending hostilities, General Ridgway, now UNC Commander, ordered the Eighth Army to cease offensive operations and begin an active defense of the front.

The war of fire and movement had turned into one of positional warfare, a defensive posture by UN forces that would continue for the last 21 months of the three-year conflict. Throughout the winter of 1951–1952, the Marines conducted vigorous patrol activities in their sector of X Corps. Although it was a lackluster period of trench warfare for the average infantryman, major tactical innovations were being pioneered by the division with its use of the transport helicopter for logistical and resupply missions.

In March 1952, the 1st Marine Division was transferred from the eastern X Corps line 140 miles west to strengthen the far end of the Eighth Army MLR in the I Corps sector. The division was relocated in the path of the enemy's invasion route to Seoul, where weak defenses in the Kimpo coastal area had threatened the security of the UNC front. Here the division's four infantry regiments (including the 1st Korean Marine Corps RCT) held nearly 35 miles of front line in the critical Panmunjom-Munsan area. The demilitarized route for the United Nations negotiators led through the Marine lines. It was the most active sector of the UN front for the next 16 months. This key position guarded the best routes of advance from North Korea to Seoul and indicated the high regard in which General James A. Van Fleet, EUSAK commander, held the Marines.

West Korean terrain was rugged, hilly, and friendly to the CCF who had the advantage of high ground positions as well as considerably more manpower. Although cast in an unaccustomed defensive warfare role, rather than a true attack mission, the Marines repelled an almost continuous series of enemy probes. While truce talks went on at nearby Panmunjom, fighting as furious as at any time earlier in the war flared up intermittently as the CCF tried to gain additional terrain for bargaining purposes. During 1952–1953, the Marine division beat off determined CCF limited objective attacks on Bunker Hill, the Hook, Vegas, and Boulder City outposts up until—literally—the final day of the war, 27 July 1953.

In reviewing Marine actions during this period, the Secretary of the Navy commented:

"Marines in Korea have established an enviable record of success in carrying out their assigned missions. The First Marine Division began its third year in Korea holding an active sector of the United Nations front guarding the enemy's invasion route to Seoul. It was frequently subjected to fanatical Chinese attacks supported by intensive artillery fire. Some of the heaviest fighting during the year took place along the front held by this Division. Enemy attacks were well coordinated and numerically strong. Continued patrol activity to keep the enemy off balance frequently resulted in bitter hand-to-hand fighting with numerous casualties on both sides."[6]

This type of prolonged static warfare gave little real satisfaction to Marines accustomed to waging a war of movement and a more tangible "mission accomplished." The year of positional warfare in western Korea was costly, too. Total U.S. casualties in the Korean War numbered approximately 137,000 men killed, missing, or wounded. The Marine Corps toll was 30,544. Of this number, 4,262 were KIA, an additional 244 were listed as non-battle deaths, and 26,038 were wounded. During this last part of the war, Marine casualties (both ground and air) totaled 13,087, plus an additional 2,529 for the attached 1st KMC/RCT. Astonishingly, 1,586 Marines or 39.6 percent[7] of the infantry Marines killed in the entire war were victims of the "static," outpost warfare in the west. Another 11,244 were listed WIA during this period—representing 43.9 percent of the total number of ground Marines wounded during the three years of conflict.

Conditions varied widely during the 1950–1952 and 1952–1953 periods of the war. The enemy's improved capability in artillery during the latter period of positional warfare largely accounts for the high casualty rate at this time. It has been noted that:

"Prior to February 1952, with a warfare of mobility prevailing, the enemy was inferior in artillery, the causative agent of most personnel losses. Afterwards, during the outpost warfare of western Korea, the front remained more or less static, and the Chinese Reds had as much artillery support as the Marines."[8]

It might be valid to question the use of Marine Corps specialists in amphibious warfare in an Army-type conventional land war. The protracted land campaign that characterized the latter stages of the Korean conflict actually was waged for the majority of the war period—from September 1951 to July 1953, or nearly two years. In terms of economy of manpower it could be considered an inefficient, though not ineffective use of Marines. On the other hand, the history of warfare down through the ages makes it repeatedly clear that a nation fights the pitched battle against its opponent with the arsenal of weapons and personnel at hand.

As an Eighth U.S. Army component (attached variously to the X, IX, and I Corps), the 1st Marine Division (one of nearly 20 divisions representing U.S. Army, British Commonwealth, and ROK troops)

performed its assigned mission—to repulse and punish the enemy. It contributed heavily to maintaining the integrity of the EUSAK front and was considered one of the two crack EUSAK divisions—the other being the Marines' neighbor to the right, the British Commonwealth Division. With the attached KMCs, the 1st Marine Division, moreover, was also the biggest and strongest division in EUSAK.

Most importantly, fast deployment of the Marine division had made possible the brilliant tactical maneuver at Inchon. Many military experts, following World War II, had envisioned future conflicts only in terms of atomic warfare and massive strategic air assaults. Even the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff "had predicted publicly, hardly six months before, that the world would never again see a large-scale amphibious landing."[9] In contradiction to new atomic-age tactics, however, the United Nations commander in September 1950 had turned the tide of the battle by his use of a conventional maneuver—envelopment by amphibious assault. The performance of the Marine Corps was thus responsible, in part, for changing post-Korean War military doctrine from total reliance on new tactics and weaponry to a more balanced concept that combined both sophisticated innovations and viable, established procedures.

Although unemployed in its primary amphibious role after late 1950, the 1st Marine Division had originally been positioned on the eastern front because of this capability. It was the UN commander's desire to have EUSAK's only amphibious trained and equipped division near the coast in the event that an amphibious maneuver was required for offensive or defensive purposes. Again, in the division's 1952 move to the western coastal front in the Kimpo area, this fighting capability was a major consideration.

To a large extent, U.S. forces in Korea fought the early part of the Korean War with weapons from the preceding war—only five years removed. Three tactical innovations employed by the Marine Corps during the Korean War were highly successful and largely adopted by the other services. These were the thermal boot, individual body armor, and the helicopter. All were first combat tested in 1951.

Frostbite casualties during the first winter in Korea resulting from inadequate footwear made it necessary to provide combat troops with specially insulated footgear. The new thermal boot virtually eliminated frostbite for both Marine infantrymen and aviators. Armored utility jackets had been developed toward the end of World War II but were not actually battle tested. The Marine Corps had renewed the experimentation in 1947. First combat use of the plastic, light-weight body armor was made in July 1951 by Marines while fighting in the Punchbowl and Inje areas of X Corps. Improvements were made to the prototypes and by the following summer the Marine Corps, following a request made by the Army Quartermaster General, furnished some 4,000 vests to frontline Army troops. By 1953 the 1st Marine Division had received its authorized quota of 24,000 vests and new lower torso body armor had also been put into production.

Medical experts reported that the effectiveness of enemy low-velocity missile weapons striking a man wearing body armor was reduced from 30–80 percent. Chest and abdominal wounds decreased from 90–95 percent after issuance of the armored vests. Overall battle casualties were estimated to have been cut by 30 percent. By the time of the cease-fire, the protection offered by the Marine body armor had been extended to some 93,000 Marine and Army wearers. Hardly anywhere could the U.S. taxpayer or fighting man have found a better buy for the money: mass production had reduced the per unit cost of the Marine armored vest to just $37.50.

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Air[10]

On 3 August 1950, eight VMF–214 Corsairs led by squadron executive officer, Major Robert P. Keller, catapulted from the deck of the USS *Sicily* to launch the first Marine air strikes in the Korean action. From then until 27 July 1953, units of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing flew 127,496 combat sorties in the Korean War, considerably in excess of the 80,000-odd sorties for all Marine aviation during World War II. Of this Korean number nearly a third, more than 39,500, represented the Marine Corps close air support specialty, even though 1st MAW pilots were heavily engaged in other assignments from Fifth Air Force. These included interdiction, general support, air defense patrols, air rescue operations, photo and armed reconnaissance, and related tasks to insure Allied air superiority.

With the outbreak of Korean hostilities, Stateside Marine air units were alerted for combat duty by 5 July. At Major General Field Harris' 1st MAW headquarters, El Toro, MAG–33 elements were quickly readied for deployment to Japanese bases and thence to Korea. Commanded by Brigadier General Thomas J. Cushman, MAG–33 comprised Headquarters and Service Squadron 33, fighter squadrons VMF–214 and –323, an echelon of nightfighters from VMF(N)–513, two radar units (Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron 1 and Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron 2), plus the observation squadron, VMO–6. Forward elements were quickly on their way, arriving in Japan on 19 July, while the rear echelon reached the Korean Theater on 31 July. Twenty R5Ds from Marine Transport Squadrons 152 and 352 were already providing logistical support for Pacific lift operations.

After practicing some last minute carrier landing approaches, the fighter pilots got into combat almost at once. Following –214 into the war, VMF–323 started operations on 6 August, flying from USS *Badoeng Strait* in support of the Pusan ground defenders. When the brigade mounted out on 7 August on its drive to Chinju, the two MAG–33 carrier squadrons were there with their 5-inch HVARs, napalm, 100- to 500-pound bombs, and 20mm cannon. VMF(N)–513 began its regularly-scheduled night tours over the Korean perimeter that same date, lashing at enemy supply and transportation centers in the Sachon-Chinju area of southern Korea. VMO–6 had already started evacuating casualties from the Pusan area three days earlier.

Many Army ground commanders witnessed the Marine system of close air support for the first time during the Pusan fighting. After the second Naktong battle, when air strikes had silenced enemy guns and 300 troops near Obong-ni, the commander of the 23rd Regiment to the right of the brigade wrote General Ridgway in Washington:

"Infantry and artillery is a good team, but only by adding adequate and efficient air support can we succeed without devastating losses . . . The Marines on our left were a sight to behold. Not only was their equipment superior or equal to ours, but they had squadrons of air in direct support. They used it like artillery. It was, 'Hey, Joe, this is Smitty, knock the left of that ridge in from Item Company.' They had it *day and night*."[11]

And while Marine, Army, and Navy staffs were completing plans for the forthcoming Inchon assault, MAG–33's little aerial Photo Unit (part of Headquarters Squadron) took a series of reconnaissance photographs of the landing beaches in preparation for the closely coordinated maneuver.

During Inchon-Seoul operations, MAG–33 was joined by three MAG–12 fighter squadrons: VMF–212, VMF–312, and VMF(N)–542. After the capture of Kimpo airfield, 212's "Devilcats" and 542's nightfighters transferred from Itami to Kimpo. Flying out of 2d MAW headquarters, Cherry Point, N.C., on 18 August, the Devilcats had climaxed a hurried dash halfway around the world to get into action. The squadron flew its first

combat mission from Kimpo a month after its departure from the East Coast. While the MAG–12 land-based squadrons and the carrier pilots functioned as the division's flying artillery, MGCIS–1 set up a radar warning system and MTACS–2 established a Tactical Air Direction Center to direct all aircraft in the X Corps zone of action.

With the conclusion of the Inchon operation on 8 October, VMF–312 and VMF(N)–542 remained at Kimpo. Other Marine squadrons (VMF–212, VMF(N)–513, VMO–6,, HqSq–12, and carrier-based VMF–323) shifted to the Korean east coast in readiness for the Wonsan landing and subsequent deployment north of the Marine infantry regiments. Wing elements began arriving at the port city's airfield on 13 October. Division Marines, meanwhile, on board ship in the Wonsan harbor while more than 3,000 expertly laid Communist mines were being removed, did not land until 26 October. For the men who fought the vertical war in Korea, it was "one of the rare times in the air-ground association, the 1st MAW had landed ahead of the 1st Marine Division. The aviators didn't miss putting up a big sign-board *"Welcome, 1st Division!"*[12]

As 30 CCF divisions slammed into UNC forces all across the fighting front in late November to change the nature of ground operations (and the future of the war), so did the onset of the first Korean winter test 1st MAW aerial skills and ingenuity. Low hanging ceilings, icing conditions, and three-inch snows on the carrier decks were common operating hazards. For the shore-based pilots, the bad weather often caused changed flight plans as they were forced to land at alternate fields or on Navy carriers. Nonetheless, Marine RD4s flew up to the southern tip of the Chosin Reservoir, at Hagaru, to air-drop ammunition and supplies and evacuate casualties from the entrapment. Logistical support to this tiny frozen makeshift air strip was also provided by Air Force C–47s and C–119s. Later on, during the first step of the grinding movement south, Air Force pilots paradropped a sectionalized steel bridge vitally needed at Koto-ri to replace a destroyed span over a chasm.

Beginning with the load-out for Wonsan in early October, the 1st MAW was placed under operational control of the Seoul-based Fifth Air Force.[13] Echelons of FAF air command and control initially slowed operational orders anywhere from 4 to 36 hours. Simplified interservice communications and command liaison between 1st MAW and FAF helped improve the situation. With a verbal agreement, on 1 December, for CG, 1st MAW to receive full control over X Corps area aircraft, problems eased substantially. To a large degree the close coordination of Marine aviation and ground forces during the Chosin campaign was due to the use of flexible, simplified, and fast battle-tested Marine Corps-Navy CAS techniques and to having increased the number of pilot FACs from one to two per battalion.

The Marine movement south from Hagaru was protected by one of the greatest concentrations of aircraft during the entire war. Twenty-four CAS aircraft covered the breakout column, while attack planes assaulted enemy forces in adjacent ridge approaches. Marine planes on station at Yonpo (south of the Hamhung-Hungnam axis) and carrier-based VMF–323 flew some 130 sorties daily. Another 100 attack sorties were flown daily by Navy carrier-based planes, while FAF flew interdiction missions beyond the bombline. Marine Panther jets of VMF–311, operating with the Air Force from the Pusan area, got into the action at Yonpo. It was also at this time that an airborne TADC (tactical air direction center) was first improvised when the radio jeeps moving south with the column had communication failures. For six days, a VMR–152 R5D transport orbited 2,000 to 4,000 feet above the Marine units to control air support between Hagaru and Chinhung-ni as a flying radio nerve center.

From late November to early December, as the division battled its way from Chosin to Hamhung, Marine, Navy, and Air Force aircraft evacuated more than 5,000 Marine, Army, and ROK casualties. And during the most critical period, the little OY spotter planes and HO3S–1 helicopters from VMO–6 provided the only physical contact between units separated by enemy action. Marine tactical squadrons in these three early major offensives of the war, from 3 August to 14 December, flew 7,822 sorties, 5,305 of them CAS for the battered UNC ground units.

From 1951–1953, 1st MAW pilots and planes came under direct control of FAF. They alternated

between principal missions of interdiction raids to harass and destroy Communist supply lines north of the battlefront, general support sorties outside the bombline, and CAS flights to support infantry forces threatened by enemy penetration. Typical of FAF focus on massive aerial assaults were the following assignments that Marine flyers participated in:

In January 1951 (prior to Operation KILLER), the 1st MAW undertook a series of interdiction raids against the Communist supply net located in the Korean waist between the 38th and 39th Parallels, to disrupt the CCF transport-truck system.

On 9 May 1951, 75 1st MAW Corsairs and Panther jets were part of the 300-plane raid staged by FAF against Communist air-fields at Sinuiju, on the Korean side of the Yalu.

Operation STRANGLE, a major Fifth Air Force all-out interdiction effort to cripple the enemy supply life line, was undertaken 20 May. When the Chinese Communist spring offensive broke shortly thereafter, MAG–12 Corsairs and –33 Panther jets delivered maximum support to the MLR regiments, the 1st and 7th Marines. When the truce talks began in Kaesong, in July 1951, 1st MAW planes and the radar searches of MACG–2 stood guard. Batteries of the Marine 1st 90mm AAA Gun Battalion, attached to the wing, were also alerted to keep under surveillance the approaches to key military ports.

New tactical developments pioneered by 1st MAW during the Korean War advanced the UNC air effort and added to the 1st MAW reputation for versatility. Several major steps forward were taken toward Marine aviation's primary goal of providing real operational 24-hour CAS, regardless of foul weather conditions. The new MPQ–14 radar-controlled bombing equipment, developed between 1946 and 1950, was employed by MASRT–1, as a device to control night fighter sorties of a general support nature flown by day attack aircraft. By means of height-finding and directional radars, it enabled a pilot to leave his base, drop a bomb load on target, and return to home field without ever having seen the ground. It offered major practical improvement in blind bombing methods. MPQ was limited, however, in its use in sudden, moving battle situations because of some of its sophisticated, hand-built ABC components. A real tactical breakthrough in night CAS came in April 1953 when VMF(N)–513 and the VMO–6 spotter planes evolved the new searchlight beam control system which made possible 24-hour coverage for 1st Marine Division ground units.

In other innovations, it will be remembered that the Air Force in late 1952 had requested escort by VMF (N)–513's new two-place jet-intruder F3D Skyknights on Air Force B–29 night bombing missions. During a four-month period from 1952–1953, the Marine night fighters downed one enemy plane or more a month while escorting the B–29s. Once the F3Ds began their night escort role, Air Force bomber losses became negligible.

A unique capability of the long-range, jet-intruder night-fighter was that the F3D carried a radar operator who replaced the ground controller, thereby extending air-defense radar range to the aircraft. It could thus operate independently and effectively at great distance from its base. Without GCI (ground control intercept) aid, VMF (N)–513 direct escort to bombers at night was so successful that the squadron's planes were used as exclusive escort of the Bomber Command B–29s. In November 1952, the Marine squadron's two night kills were the first ever recorded by airborne intercept radar-equipped jet fighters. At the end of the war, Skyknights and–513 pilots (flying F3Ds as well as the earlier F7Fs) had destroyed more enemy aircraft than any other Marine or Navy day or night fighter plane. Tactics employed by VMF(N)–513 were original in concept and required a high-level of training and individual pilot-AIO (airborne intercept operator) proficiency. It was noted that:

"The enthusiasm with which this Marine aid to the Air Force has been received by FEAF Bomber Command indicates that VMF(N)-513 had successfully adapted its equipment and personnel to a mission usually associated with Air Force operations, making an important contribution to interservice cooperation, but even more important, to tactical progress in the night escort of bomber formations."[14]

An operation somewhat in reverse of the nightfighters was that of VMJ–1, the Marine photographic squadron, which had its own Air Force escort. Formerly the Wing Photo Unit, VMJ–1 was commissioned in

February 1952 and flew a total of 5,025 combat flights. Under FAF operational control until late in the war, the squadron's 550-mph F2H–2P twin-jet Banshees flew unarmed deep into enemy country—even as far as the MIG-guarded Yalu—photographing positions, airfields, power plants, and other targets. An escort plane flew cover while the photo ship took pictures. Photo missions to the Suiho Reservoir were rated so important that "24 Air Force F–86 jets flew an umbrella."[15] Introduction of the squadron's jet Banshee early in 1952 was a major step in improved aerial photography. The Banshee was the superior photographic aircraft in the combat theater, because of its new advanced-design view finder and operating range.

Coverage from VMJ–1's gross wartime output of 793,012 feet of processed prints was equal to a continuous photographic strip six and half times around the earth at the equator. The Marine photo squadron contributed a third to the entire UN photo reconnaissance effort and at times flew as much as 50 percent of all FAF intelligence missions.

Throughout the war the four attack squadrons of MAG–12 (VMAs–212, –251, –121; and –332 at the end of the war) had dumped seemingly endless bomb loads on CCF installations, while MAG–33's two jet-fighter squadrons (VMF–115 and –311) had provided the Marine exchange pilots who scoured the lower side of the Yalu with the Air Force F–86s on fighter sweeps.

During Korea the Marine CVE/CVL squadrons (VMAs–214, –233, –312, and –251) flew more than 25,000 sorties, experimenting with improved techniques for carrier landings. The carrier qualification program of Marine air units, a regular part of their training, also proved its value in combat. In the earliest days of the war, VMF–214 and –323[16] had operated from two CVEs based off the south coast of Korea, thereby providing close support to the brigade and other Eighth Army elements at a time when all shore-based aircraft were forced to operate from Japan.

In other tactical refinements, the 1st MAW had employed an airborne tactical air control center in combat for the first time. In July 1952, when the static ground situation led to a build-up of enemy flak along the front lines that interfered with effective CAS delivery, the 11th Marines had instituted a flak suppression program in front of the division sector. Later that year, CG Eighth Army had ordered a similar program used by all other Eighth Army commands. By December, apparently because of lack of success with their own methods, EUSAK had adopted the system developed by the Marine artillery regiment. The antiaircraft program, together with a reduction in the number of runs per aircraft per mission,[17] had measurably decreased casualties for CAS missions conducted within artillery range. During 1952–1953 this loss rate for pilots and planes had dropped by a third, with no corresponding reduction in the sortie rate.

Stabilized warfare and enemy AA build-up had also led to an increasing use of enemy radars. Passive electronics countermeasures (ECM) were instituted by FAF. This program was enhanced in September 1952 by the commissioning of VMC–1 (Marine Composite Squadron 1), administratively assigned to MACG–2. The squadron possessed the only Fifth Air Force ECM capability to locate enemy radars and was the primary source of ECM intercept equipment in FAF squadrons for early warning and radar control monitoring. Throughout the duration of hostilities, VMC–1 remained the only Navy-Marine unit in the Korean theater with ECM as its prime function.

For its combat action, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing was awarded two Korean Presidential Unit Citations and the Army Distinguished Unit Citation for the Wonsan operation. Wing pilots were responsible for downing 35 enemy planes, including the first night kill made by a United Nations aircraft. Participation of the 1st MAW in the war could also be measured in a different way. On the inevitable red side of the ledger: 258 air Marines had been killed (including 65 MIA and presumed dead) and 174 WIA. A total of 436 aircraft were also lost in combat or operational accidents.

From the command level, Korean operations marked the first time the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing had functioned for an extended period as a component in a broad, unified command structure such as FAF. Despite

the weak links initially inherent in such a situation, the command structure did work. Marine-Navy and Air Force-Army differing aerial doctrines and tactics of close tactical air support, however, were never fully reconciled. The Marine wing made a notable contribution in providing really effective close, speedy tactical support during the sudden fluid battle situation that erupted in mid-July 1953. Simplified Marine TACP control, request procedures, and fast radio net system enabled 1st MAW pilots to reach the target area quickly. During this final month of the war—and indicative of the enormous amount of coordination involved in the FAF administrative apparatus—1st MAW planes flew 1,500 CAS sorties for the 19 different EUSAK frontline divisions.

CG, 1st MAW noted in General Order No. 153 issued the last day of the war, that “the Wing’s association with the Eighth Army, the Fifth Air Force and the Seventh U.S. Fleet in combined operations had been a professionally broadening experience—teaching tolerance, teamwork, and flexibility of operations.”[18]

Besides the FAF interdiction work and support missions for frontline units, new 1st MAW tactics and equipment had diversified the wing’s skills and capabilities in its primary role of providing CAS for Marine ground units. Of new tactical air support developments in the Korean action none had a more revolutionary effect than those created by the helicopter—which dramatically reshaped battlefield logistics and pointed the way to a new era in Marine Corps air-ground teamwork.

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Helicopter[19]

A promising newcomer on the Marine aviation scene was the helicopter, whose tactical employment in Korea was to far exceed all expectations. A few helicopters had been used experimentally in the European and Pacific theaters toward the end of World War II, too late to evaluate their performance. But it was the Marine Corps, beginning in 1947, that had pioneered the development of combat techniques utilizing the rotor-driven aircraft as a means of enhancing its capability for the amphibious assault. When the Korean incident erupted in June 1950, the Marine Corps was in a position to assign four HO3S–1 Sikorsky two-place helicopters and flight personnel from its Quantico test unit, HMX–1, together with fixed-wing planes and pilots to form the brigade observation squadron, VMO–6. These Marines had the distinction of being the first helicopter pilots of any U.S. service to be formed into a unit for overseas duty.

Further, the Marine Corps also had 31 months' experience with the strange looking, pot-bellied, ungainly aircraft in diverse battlefield tasks. These included casualty evacuation, reconnaissance, wire-laying, liaison, and administrative missions. But promising test exercises at Quantico and Camp Lejeune were hardly enough. The real test would come at the front. There, the helicopter's military value would reflect and "depend to a large extent on how well the Marine Corps had worked out combat doctrines and techniques where none had existed before."[20]

Landing with the brigade in August 1950, the choppers performed invaluable service from the earliest days of Pusan, Inchon, Seoul, and the Reservoir. During the most critical phase of the Chosin operation, the helicopters provided the only liaison between isolated commands. Wire-laying by air was first employed by VMO–6 during the second battle of the Naktong River, in September 1950. The ground had changed hands several times and control was uncertain. Using makeshift communication rigs, VMO–6 pilots unreeled telephone wire at a mile a minute. This method of putting telephone lines across Korean mountains became routine through the rest of the war, and Marine choppers strung miles of lines in rain and wind with the enemy blasting away at them. Wire was laid over terrain in a matter of hours where it would have taken men on foot weeks—if it could have been done.

Perhaps the greatest innovation of VMO-6, however, was its night casualty evacuation techniques first employed at Pusan. Darting in and out at treetop level around the Korean mountains, the light, easily maneuverable craft could land on a tiny patch of earth to evacuate injured men or bring in supplies. Once, during the early part of the war, when the aeronautical pioneer Igor Sikorsky was asked how his revolutionary vehicles were performing in combat, Mr. Sikorsky, bowing from the waist in his Old World manner, replied:

"Thank you. Our things go very well in Korea. The helicopter has already saved the lives of several thousands of our boys in Korea and the score is still mounting."[21]

With the advent of the helicopter, as little as 43 minutes elapsed between the time a Marine was hit and the time he was on board the USS *Repose* or other hospital ships. Later on when the Marine transport copters arrived in Korea, HMR–161 pilots felt a new record had been set when only 30 minutes[22] intervened between the time a frontline Marine was hit and delivered to a hospital facility 17 miles from the zone of action. The *Consolation* had been outfitted with a helicopter loading platform in July 1951, and eventually all hospital ships had such landing platforms. In Korea the flying ambulances could make the trip from rear area aid station to ship in five minutes and unload the wounded and clear the deck in 45 seconds flat.

Throughout the war nearly 10,000 wounded Marines were evacuated by helicopter; more than 1,000 such

missions were carried out at night. Records indicate that VMO–6 flew out 7,067 casualties and that another 2,748 medical evacuations were made by HMR–161, for which the task ranked as a secondary mission. Although these humanitarian gains were important, major tactical innovations made by the helicopter were even more significant.

In the fall of 1951, HMR–161 successfully executed the first combat troop resupply mission in history. At this time while the division was deployed in the jagged razorback-ridge Punchbowl area, “a glimpse of future warfare was provided when Marine helicopter lifts on a company scale led to the lift of an entire battalion and its organic equipment.”[23] Arriving in Korea on 31 August, the squadron had a complement of 15 new 10-place HRS–1 transport vehicles, with cruising speed of 60–85 knots. Developed specifically to meet Marine Corps combat requirements, the HRS marked a new era in Marine airborne support to ground troops. Both VMO–6 and HMR–161 came under operational control of the division. (With 1st Division and Wing headquarters separated geographically by more than 200 miles, it was particularly expedient to have the two squadrons under division control.)

The first step toward using the rotor-blade aircraft in the mission most closely related to the USMC basic helicopter concept—that of transporting troops and supplies by vertical envelopment—was accomplished 13 September 1951. In Operation WINDMILL I, HRS choppers carried out the first Marine mass helicopter combat resupply operation in history. A lift of one day’s supplies was made to 2/1 in the Soyang River vicinity. A total of 28 flights were executed in overall time of 2 1/2 hours (a total flight time of 14.1 hours) to transport 18,848 pounds of gear and 74 Marines a distance of seven miles.

HMR–161 first applied the Corps’ new concept of vertical envelopment on 21 September when, despite heavy fog, it transported 224 fully equipped Marines and 17,772 pounds of cargo from the reserve area to the MLR. This was the first helicopter lift of a combat unit in history. Company-size troop lifts inevitably led to more complicated battalion-size transfers. In the 11 November Operation SWITCH, HMR-161 effected the relief of a frontline battalion, involving the lift of nearly 2,000 troops. Twelve of the 3 1/2-ton aircraft made 262 flights in overall time of 10 hours (95.6 hours flight time).

The tactical and logistical possibilities of the multi-purpose rotor craft attracted considerable attention. So impressed, in fact, were Eighth Army officers by the mobility and utility displayed by Marine helicopters that in November 1951 General Ridgway had asked the Army to provide four Army helicopter transport battalions, each with 280 helicopters. Korea, Ridgway said, had “conclusively demonstrated that the Army vitally needed helicopters,”[24] and he recommended that the typical field army of the future have 10 helicopter transportation battalions.

Ridgway was thereby renewing requests for helicopters made in the early days of the war by both the Army (through General MacArthur) and the Air Force (by General Barcus). But the UNC Commander’s enthusiasm, although understandable, turned out to be the undoing for substantial Army use of the rotary-blade aircraft in Korea. The scale of operations[25] envisioned by Ridgway unwittingly led to a “jurisdictional controversy”[26] about possible duplication of aerial functions not reconciled by the two services until a year later. Although both services had helicopters in limited use, “hostilities were in their last stages before either the Army or the Air Force began to receive the cargo helicopters which they had put on order in 1950 and 1951.”[27]

A successful three-day Army regimental supply exercise in May 1953 and a combat maneuver the following month in which the choppers formed an air bridge to a heavily attacked, isolated ROK unit caused General Taylor, then CG, EUSAK, to observe: “The cargo helicopter, employed in mass, can extend the tactical mobility of the Army far beyond its normal capability.” He strongly recommended that the Army make “ample provisions for the full exploitation of the helicopter in the future.”[28]

Pioneering developments by the Marine Corps had, of course, continued meanwhile. Logistical operations had grown increasingly complex and diversified. In Operation HAYLIFT II, 23–27 February 1953, Marine helicopters set an all time cargo-carrying record when they lifted 1,612,306 pounds of cargo to completely

supply two JAMESTOWN regiments with daily requirements for the five-day period. This represented a total of 1,633 lifts and 583.4 flying hours for the operation. The record day's lift was 200 tons, whereas plans had called for lifting a maximum 130 tons per day. Experience gained during the operation indicated that similar tactical maneuvers in warmer weather would be even more successful when troop fuel oil requirements were reduced.

Other Marine innovations by HMR–161 included supplying ammunition from the rear area ASP to the MLR and redeployment of 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battery personnel and guns from one firing area to another. And although VMO–6 executed most of the mercy missions, the transport squadron performed an unusual assignment in July 1952. Flood conditions throughout Korea brought an urgent request from the Army for use of HMR–61. On 30 July, the Marine squadron evacuated 1,172 Army troops from their positions in the Chunchon area where they had been trapped by the heavy rains.

With a new tactical exercise held nearly every month, HMR–161 operations that once had rated world-wide headlines were now practically routine. VTOL-style battalion troop lifts were no longer novel and regimental resupply operations were becoming almost standard practice. In both relocation of units and logistical support, combat helicopters had provided high mobility and reasonable speed. They had introduced a new infantry technique of "hit and run" tactics. The transport helicopter squadron had proved most effective when employed in major tactical movements and not when used piecemeal on minor missions. Marine Corps wartime use of the new aerial vehicle had clearly proven that helicopters had become a necessary and integral component of the modern-day balanced military force.

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Chapter 12. Korean Reflection
FMF and Readiness Posture[29]

The flexibility and readiness capability inherent in the Marine Corps FMF structure was a strong undergirding factor in its swift response to the Korean crisis. As noted, in June 1950 the Marine Corps had 74,279 officers and men on active duty. Its Fleet Marine Force, consisting of FMFPac and FMFLant, numbered 27,656. The 11,853 personnel of FMFPac included 7,779 men in General Smith's 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton and 3,733 in General Harris' 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at El Toro. On the East Coast, FMFLant numbered 15,803 with approximately 8,973 Marines in the 2d Division at Camp Lejeune and 5,297 air personnel attached to the 2d Wing at Cherry Point.

Outbreak of Korean hostilities thus presented the Marine Corps with the tasks of organizing and deploying for combat first a brigade and then a full war-strength reinforced division, each with supporting aviation elements. Despite the low strength to which FMFPac had shrunk due to stringent national defense economy measures, the heavy demands placed upon it were met. Both missions were accomplished quickly and effectively. In fact, "few achievements in the long history of the Marine Corps can equal what was achieved in the 11 weeks which elapsed between the outbreak of the Korean War and the amphibious assault of the 1st Marine Division at Inchon."[30]

As early as 2 July, CinCFE MacArthur had requested that a Marine RCT-air unit be dispatched to the Far East. On 7 July the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was activated; on 12–14 July it embarked. With departure of the brigade, personnel shortages within the 1st Division and 1st Wing became acute. The division was reduced to 3,459, less than a RCT; and the wing to 2,300. Meanwhile, as the increasing demand had continued for a Marine Division deployed to Korea, it became equally apparent that if the Marine Corps were to fulfill this requirement of deploying a full-strength division to Korea,[31] its reservists would have to be called up to alleviate these shortages.

Manpower potential of the Marine Corps Reserve was 128,959, nearly twice that of the regular establishment. In June 1950, the Organized Marine Corps Reserve (Ground) numbered 1,879 officers and 31,648 enlisted personnel being trained in 138 OMCR units of battalion size or less. Membership of the ground reserve was approximately 76 percent of its authorized strength. At the same time the Organized Reserve (Aviation) consisted of 30 fighter and 12 ground control intercept squadrons attached to the Marine Air Reserve Training Command organized at Glenview, Ill. in 1946. These MARTCOM squadrons numbered 1,588 officers and 4,753 enlisted, or approximately 95 percent of authorized strength. In addition to nearly 40,000 members of the OMCR, the Marine Volunteer (non-drill, nonpay status) Reserve carried approximately 90,000 on its rolls.

A warning notice went out on 19 July from the Commandant, General Cates, to District Directors that the OMCR would shortly be ordered to active duty; later that same day mobilization of the Reserve was authorized by President Truman, with Congressional sanction. On 20 July, the first 22 ground units, with nearly 5,000 men, were ordered to active duty on a schedule that took into account the unit's state of readiness, proximity to its initial duty station, and facilities there for handling the personnel overload.

Less than a month after hostilities began in Korea, key infantry, artillery, and engineer units of the OMCR had been ordered to extended active duty. On 31 July, West Coast ground reserve units from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, and Phoenix were the first to report in to Camp Pendleton for augmentation into the 1st Marine Division. The following day their opposite numbers from the East Coast units arrived at Camp Lejeune. By 11 September, all of the organized ground units had reported for duty and the OMCR (Ground) had ceased to

exist.

While the organized ground reserve was being mobilized, the first of the 42 MARTCOM fighter and intercept squadrons began arriving at El Toro. Personnel of six reserve VMF and three MGCI squadrons were ordered to duty on 23 July as replacements in the 1st MAW which had furnished units and men for the MAG-33 component of the brigade.

Commenting on the success with which the Marine Corps achieved this expansion, the Secretary of Defense was to note later:

"The speed with which this mobilization was effected was an important factor in the rapid buildup of the First Marine Division, the first units of which sailed for the Far East in July 1950."[32]

As late as 20 July, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had informed MacArthur that a Marine division could not be sent before November or even December. Finally, on 25 July, the CinCUNC's third request for the division was approved. It would, however, be a division minus one RCT, and the Joint Chiefs were "adamant in their decision that MacArthur must wait until autumn or even winter for his third RCT."[33]

The JCS also directed on 25 July that the Marine Corps build its division (less one RCT) to full war strength. The date of 10–15 August was set for its departure to the Far East. Among the many steps taken in the mobilization schedule, the JCS directed that the Camp Lejeune-based 2d Marine Division be expanded immediately to war strength.

Fleshing out personnel—against short-fuzed manpower and time factors—for the 1st Marine Division and Wing, due to embark in mid-August, a month after the brigade had left, was a round-the-clock operation for all hands. Between 25 July-5 August, the Marine Corps provided personnel for the expanded Division/Wing by:

transfer of FMFLant-selected, 2d Division/Wing air and ground units, of 6,800 men, to FMFPac;

transfer of 3,600 regular Marines from 105 posts and stations throughout the U.S.;

mobilization of 2,900 from early OMCR ground and air units; and utilization of two replacement drafts, number 900, intended for the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade.

Expansion of the 1st Marine Division was in two phases, bringing the division (less one RCT) up to war strength and then organizing its third reinforced infantry regiment, the 7th Marines. With the cadre of 3,459 men in the division after the brigade left and the influx of regulars and reservists, the 1st Division embarked for Korea between 10 and 24 August. It had reached wartime strength (less one RCT) on 15 August, just 27 days after beginning its buildup from a peacetime T/O. As it had approached war strength, the Division CG, General Smith, was directed by CMC ltr of 4 August to activate a third RCT and prepare it for departure to Korea no later than 1 September.

While mounting out, the division transferred approximately 1,000 of its rear echelon to be used in the buildup of the 7th Marines. The 6th Marines of the 2d Division provided the base for building this new regiment. (Approximately 800 Marines of 3/6 were reassigned from Mediterranean duty and ordered to the Far East, via the Suez Canal, to join the 7th Marines upon its arrival there.) By drawing men from widely scattered sources, it was possible to activate the 7th Marines on 17 August. Departure of this regiment on 1 September was thus far in advance of the late fall or winter target date originally set by the JCS.

With all OMCR ground units called up and absorbed into the 1st and 2d Divisions, and air squadrons being mobilized on a slower schedule (due to less-urgent combat needs for air personnel in the early war stage), the Marine Corps dealt with its remaining body of reserve strength. Bulk orders went out beginning 15 August to the Volunteer Reserve, and by the end of the year 58,480 men and women in this category were on active duty. More than 80 percent of the volunteer reservists on Marine Corps rolls served during the Korean War.

Attesting to the impact of events in Korea is the fact that "following the epic withdrawal of the 1st Division from the Chosin Reservoir, the number of new enlistments into the active Volunteer Reserve jumped from 877 in December to 3,477 in January."[34]

Complete mobilization of the organized ground reserve had been accomplished in just 53 days, from 20 July to 11 September. A previous estimate had shown an expected 80 percent availability of ground reserve on M-Day; the actual mobilization figure was 90 percent. Of 33,528 OMCR ordered to active duty, a total of 30,183 (1,550 officers/28,633 enlisted) reported. Marine aviation also expanded rapidly. By January 1951, 32 organized reserve air units (20 of the 30 existing VMFs and all 12 MGCIs) had been activated and by October of that year all of the reserve squadrons had been called to active duty. Of the 6,341 organized air reservists, 5,240 received orders; 4,893, or 93.4 percent, reported in. In contrast to the ground reserve, air units had been recalled on a staggered or partial mobilization schedule, a matter which was later to receive Congressional attention (and ultimately to set a new trend) when the Nation's entire Korean War mobilization procedures were reviewed and subsequently revised.

Of the Marines participating in the Inchon invasion, 17 percent were reservists. By June 1951 the proportion of reservists in Marine Corps units in Korea had increased to nearly 50 percent. Between July 1950 and June 1953, approximately 122,000 reservists, both recruits and veterans, saw active duty with the Marine Corps.

Throughout the war the Marine Corps effected approximately 34 replacement drafts and another 31 rotation drafts. Ground Marines served an average tour of 13 months overseas (although actual time attached to the division was about 10 1/2 months). The collapse of North Korean forces after the Inchon-Seoul operation and the unopposed landing at Wonsan had pointed to an early end of the Korean conflict. Massive Chinese intervention in November 1950, however, changed the prospect of a short war to a long one and made it necessary to implement a rotation and release policy. By March 1951, HQMC had worked out a preliminary phaseout program for reserve personnel (based on the various categories and length of service prior to recall) which was put into effect in June 1951.

During 1952 and up until July 1953, approximately 500 officers and 15,500 enlisted men joined the 1st Marine Division in Korea every six months. Individual monthly replacement drafts generally ranged from 1,900 to 2,500, depending on the combat situation and other personnel needs within the Marine Corps. Monthly rotation drafts of Marines assigned to the States or other duty stations from Korea were usually somewhat smaller than their corresponding incoming numbers. Ranks and MOS of replacement personnel to the end of the war, however, did not always meet the needs of the division. Specialty training conducted by the 1st Marine Division in Korea helped remedy most of the worst deficiencies.

During the latter half of 1952 and throughout 1953, tours for Marine pilots/combat air crews averaged 9 months, and for aviation ground officer/enlisted personnel, 12 months. Following a detailed HQMC study of the advantages of tactical unit as opposed to individual pilot rotation, a new squadron replacement policy was instituted. This procedure assured standard precombat training of all pilots[35] and development of a team spirit prior to the squadron's arrival in the combat theater. Previously this had not been possible with the continuing turnover of 1st MAW personnel under the individual release system. Despite plans during 1952–1953 for replacement and rotation of squadrons as an entity, this did not come about until late in the war when carrier squadron VMA-312 was replaced by VMA–332 in June 1953. With the end of hostilities, tours were extended to approximately 14 months for both aviation and ground Marines.

Buildup of Marine Corps personnel during the Korean War from the June 1950 base of 74,279 is seen in the following strength figures:

June 1951: 192,620 Marines on active duty
June 1952: 231,967
June 1953: 249,219

Altogether, an estimated 424,000 Marines served during the period of hostilities. The war also witnessed a sizable increase in the number of Negro Marines on active duty. This figure grew from 2 officers/1,965 enlisted

in 1950 to 19 officers/14,468 enlisted by 1953. Marine officials commented on their fine combat performance, including that of many outstanding NCOs. In line with the changing climate of events and legislation,[36] the Korean War marked the first time that Negro personnel were fully integrated into the military services, in contrast to the segregated units before and during World War II.

Peak strength of the Marine Corps during the Korean emergency occurred on 30 September 1953, when 261,343 were on duty. At the end of the war, 33,107 Marines (26,072 division, 7,035 wing) were stationed in Korea. The time of peak deployed strength in Korea during 1950–1953 appears to have been April 1953, when Marines of the 1st Division/Wing numbered 35,306.[37]

While the Korean War was still in progress, Congress passed new legislation to remedy certain shortcomings that had become apparent during the emergency, particularly the Nation's recent experience with partial mobilization. These new laws affected the size of the FMF structure of the Marine Corps, its active-duty strength, and its reserve component.

Public Law 416, enacted 28 June 1952, represented several major advances for the Marine Corps. It authorized an increase of Marine Corps strength to a minimum of three combat divisions and three wings; raised the ceiling of regular active-duty personnel to 400,000 (except for normal expansion in a national emergency or war); and provided for the Commandant to sit as co-equal member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff[38] on matters of direct concern to the Marine Corps. In reaffirming the role of Marine Corps in the seizure and defense of advanced naval bases, as well as land operations incident to naval campaigns, the law also cited the corollary Marine Corps mission of "performing such other duties as the President may direct." Commenting on Public Law 416, the Commandant observed: "Our views are considered. Our interests are protected. The entire Marine Corps has benefited greatly by these gains."[39] General Shepherd further noted that the new legislation "expresses clearly the intent that the Marine Corps shall be maintained as a ready fighting force prepared to move promptly in time of peace or war to areas of trouble. It recognizes that in the future there may be a series of continuing international crises—each short of all-out war, but each requiring our nation . . . to move shock forces into action on the shortest of notice."[40]

The two new laws affecting the future training and composition of the Marine Corps and other services were: (1) the Universal Military Training and Service Act (UMT&S), as amended, approved 19 June 1951; and (2) the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 (Public Law 476), approved 9 July 1952. Basically, the two laws sought to establish a sounder mobilization base and were complementary in nature. The Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 implemented a new mobilization concept: either a partial or total callup of the Nation's reserve forces. In the past, the M-Day target had been geared to a total war only. A limited war, resulting in a partial, Korean-type mobilization, had not been envisioned. The 1952 act thereby provided greater flexibility for dealing with both contingencies and also consolidated much of the existing legislation affecting reserve forces.

Members of the reserve were newly designated by different categories of M-Day priority: ready, standby, and retired reserve. These varying degrees of availability for callup reflected training status (OMCR/volunteer), length of prior service, and related factors (i.e., men with the least service were designated for first callup, or the "Ready" category.) Previously, they were all equally subject for recall in an emergency, regardless of prior service.

The 1952 act and its new provisions thereby distinguished between a future national emergency and an all-out war. Theoretically, at least, a national emergency could be proclaimed by the President, calling for a partial mobilization, as in Korea. A declaration of war by Congress, as in World War II, would call for total mobilization. Thus the Marine Corps Reserve was newly earmarked for either a partial or total mobilization.

Under UMT&S, a military service obligation of eight years was established for all young men under age 26 entering the armed forces (whether by enlistment, draft, appointment, or reserve) after 19 June 1951. The act also authorized drafting of male citizens for two-year active duty periods. This new system of eight-year obligors

provided the post-Korean MCR with a stable body of personnel who had received their basic training but still had a reserve obligation.

Also as a result of the Korean mobilization, the Organized Marine Corps Reserve troop list was modified in order to provide a manpower pool for additional elements of the regular establishment. Supply, service, and security units were added to provide more of an FMF type of augmentation than that furnished by reserve units in the past. Reestablishment of the OMCR began in October 1951, when the first group of recalled reservists were released from Korean duty. Plans called for a larger reserve and more comprehensive training. Ground units were to be increased from 138 to approximately 255, with the air squadrons to number 42. The Volunteer Reserve was similarly to be strengthened by stricter requirements for participation.

Traditionally the mission of the Marine Corps Reserve, since 1916, had been defined as “providing trained personnel for integration into the Marine Corps in time of national emergency.” The strengthened MCR program as a result of Korea and the new laws led to a more serious reappraisal of its role. In looking to its post-Korea future, the Marine Corps planned a revitalized training program that would now “assist in extending the ‘force-in-readiness’ concept to the Marine Corps Reserve.”[41] More than ever before, the Marine Corps sought to make its reserve a mirror-image of the regular establishment.

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Chapter 12. Korean Reflection

Problems Peculiar to the Korean War[42]

The undeclared war of Communist China against United Nations forces resulted in major changes in high-level policy and strategy that affected military tactics for the rest of the war. In an attempt to prevent escalation of Korean hostilities into an all-out nuclear war, the decision was made that U.N. forces, both ground and air, would not strike enemy bases in Chinese territory. After the beginning of truce negotiations in July 1951, the mission of Allied ground forces was changed from initiating offensive operations to one of maintaining an active defense of the MLR across Korea. The basic strategy became one of containment and prevention of any further enemy gains south of the 38th Parallel. It involved attempting to inflict maximum losses on the enemy while attempting to minimize those of the UNC. Militarily, these restrictions removed the possibility of winning a decisive victory. For the next two years, fighting seesawed back and forth across the parallel.

Static and defensive warfare thus characterized the greater part of the Korean War. During this period, the Marine division performed a land war mission similar to other Eighth Army components while Marine aviation squadrons flew under control of Fifth Air Force. Both the 1st Marine Division and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing faced tactical restrictions that resulted from the strategic policies governing the overall role of EUSAK and FAF. Problem areas arose from the limited nature of this particular war. These involved not only the shift in the UNC strategy from an offensive posture to a defensive ("active defense") concept, but also from the paralyzing effect of the protracted truce negotiations on battlefield tactics.

For nearly two years (16 months in West Korea and 5 months earlier while in IX Corps on the East-Central front), the Marine division assumed an unaccustomed defensive role. Such a sustained, basically non-win position was hardly morale-building to the average Marine unable to see personally any yardage gained, any progress made in his particular war. Not surprisingly, such a passive battle assignment did result in a temporary loss of amphibious skills on the part of both individual Marines and the division. End-of-war evaluations noted that "long and indecisive defensive situations such as existed in Korea do little to foster the offensive spirit so long traditional with the Marine Corps and certainly tend to detract from the immediate amphibious readiness required of a Marine Division."[43]

Prior to its tour of duty as I Corps reserve in mid-1953, the 1st Marine Division had noted that it would "require intensive training and reequipping for a period of at least 60 days" upon release from active combat in order to "reach a desirable standard of amphibious readiness."[44] Rigorous MARLEX and RCT exercises initiated in June 1952 after the division had moved to the western coastal sector off the Yellow Sea and expanded during its I Corps reserve period, were important steps in rectifying this skill attrition. This was, of course, in addition to the continuous training schedule in offensive and defensive warfare maintained by the division for the battalions and regiment periodically in regular reserve status.

Outpost warfare in West Korea was characterized by overextended MLR frontage. The more than 60,000 yards held by the division while in the I Corps sector resulted in a thinly-held line which invited penetration and encirclement. "Normal" frontage for an infantry division in defense with two regiments on line was considered by U.S. Army doctrine to be 8–9,000 yards. Even with four MLR regiments (two Marine, 1st KMC/RCT, and KPR) and the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion on line (the third Marine regiment in reserve with a counterattack mission), this was a very lengthy sector. It was further complicated by the Han River obstacle on the left flank and the Imjin River to the rear of the sector that separated Marine frontline troops from rear support and reserve units.

Infantry battalions thus occupied "extremely wide fronts, as a rule 3,500 to 5,000 yards," while

individual rifle companies were assigned anywhere from “1,200 to 1,700 yards of the MLR to occupy and defend.”[45] Prior to the battle of the Hook in October 1952, one of the major engagements on the western front, the 7th Marines at the far right end of the division sector had emplaced all three battalions on line, rather than the customary procedure of two on line and the third in reserve. There was little other choice, for the regimental sector exceeded 10,000 yards, “more properly the frontage for a division rather than a regiment.”[46]

During a 100 percent watch, at least theoretically, a Marine could be spaced at intervals about every 10 to 15 yards along the MLR. A night 50 percent watch—with personnel of rifle platoons assigned to COPs, listening posts, combat patrols, repair of fortifications, and the KSC nightly supply trains—not infrequently spread personnel to a point where the MLR was dangerously thin, often with 50 yards between men.[47] Such an over-wide lineal deployment dissipated defensive strength and made mutually supporting fires difficult.

Division artillery, too, was thinly positioned across the wide sector, making it difficult to execute counterbattery missions. This led to development of the innovative counter-counterbattery program (or “roving guns”) devised by the 11th Marines in May 1952 to deliberately mislead the CCF as to the strength and location of divisional artillery; the situation resulted as well in the reinforcement of the four Marine artillery battalions by heavier I Corps 155mm and 8-inch howitzers. The static situation in the prolonged land campaign also led to the growth of large, semi-permanent type camps which somewhat hampered traditional Marine mobility. Organizations had additional personnel and equipment above T/O and T/E because of the peculiar defense requirements of the sustained battle situation.

The lack of depth in the defense did not provide for receiving the shock of a determined enemy attack, particularly since the normal OPLR had been withdrawn to strengthen the overextended MLR in April 1952, shortly after the division’s arrival in West Korea. Ultimately, as we have seen, this main line of resistance concept was modified and rather than a long thin trenchline the Marine division employed a defense-in-depth concept using a series of strongpoints, as in Boulder City and the organization of the postwar main battle position. In contrast to the Marine situation (and that of most other divisions in the EUSAK line), the CCF confronting the 1st Marine Division beyond No-Man’s-Land deployed their forces in great depth, boasted unlimited manpower, and employed an elastic type of defense on mutually supporting key terrain features. The enemy had also developed an artillery capability that was numerically superior to ours. And they held high ground positions that overlooked virtually the entire Marine front.

As in World War II, Korean operations provided another instance in which various military services and components were coordinated by joint commands: EUSAK for the ground defense and FAF for air. These massive operational command structures accomplished the desired goals. On lower level echelons, however, some policies tended to be so restrictive that they precluded normal combat initiative and aggressiveness. The net result was thus to allow the enemy to maintain the tactical initiative while, in effect, hampering UNC counter-defense measures.

New directives issued by I Corps in late 1952, for example, changed the corps policy of large-scale raids for prisoners, previously encouraged in the spring of 1952, which affected infantry raids and patrol activities for the rest of the war. Plans for all raids, company size or larger, required both I Corps and EUSAK approval, and were to be submitted 10 days prior to planned execution. Complete patrol plans for even platoon-size operations had to be submitted at least 24 hours in advance. Although the reason for the new policy stemmed from a desire to minimize casualties during the prolonged stalemate, negative effects of such a lead-time factor were quickly apparent. Battalion or regimental commanders frequently were unable to capitalize on targets of opportunity that developed or changes in local conditions, such as weather or troop deployment, to gain maximum effectiveness from the operation.

Directives covering offensive maneuvers that could be taken on local initiative were so restrictive that “any independent action below the level of the Division Commander became practically nonexistent.”[48]

Similarly, counterattack plans to retake previously considered major COPs were countermanded, on several occasions, by corps or army higher echelons shortly before jump-off time with the reason given that the action was not worth the cost of further UNC casualties or possible jeopardy to the fragile peace negotiations.

Allied offensive capability was further restricted by various EUSAK and I Corps orders issued during the protracted period of truce talks. Many directives had as their well-intentioned rationale the desire not to upset the precarious balance in UNC-Communist negotiations by providing the enemy further opportunities for exploitative propaganda victories. The actual record shows, however, that the Communists were never at a loss to conjure up and capitalize on fabricated "events" that suited their purpose—whether charging UNC aircraft had violated the Kaesong neutrality strip, that American fliers were engaging in germ warfare, or deliberately instigating POW camp disruptions and breakouts.

Neutrality restrictions[49] on supporting arms within the entire Kaesong-Panmunjom-Munsan-ni area further complicated the UNC tactical situation and hampered both offensive and defensive operations of the 1st Marine Division. This was particularly true of the center Marine regimental sector which was bisected by the Panmunjom corridor and the no-fire lines. The truce talk neutral zone restrictions prevented the Marines in this area from massing their artillery fires on a desirable scale and also, at times, interfered with proper CAS delivery forward of the MLR. The numerous and sometimes conflicting "no-fly, no-fire" restricting lines stemmed from original agreements made between UNC and Communist representatives in 1951. Subsequently, however, the prohibitions against firing any type of weapon in the area were modified from time to time and added to by FAF, EUSAK, and I Corps, "each time adding to the frustration of the local commanders."[50]

The double-standard effect of the neutrality restrictions became readily apparent, however. The CCF artfully used this area, by means of his tactics of "creeping" toward the Allied MLR, as a supply and reserve buildup location. The enemy emplaced artillery, assembled troops, and even used the neutral territory for equipment buildups, including tanks, in the Kaesong vicinity.[51] Thus the restrictive lines gave the enemy an opportunity to maneuver within an approximate 12 square-mile area, all within effective artillery range and outside of the Kaesong-Panmunjom restricted territory, but UNC units were powerless to take any action.

Intelligence operations, during the latter stages of the war, were not considered optimum—for either the division or wing. While dug in on the western end of I Corps, the Marine information effort had been "seriously hampered by the lack of prisoners of war."[52] Only 94 CCF had been captured by the division during the period, compared with more than 2,000 prisoners taken earlier on the East-Central front.[53] This deficiency was attributed to the "static defensive situation, the reluctance of the Chinese to surrender and the heavy volume of fire placed on our reconnaissance patrols."[54]

In the air, photo reconnaissance results were not rated entirely satisfactory as a source of current information by either air or ground Marines. The command channels in effect designated the Air Force as responsible agent for control and coordination of all photo missions in Korea. Requests for photographic missions thus were relayed on to FAF and flown by its Reconnaissance Wing or the Marines' own VMJ–1 squadron. The system produced relatively good vertical coverage with photos available in about 10 days. Special requests for immediate coverage on areas of local importance, however, customarily were either not flown or "delayed to the point where they were of no value"[55] because the tactical situation had been changed.

Delays were due to the shortage of photographic aircraft throughout FAF and the limited provision in T/Os for photo interpretation. Intelligence of air-strike targets (particularly post-strike) was consistently mediocre. Oblique photos of frontline positions took an average of three-four days to be processed and sometimes longer. As an expedient, aerial observers began to shoot their own vertical and oblique photos with hand-held cameras slung over the side of a VMO–6 plane.

Probably the most serious problem of all, from the Marine Corps point of view, was that during much of the Korean War Marine air-ground components, trained to work as a team, were to a large extent precluded from

operating together. The separate missions of the wing and division reflected, on a smaller scale, the divergent UNC air and ground doctrine and tactics. After the early moving battles, Korean hostilities had settled down to a protracted land war in which ground and air tactical commands did not operate jointly and were never coordinated to deal a truly devastating blow to the enemy. Since the Korean War was a limited one most of the fighting was confined to the stabilized front across Korea. Both air and naval forces were viewed largely as supporting arms for the ground operation.

Due to political-military considerations, UNC tactical air power had been, in effect, handcuffed so that its use would not appear "overly aggressive" and threaten an enlargement of the Korean hostilities into a nuclear armageddon of World War III.[56] Since the earliest days of the war, a strict embargo had been placed on any bombing of Chinese rear supply areas or industrial complexes although it was obvious that much of the enemy's logistical strength lay beyond the Manchurian border.

Air efforts were concentrated largely on nuisance or harassing raids within North Korea and close air support efforts of various types, rather than a systematic destruction of the enemy's primary supply installations. Some ranking officers had informally interpreted official Washington policy as "Don't employ airpower so that the enemy will get mad and won't sign the armistice."[57] Indeed, it was not until after the Communists had rejected what the UNC called its "final truce package," in April 1952, that it was decided to exert greater pressure against the Communists. The list of approved aerial targets was then enlarged to include North Korean hydro-electric power facilities, previously exempted from air attack.

From late 1950 until early 1953, Marine air squadrons were assigned directly by FAF, with CG, 1st MAW, having virtually no tactical control over his own units. Marine Corps aerial doctrine traditionally employed close air support of ground operations as the primary role of its air arm. FEAF and FAF, however, in their interpretation of employment of tactical air power directed FAF maximum efforts toward interdiction missions, sometimes even to the expense of immediate CAS needs.[58] As Far East Air Forces stated late in 1951, "when required, close air support of United Nations Army forces may take precedence over other FEAF programs."[59] Interdiction, general support, and close support missions were the normal order of priorities flown by FEAF-FAF.

Operation STRANGLE, the 10-month, all-out, air interdiction campaign during 1951–1952 originally had as its objective the destruction of the North Korean road-rail network. The interdiction program had been defined at first as a move to "paralyze enemy transportation in the zone between the railheads at the 39th Parallel and the front lines,"[60] and later somewhat more conservatively as a measure to so "disrupt the enemy's lines of communication . . . that he will be unable to contain a determined offensive by friendly forces . . . or to mount a sustained offensive himself."[61]

Despite more than 87,552 interdiction sorties flown during the period, CinCFE daily intelligence summaries showed that aerial harassment of the CCF had not hindered their defensive efforts. Instead, by the summer of 1952 the enemy had "actually doubled in troop strength, reinforced their artillery strength to equal that of the UN forces, developed a tremendous AA capability, and established the capability for launching a general offensive."[62] With UNC air and sea superiority, the Chinese Communists had still succeeded in keeping their main supply route open. Rail track cuts were being repaired in as little as 36 hours. And the CCF was employing more fire power than ever: in May 1952, some 102,000 rounds fell against UNC positions compared to only 8,000 the previous July.

Even the retiring UNC Supreme Commander, General Ridgway, admitted before Congressional representatives in 1952 that the enemy had greater offensive potential than ever before, and the Commander, Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral Joseph J. Clark, declared flatly: "The interdiction program was a failure . . . It did *not* interdict."[63] USAF spokesmen felt it had attained its limited purpose but opined: "Seen abstractly, the United Nations railway-interdiction campaign was defensive and preventive rather than offensive and

positive."[64] In early 1952, CG, FAF, General Everest, recognizing that his pilots "had been so long engaged in interdiction attacks that they were losing their skills in close support"[65] inaugurated a new system. Beginning in March all fighter-bomber squadrons were to be rotated on weekly close-support missions.

Actually, the skies had begun to clear for Marine aviation operational difficulties by the latter half of 1952. A better understanding had developed between both high-level officials and the working day-to-day liaison operations at JOC. CG, 1st MAW had "established his position so firmly he was able to guide establishment of the policies which governed his operations merely by expressing his desires to CG 5th AF."[66] The battle for Bunker Hill in August 1952 had marked excellent cooperation between Eighth Army and FAF, with the 1st Marine Division receiving air priority for two days. In any event, matters were substantially improved from late 1951-early 1952 when, during a 12-month period, 1st MAW CAS sorties for 1st MarDiv had plummeted to the incredibly low figure of 1,956[67] or 15.8 percent of the wing's total 12,372 CAS sorties during FY 1952 (1Jul51–30Jun52).

Commenting on this unhappy period for both air and infantry Marines, Lieutenant General Richard C. Mangrum, USMC (Retired), who was CO, MAG–12 during part of the STRANGLE operations, said "for the rest of 1951 and well into 1952 the major effort of my Group and of MAG–33 was devoted to cutting the rail lines in North Korea. Without success, of course. Little by little we were able to increase the percentages of effort devoted to close support of the troops."[68] And by the last six months of the war the bulk of all CAS missions received by the division were flown by 1st MAW aircraft, in contrast to earlier periods when a third or half of the division's sorties were Marine-flown. As the last Korean War Wing CG noted, despite basic differences between Army-Air Force and Marine Corps-Navy concept and tactics, ultimately "the commanders of the Fifth Air Force in actual daily practice decentralized control to a marked degree."[69]

Throughout the war, however, a lack of standardized terms and differences in request procedures continued to exist. (This was resolved by using Marine control procedures when flying for the division, and Army-Air Force procedures when scrambled on flights for other divisions.) Whereas EUSAK-FAF considered strikes inside the bombline[70] as "close air support" and those outside it as "general support," the Marine CAS concept was one of support in close proximity to frontlines (ranging from 50 to 500 yards out) that affects the fire and maneuver of those ground units. In the hands of Marine FACs, Marine planes employed on close support strikes had a definite influence on the MLR tactical situation.

Then, too, the Marine system of maintaining aircraft "on air alert" resulted in CAS requests being filled in 5 to 15 minutes. Air support requests screened in the regular manner by Eighth Army and FAF at the JOC level resulted in a delivery of ordnance to the target in a minimum of 30 minutes and delays sometimes of nearly four hours.[71] During fluid situations, when the division required more than 40 sorties per day, the "on station" system proved more tactically effective than the FAF preplanned "on call" procedure.

Operational differences between the Marine-Navy and Army-Air Force type of CAS in a critical ground situation were never more apparent than in a major CCF last-ditch effort when the enemy slammed against ROK defenses in the Kumsong area. An end-of-war report noted:

"CCF penetration of the II ROK Corps sector, in July, 1953, brought clearly into focus the ineffectiveness of the Air Force-Army close air support (CAS) system during periods of fluid operations. CCF eruption through the II ROK Corps MLR and deep into friendly territory eliminated, as effective or practical, the complete reliance by 5th AF on pre-planned CAS strikes (using aircraft from the ground-alert pool), against fleeting targets or targets of an immediate nature. These types of targets are considered normal during a fluid situation.

"The inadequacy of communications for rapid transmission of air support requests in the CAS system employed in Korea, the impossibility of only four TACP's per division (U.S. and ROK Army) to keep up with frontline battalion battle actions in order to control CAS strikes, and the over-centralization of control of CAS

request approvals and CAS aircraft allocation were all clearly demonstrated during that period of fluid ground operations in July."[72]

Despite the accommodation reached during the Korean War, many of these fundamental differences in doctrine and employment of air support to ground troops in combat persisted until recent years.[73]

As military history has shown countless times in the past, wars are fought under the prevailing difficulties of the time. There never was a war waged under ideal conditions. A reflection on operational problems of the Korean period is predicated on the thought that a review of them—and the solutions effected where possible—may help avoid their repetition in a conflict of the future.

Operations in West Korea

Pat Meid and James M. Yingling

Chapter 12. Korean Reflection

Korean Lessons[74]

In the early phase of the Korean War, the 1st Marine Division deployment was in a moving battle situation similar to numerous engagements it had fought in the past 175 years. Most of the "lessons" learned from the enemy, the tactical situation itself, and the terrain in Korea are derived largely from the later outpost warfare stage when the Marines were employed in a stabilized and sustained defensive situation similar to that facing other Allied units across the entire Eighth Army front. Tactics of defense on a wide front, construction of permanent type field fortifications, and organization of the battle position in difficult terrain was a new experience to Marines. This period of limited objective attacks and battles of attrition highlighted the importance of small unit tactics and demonstrated some modified concepts regarding employment of supporting arms.

During the period of outpost warfare, the 1st Marine Division was never confronted by a general enemy offensive or combined infantry-armor-artillery-air assault. The nature of the conflict was one of limited objective attacks, with strong and sometimes sustained probes. Typically, these were two-battalion assaults against a platoon-size outpost.

Time after time, as UNC defending troops learned, the CCF characteristic pattern of attack was repetitive and almost predictable. After dark, heavy preparatory fires deluged an isolated advance outpost. Crude, but effective, improvised demolitions often reduced COP fortifications[75] so that the enemy could assail the position. Waves of attacking Chinese then overwhelmed the greatly outnumbered defenders. Almost invariably the initial attack made on the front of the position was a feint; the real attack would be made by troops that had enveloped the position and moved to the rear. Enemy ambush forces were also located to the rear of the outpost, between the COP and MLR, at normal reinforcement routes to prevent both a pullback by the defenders to the MLR and to stop reinforcements from reaching the outpost.

Effective defensive fire plans for the COPs covered all likely enemy approaches and assembly areas, as well as close-in boxing fires of the COP on all sides. Marine defense positions were sited for all-round defense, with special attention paid to covering the rear approaches at night. This tactic of rear envelopment also applied on a smaller scale to patrols. Invariably the CCF maneuvered to the flanks and rear of a friendly patrol in an attempt to encircle it. The CCF skillfully employed both the terrain and troops and regularly attacked from more than one direction.

Experience with Communist combat techniques forced UNC leaders to reevaluate their own night-fighting tactics. The Chinese had a marked superiority in night operations. Every major attack on Marine outposts during the last year of the war was made at night. When they were not directly assaulting a friendly site, the CCF advanced their own ground positions by digging and their well-known creeping tactics. This enabled them to establish an OP line within small arms and mortar range of Marine COPs and the MLR. The battle for Bunker Hill came about as a result of this enemy tactic. Organization in early 1952 of COP-2A, adjacent to the Panmunjom corridor, was in direct rebuttal to this same tactic. By such indirect methods, the Chinese were further able to extend their already favorable high ground positions which gave them observation over practically all of the Marine front line. Defensively the enemy used the cover of darkness equally well: mountain roads were aswarm with trucks and supply movements, which UNC night-fighters and bombers slowed with only moderate success.

Skilled, rapid construction of field fortifications and excellent camouflage discipline by the enemy were also object lessons. Entrances to tunnels and caves, as well as the bunkers themselves were so carefully disguised by fresh branches, weeds, logs, and other natural foliage that they were rarely visible either by air observer or

aerial photographs. Active weapons positions were also effectively camouflaged. Often 60mm and 82mm mortars were housed in bunkers and fired through a narrow opening at the top. If moved out temporarily to an open slope, they were quickly returned to the bunker to avoid detection. The Chinese elaborate underground system of trenchworks and radial tunnels between forward and rear bunkers was sometimes as much as 35 yards long. Underground bunkers and tunnels often had 20 feet or more of protective dirt cover and offered security from anything except a direct aerial hit.

Destruction of the enemy's trenches, bunkers, and cave network by medium and heavy artillery was only partially successful. Napalm was generally ineffective due to the lack of combustible materials in CCF ground defenses. The well-prepared, deeply dug fortifications were virtually impervious to anything less than air assaults with heavy ordnance (1,000-pound bombs and over) which were required to destroy CCF reverse slope positions.

A well dug-in secondary line was located four to eight miles to the rear of the Chinese MLR. Intelligence indicated that an attack to infiltrate CCF defenses would "require the penetration of a fortified area to a minimum depth of 10 miles."[76] Some Korean War anaylsts maintained that behind their front line the Chinese had entrenched the ridges to an average depth of 14 miles and that the enemy "could have fallen back upon successive prepared positions for all that distance."[77] Although the trench warfare period of the Korean War was often likened to World War I, the Chinese defensive works were estimated to have "ten times the depth of any belt of entrenchments in World War I."[78] Some areas had even been engineered for defense against nuclear attack. Caves, tunnels, and particularly reverse slope positions also showed CCF skill in the selection and organization of terrain features.

Both the nature of the ground fighting and weather in Korea quickly indicated that our bunker construction needed to be improved. Siting them lower into the ground, so that the outline of the bunkers would not make them such ready targets, and reinforcing them to withstand a 105mm direct hit were steps in this direction. Use of sandbags (of which there was a continuing shortage) for both bunkers and trenches proved to be almost as much a problem as a solution. Bunkers above ground shored up with sandbags frequently collapsed in times of heavy rains or Korean spring thawing conditions.

Outpost warfare also proved that the average bunker often became a deathtrap when used defensively. This was due to the enemy proclivity for sealing entrances with their satchel charges, as occurred in the Vegas Cities battle. It became evident that large living-fighting bunkers could easily turn into traps in which many men could become casualties simultaneously, and from which few could fight. Despite their exposed nature, fighting holes were often safer. Some Korean combat officers were of the opinion that rather than our six-to eight-man bunkers, smaller two-man fighting units would be obviously faster to build, more effective, and safer since they would present a smaller target.

A 1st Marine Division training bulletin issued near the end of the war stated categorically:

"As a rule no bunker or cave should be large enough to accommodate more than four men. If the cave is bombardment proof, there is another greater danger that the men will fail to man their fighting positions quickly enough after the enemy fire lifts or ceases."[79]

UNC reconnaissance and security activities also showed need for improvement. Night raids, patrol operations, and ambushes were conducted continuously to maintain contact with the enemy, keep him off balance, and obtain intelligence. This type of mobile, small-unit action repeatedly indicated an urgent need for more basic training in night combat operations at the squad and platoon level. The frequent breakdown of communications in night fighting, whether it involved a small patrol or besieged outpost, was particularly critical. Some regimental commanders noted the failure to employ properly organic small arms in combat action during darkness before requesting heavier supporting fires. It was felt that the practice of calling for mortar or artillery fire to the exclusion of using small arms was a dangerous practice which was being overused and that "*even in the defense the spirit of the offensive must be maintained*."[80] Meticulous planning was vital for effective fire plans, alternate

avenues of approach, and evacuation. Detailed rehearsals of raids were essential.

Night operations proved it was necessary to have a combat patrol sufficiently large to allow for both the accomplishment of the mission and evacuation of casualties. In evaluating the Korean experience, Marine officers pointed to the difficulties of operating effectively on "pitch black nights when a man could barely see his own hand in front of him or when the most prominent terrain feature could not be silhouetted."[81] Some commanders declared that such circumstances often lead to patrols accidentally walking into minefields—their own, as well as the enemy's.

In their security measures, CCF strict policing of the battlefield after either a small raid or major assault was well known to every Marine infantryman as part of the Chinese elaborate precautions to preserve order of battle identity. CCF counterintelligence efforts were equally scrupulous. Despite extensive precautions to keep the relief of the Marines by the 25th Infantry Division secret in May 1953, enemy psychological warfare loudspeakers predicted the relief date one week in advance. Later they broadcast a change in date that was equally accurate. Two heavy enemy probes made in July while individual battalion reliefs were in process also demonstrated the Chinese acuity in intelligence activities.

The necessity for UNC commanders to avoid a fixed pattern in operations was insufficiently recognized. A battle diary found on a CCF soldier killed in early 1953, had observed about the Americans:

"Two days before an enemy relief they clamor in their trenches, and at the same time heavily bombard our positions.

"For small scale attacks, the enemy sends out a small group of men crawling on their hands and knees; however, in large scale attacks, they intensly bombard our positions.

"An enemy artillery bombardment following air reconnaissance indicates that the enemy will probably launch a ground attack within a short period."[82]

As the CG, 1st Marine Division further commented about overuse of established procedures:

"The same tactics and techniques should not be followed in every raid. The pattern should be altered to the extent that the tactics and techniques employed will not indicate the objective to the enemy. The time selected for raids should vary to permit the conduct of both daylight and night raids. Employment of supporting arms including the delivery of smoke must be varied to prevent indication of the objective."[83]

Enemy ability to locate listening posts and take them under direct fire or mortar attack also dictated the need for frequent change in location.

Regarding the use of supporting arms, the Korean terrain itself dictated a need for modification of traditional practices of employing both direct and indirect fire weapons in order to achieve maximum effectiveness. Standard Marine Corps use of both crew-served infantry weapons and artillery centered around the concept of interlocking and mutually reinforcing bands of fire. Neither the frontage nor terrain in Korea was what could be termed "normal." Battalion frontages were often more than twice the accepted maximum. The terrain consisted of steep main ridge lines with many steep finger ridges leading off both sides. Such contours require twice as many machine guns for adequate defense against enemy attacks if employed in positions affording the usual interlocking grazing fire.

For both infantry weapons on the forward COPs and MLR, and supporting artillery batteries, the combination of "stretching unit fronts and unstretchable ranges"[84] of the weapons caused them to lose a considerable amount of their mutual support capability, as one artillery regimental commander commented about the experience of the 1st Marine Division in Korea. As a result, a compromise was often effected whereby machine guns were emplaced on the high ground of the ridge line, with their individual sectors of fire extended to 180 degrees. Although the guns were no longer mutually supporting, the numerous finger ridges could be better covered by fire to prevent the enemy from gaining a foothold on them prior to assault on the main ridge line.

As previously noted, the Marine division also modified its concept about occupying the military crest,

rather than the topographical crest, of forward slopes.[85] In view of CCF tactics, forward slope positions offered the advantage of observation and superior fields of fire and assisted in bringing fire on the enemy in those areas and approaches masked from the view of reverse slope positions.

Under conditions of stabilized defensive lines in Korea, the great offensive power of Marine tanks was somewhat limited. They were used extensively as direct fire weapons and supplemented the artillery regiment by firing deep H&I (harassing and interdiction) missions. In West Korea, it proved expedient to have friendly tanks positioned in defiladed assembly areas where they were on call and ready to move into MLR firing slots on short notice. They often provided close fire support to Marine patrols and outpost defense actions, sometimes being called in for fire missions before the direct support artillery.

Since tanks under enemy observation invariably drew retaliatory fire, they usually remained in firing positions on the MLR only long enough to complete their fire mission. Deployment of several M–6s in mutually supporting MLR positions, however, tended to reduce the volume of hostile fire. When operating forward of the MLR, it was important that the armored vehicles be protected by infantry from enemy tank-killer teams. Often the Marine artillery observer's knowledge of the terrain and familiarity with objective targets upon which the tank could be effectively used was thus relayed to the tanker, particularly when such targets were themselves obscured to the tank gunner. In registering the target, however, the adjustment system used by the gunner differed from that of the artillery FOs. It was recommended that use of tank guns and lights be made part of the regular COP fire plan.

The Korean experience demonstrated in particular the need for better rehearsed tank-infantry patrols. It also showed the need for a reliable tank-mounted searchlight with a range up to 2,000 yards. Smoke and muzzle blast of the 90mm gun often reduced the effectiveness of the tank searchlight. When two tanks were employed as a team (one spotting targets and adjusting fire with the light, while the other zeroed in on the illuminated targets), the searchlight was markedly more effective.

Outpost warfare, which was predominantly night fighting, was thus characterized by patrolling and ambushes, artillery dueling, and sharp battles for contested terrain that would offer improved observation. In this stand-off period of positional warfare, ground defenses were developed to the point where "both sides were incomparably stronger than they had been in actual [moving] battle."[86]

Lessons from Korea dealt not only with modified battle tactics, but involved an evaluation of enemy performance and capabilities, as well as certain strategic considerations which had so markedly affected the course of the war. UNC forces in Korea faced an adversary who had vast resources of manpower and, accordingly, was wholly indifferent to the cost of victory in terms of personnel and time. In fact, the enemy believed that mass was the key to victory. In many instances Chinese commanders did not launch an offensive unless their attack force had a three-to-one superiority over the defending friendly unit.

Combat effectiveness of the CCF was evaluated as good to excellent. Chinese officers demonstrated good combat leadership. They were well schooled in both offensive and defensive military tactics. Some units had been trained for amphibious operations. During the long period of positional warfare, the CCF had built up their military capability (troops, artillery, AA guns) and resupplied their forward units. Maintaining a steady flow of supplies had been an earlier weakness of the CCF logistics system. During the last six months of the war Chinese stockpiles were adequate for 35 days of offensive operations; the enemy was capable of supporting a major offensive for a 17–24 day period.

By contrast, the North Korean soldier was considerably less effective. The larger number of NKPA prisoners taken and their greater desertion rate indicated poorer discipline and lower morale. NKPA, units were rated from poor to good. After 1951, NKPA forces decreased in importance while the CCF assumed a greater role in the combat effort as well as in the truce negotiations.

Chinese weapons and equipment were characterized by a lack of standardization due to the absence of a

central system of production or ordnance supply. Their weapons included a wide assortment of foreign manufacture—Japanese, U.S., German, Czechoslovakian, Soviet, and Chinese design. Because of a shortage of small arms, usually not more than a third of the personnel in their combat units were individually armed. Despite this fact the CCF soldier was convinced he was good and had "proved himself to be a formidable opponent in combat."[87]

Individually and as units, the CCF exhibited the traditional Oriental characteristics of extreme patience, passivity, and determination. Some authorities went so far as to declare that the Chinese ability to:

". . . remain quiet for a long period and to patrol stealthily are the main reasons for the success of his engagements. The enemy's successes which have resulted from his patience and stealth show that our troops need more training in the same technique."[88]

The enemy's tenacious determination to hold key terrain, regardless of the costs of lives, was well known. Another evaluation concluded:

"The Chinese [is] well and courageously led at the small unit level. He is thoroughly disciplined. He is an industrious digger. His conduct of the defense is accomplished in spite of UN superiority in the air, his inferior communications equipment and his hodgepodge of weapons and equipment."[89]

Battlefront lightweightness and mobility, particularly in Korean winter operations, was another important object lesson from the enemy. Marine cold weather clothing, including thermal boot and body armor which had saved so many lives, was of excellent design and quality. Despite this, some authorities felt that during the Korean War the Marine was "placed at a disadvantage when he met the CCF soldier,"[90] because of bulky cold-weather clothing that hindered freedom of movement. The weight of some of the Marine infantryman's weapons, such as the 16 1/2 lb. BAR (plus magazines) and the 9 1/2 lb. M-1 rifle, was felt to contribute further to this lack of mobility. In contrast, "the CCF soldier dressed in his quilted uniform and armed with a 'burp' [submachine] gun, moved freely and quietly over the roughest of terrain, thereby gaining a not inconsiderable advantage over his heavily burdened adversary."[91]

This superior mobility led to the related advantage of tactical surprise. Since CCF units were unencumbered by heavy weapons they could readily use primitive routes of approach in the darkness. Their movements through disputed terrain were typically so furtive that often there was no preliminary warning until the CCF were virtually within grenade-throwing distance of friendly patrols or installations. The enemy practice of hiding by day and moving by night also concealed their presence from UN air reconnaissance.

One observer of the Korean scene, both in the early battles of 1950 and again in 1953, has compared the CCF development of military skills during this period, as follows:

"In 1950, the Red Chinese were a crude lot, given more to pell-mell attacks and diehard stands than to deception and protection. But they stayed and they learned as they went along. When they entered the war, apart from their exceptional skill and persistence with the machine gun, they were not accurate users of hand weapons . . . by 1953, few of the old signs remained. They had become as tenacious and as earth-seeking as ants, and in that lay a great part of their success. Two and one-half years of war in Korea were a bonanza for Communist China. On that training ground her armies became as skilled as any in the world in the techniques of hitting, evading and surviving."[92]

The most telling characteristic of the Chinese Communist soldier, who essentially was a guerrilla fighter, may thus be his ready capacity to learn from experience, particularly the fine art of deception.

As important as any of the lessons from the battlefield was the experience of dealing with the Communists at the truce table. Ceasefire talks dragged on interminably over a period of 2 years and 17 days. Some 158 meetings were held, with more than 18 million words recorded, most of these dealing with the prisoner exchange that had been the major stumbling block since early 1952. During the two years of the truce talks, from July 1951–July 1953, an additional 56,000 Americans had been killed or wounded, bringing total U.S. combat

losses to more than 136,000.[93] (U.S. forces suffered some 80,000 casualties in the first year of the war.) And in the end, the final solution to the POW problem was substantially that first proposed by the UNC in April 1952.

Commenting on the Communist strategem that opened the truce talks in July 1951, U.S. government officials observed at the time the negotiations began:

"The suggestion was received with caution since the free people of the world have learned that Communist words and Communist intent seldom coincide. Regardless, our leaders initiated action for preliminary ceasefire talks with the hope that the Communists were acting in good faith."[94]

Despite this early realistic appraisal of the enemy, the degree to which the Communists were to employ truce negotiations as simply an extension of the battlefield was not immediately evident.

A key factor is involved here. The proverbial Chinese quality of passivity and seemingly endless patience, both on the individual and national level, was fully utilized to their advantage. In contrast, the Western people, particularly Americans, are characteristically impatient to complete a task once it is started. As Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, who initially headed the UNC delegation to the Korean Armistice Conference, commented, "We are a people who like to get things *done* . . . The Communist negotiating method recognizes and seeks to gain advantage by aggravating our American tendency to impatience through the imposition of endless delays."[95] The American attitude is to feel that a deadlocked issue should be resolved by mutual concessions, which puts the enemy on favorable ground in employing his delaying tactics. The Communist view is that by deliberately slowing the progress toward completion of the armistice the position of their opponent will gradually be undermined. Thus, Communists regard any concession made by their opponents as a sign of weakness. Whereas Westerners often feel that to accept part of a negotiating proposal will encourage the Communists to respond in kind, such an action is apt to lead to an even more unyielding position on their part.

The armistice effort in Korea also taught the following lessons:

"Never weaken your pressure when the enemy sues for [an] armistice. Increase it.

"Armistice conferences should be brief . . . to allow . . . talks to become protracted is to indicate weakness on your part. This encourages your Communist opponents.

"The site at which armistice talks are held should be outside the area of conflict.

"Never concede anything to the Communists for nothing, merely to make progress."[96]

Possibly no one had more first-hand experience in negotiating with the enemy in the Korean War than Colonel James C. Murray, the Marine Corps staff officer who was involved in the truce talks from 8 July 1951 to 27 July 1953. In these two years he served as liaison officer between the delegations of the two sides and participated actively in meetings. On three different occasions he negotiated the truce line which was to separate UNC and Communist forces. In July 1953, as Senior Liaison Officer, he was in charge of the UNC staff group that determined the final line of demarcation. He has noted that Communist rationalizations readily disregard whatever facts or logic which do not fit their purpose, no matter how inconsistent.

While customarily ignoring all restrictions of the Geneva Convention in dealing with prisoners, for example, when it was expedient to their interests the Communists would then argue for an incredibly narrow interpretation of the Convention's provisions. Declared Colonel Murray: "Having come to the conference table only because they were near defeat, the Communists were prepared from the very first to make the most of the negotiations to create . . . a 'climate of victory'."[97] This accounts for their concern with even the smallest detail of "stage setting," for maintaining "face," and for practical advantages from negotiating conditions, such as the physical setting of the truce talk site.

As the Marine officer further observed:

"A fundamental objective of the Communists in respect to the truce was the appearance of the Communist victory in Korea . . . An armistice, no less than war, could be looked upon only as a means to an end . . . to this end they negotiate patiently and skillfully . . . temporary inconviences must be borne for . . . the

attainment of long-range political objectives."[98]

Certainly, the close interaction between Communist military operations and truce negotiations, a key factor since 1951, was particularly apparent during April–July 1953 as the war drew to an end.

In addition to Communist China which had emerged stronger and with considerably more prestige from the war, the other Asian nation to have undergone marked military growth was the Republic of Korea. In June 1950, the ROK army had numbered approximately 98,000 inadequately trained troops, armed chiefly with hand-carried weapons such as rifles and carbines, ill-prepared to hold back a determined enemy attack. The ROK army was little more than a constabulary force organized by KMAG (Korean Military Advisory Group) for internal police duty. Only 65,000 men had actually received unit combat training. ROK armed forces during the three years of the war had increased six–fold and by July 1953 totaled nearly 600,000 men.

Training and equipment had steadily improved the ROK battle efficiency which, in the 1950–1951 period, had been handicapped by lack of heavy tanks, mortars, artillery, antitank mines and shells, and other heavy weapons. By the spring of 1951 the ROK army was being transformed into an effective fighting force, due largely to the determination of General Van Fleet, then EUSAK commander. In 1952 the ROK army had been enlarged to 12 divisions and the ROK Marine forces had been similarly expanded. Gradual augmentation resulted in a total of 16 ROK divisions, most of these with organic artillery; by July 1953 ROK troops had assumed responsibility for the majority of the UN line.

Marine Corps experience with its ROK counterpart had been instructive and generally encouraging.[99] Organized in 1949 by the Republic of Korea with assistance from KMAG, the 1st Korean Marine Corps Regiment had taken part in antiguerrilla operations until the NKPA invasion. With the outbreak of hostilities, the KMCs engaged in UN delaying actions in southwest Korea until September 1950 when the Korean regiment of nearly 3,000 men was attached to the 5th Marines as part of the Inchon assault force. Later the KMCs were involved in defense of Wonsan and the Hamhung-Hungnam beachhead as well as the Pohang patrol. After serving as a maneuver element with the ROK forces in early 1951, the 1st KMC Regiment was attached permanently to the 1st Marine Division in March of that year, participating in the Hwachon Reservoir fighting and performing valuable service in the interrogation of POWs.

The KMCs modeled themselves after U.S. Marines, particularly emulating the traditional offensive Marine *esprit de corps* and overriding goal to "close with the enemy and seize the objective" regardless of strong resistance. The combat courage and determination of the KMCs was cited by CG, 1st Marine Division, on several occasions.

During the 1952–1953 period, the KMC/RCT provided the Marine division with nearly a quarter of its combat strength and became the fourth regiment of the division. The ROK Marine Corps also consisted of the 2d KMC Regiment, which furnished personnel for the WCIDU/ECIDU island security forces, and the 5th KMC Battalion, attached to the Marine division in 1952. Classes in infantry tactics for KMC officer and enlisted personnel were conducted at the Korean Marine Corps Training Center at Chinhae. This was patterned after U.S. Marine Corps recruit and officers' basic schools, under supervision of USMC staff personnel. Coupled with an offensive spirit and desire to attain U.S. Marine Corps standards and combat performance, the Korean Marines largely overcame early major problems resulting from the language barrier, translation of U.S. basic training materials, and the insufficient number of qualified and experienced Korean military instructors. One early recruit class possibly established a record for brevity in training when its members, after only a few weeks, were ordered to participate in the Inchon assault which was the Korean Marines' first specialized amphibious operation.

Many of the hard lessons of Korea—as well as some of its unique problems—resulted from the fact that this was America's first major experience in a modern, undeclared, and limited war. Accustomed to the tradition of hard-hitting, all-out war and decisive victory, both the fighting man at the front and Nation tended to view the conflict as well as its ultimate accomplishments as inconclusive.[100]

Most importantly, immediate collective security action by the UNC had prevented another small country from being subdued by direct, armed aggression. And the Communists had failed to attain their objective: the forced unification of Korea, not as a free nation but as a Russian satellite, as was North Korea. The balance sheet for UNC military intervention showed that 22 nations (including the ROK) had provided assistance, either personnel or materiel in defense of South Korea. Many of these countries had supplied token units of battalion-size or less and several had furnished noncombat medical facilities. Despite the fact these detachments from other Allied countries totalled "only 44,000 men they were disproportionately valuable in emphasizing the collective, coalition nature of the Korean war effort."[101] Major losses, however, had been borne by ROK and American troops.

UNC casualties numbered 996,937 killed, wounded, and missing. U.S. losses were 136,937, of which 33,629 represented battle deaths and 103,308 wounded in action. A measure of the role that ground forces played in Korea "may be judged from the fact that, of the total United States battle casualties for the entire conflict, the Army and Marines accounted for 97 percent."[102] Casualties of other UNC countries, exclusive of the U.S. and ROK, totaled approximately 17,000 although no other Allied nation lost as many as 1,000 dead. ROK casualties were listed at 850,000. Communist losses were estimated at 1,420,000 (CCF: 900,000 killed and wounded; NKPA: 520,000 killed and wounded).

For the Republic of South Korea, the end of the war in some respects represented a *status quo ante bellum.* Korea still remained politically partitioned and geographically divided. Whereas the 38th Parallel had been the territorial boundary prior to the Communist attack of 25 June 1950, the cease-fire line dividing North and South Korea in 1953 was the point of contact between ground forces at the time the armistice was signed. This demarcation line, however, "represented a stronger defense than the 38th Parallel as it possessed a geographical basis all along its approximately 155-mile length."[103] The new boundary ran above the KANSAS Line, the commanding ground north of the 38th Parallel.

Possibly the single, most important lesson to be drawn from the Korean War is that many of our nation's military assumptions—and resulting tactical decisions—tended to be based on a lack of appreciation of enemy capabilities. In many instances intelligence evaluations focused on "probable intentions of the enemy rather than on his capabilities."[104]

While America put great military value and reliance on its massive destructive air power, for example, we were confronted by an enemy who practically never employed his own air capability, but instead moved freely at night and hid by day and was thus little deterred by our aerial harassment. And while our own battle summaries regularly cited kill ratios of 1 USMC to 3.75 CCF and substantial Communist losses,[105] we seemed to ignore an enemy mind that thought in terms of numerical superiority and was little concerned about the high human cost of holding key terrain or annexing a desired position. In the last month of the war alone, Eighth Army estimated that CCF casualties numbered 72,000, with more than 25,000 killed.

In both battlefield tactics and high-level strategy, the Korean War revealed a strong tendency on the part of the UNC to predict enemy action by values and ideology largely reflecting our own. Whether because of wishful thinking, basic mistakes in judgment, or international *naiveté*, the 1950–1953 experience repeatedly indicated a need on the part of Allied nations for considerably more hard-headed realism in dealing with a Communist adversary. The original UNC military objective of halting Communist aggression in Korea had been successfully accomplished, without enlarging the conflict into a nuclear war. At the same time, Korea had also provided a sobering lesson. It demonstrated how, in a limited war, overriding political considerations may permit the enemy to operate from a privileged sanctuary and allow him to seize and, in many respects, retain the initiative.

The Korean War had made America more aware of the threat of world Communism and had resulted in the strengthening of our national defense commitments in the Far East as well as in Europe. It had also validated

the concept of a balanced defense force. In contrast to the emphasis on air capability and atomic power that had dominated the strategic thinking in the post-World War II era, the Korean hostilities pointed to the requirement for a balanced, diversified military force of sufficient strength and readiness to cope effectively and on short notice with any emergency. Korea had underscored how severe peacetime budgetary cut-backs had led to unpreparedness. The Korean experience had also shown the need for flexibility in mobilization planning. Previously, this had been projected for an all-out, general war, based on America's role in World War II. The Nation's post-Korean policy thus sought, for the first time, a military strategy that would effectively deter either a major war or local aggression.

Korean hostilities illustrated another important lesson. South Korea had been attacked by an act of direct aggression, in flagrant violation of the Cairo Declaration and U.N. Charter. It was apparent that, despite the defense treaties and mutual aid pacts which the United States had signed during and after World War II, "any number of alliances, if not supported by strong military preparedness, would never restrain aggression."[106] It had taken the Korean War to drive home the harsh reality that military preparedness, possession of superior power, and *the willingness to use that power* were the only deterrent to enemy aggression throughout the world.

The Korean War also caused the Communists to modify their strategy from one of overt aggression to more insidious means of gaining their political and economic objectives. As the Marine Corps Commandant, General Shepherd, warned: "Their tactic is to use war by proxy, war by satellite, war by threat and subversion."[107] And, although it was not fully apparent at the time, the Korean attack "was to prove to be one of the first in a series of 'wars of liberation'"[108] that the world would be witness to.

In the final analysis, the Korean War evolved into a prolonged battle of position and attrition in which the Communists, operating close to their base of supply, were fought to a standstill by United Nations forces under unfavorable conditions of climate and logistics. In countering the enemy threat in Korea, the American units committed there initially suffered from the effects of peacetime apathy that had followed the rapid demobilization following World War II. As the Korean War, originally visualized as a "police action" of brief duration, ground on into a major effort spanning a period of three years and one month, loud voices were raised on the home front to protest the expenditure of lives and materiel in a venture that was not always clearly understood by all Americans.

Among the U.S. forces committed on this far flung battlefront, it was once again the Marine Corps component that stood out in its sacrifice, military skills, and devotion to duty. When rushed into the battle during the first desperate weeks and months of the war, the quickly-augmented Marine units helped to restore stability to the shattered EUSAK front line. During the daringly conceived and executed operation at Inchon, Marines accomplished this incredibly complex amphibious operation with their customary spirit and precision. Never was their courage and tenacity more conspicuous than during those bitter days of the Chosin Reservoir campaign following the Chinese Communist intervention.

In the static, or positional, warfare that marked the final operations in Korea, the 1st Marine Division and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing executed their respective missions with professional skill and dispatch, regardless of tactical problems and the dreary monotony that characterized a large part of the Korean War. U.S. Marines had seen combat throughout much of the Korean peninsula. The fighting had taken them from Pusan to Inchon and Seoul, to the Chosin, to Inje and the Hwachon Reservoir in the Punchbowl area, and finally, in 1952–1953, to the critical 35-mile front in West Korea near Panmunjom. In Korea, as in past wars, Marines demonstrated the versatility, aggressiveness, and readiness which has always been a tradition of the Corps.

Marine courage and combat performance went far toward removing the image of Western softness and decadence which the Communists had so mistakenly construed in their own minds. It is a record of which all Americans and the Free World can be proud.

Operations in West Korea

Pat Meid and James M. Yingling

Appendix A. Glossary of Technical Terms and Abbreviations

AAA—Antiaircraft Artillery

AA—Antiaircraft

AD—Douglas “Skyraider” Single-Engine Attack Aircraft

ADC—Assistant Division Commander

ANGLICO—Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company

AO—Aerial Observer

ASP—Ammunition Supply Point

AT—Antitank

AU—Attack model of Vought F4U “Corsair”

BAR—Browning Automatic Rifle

BLT—Battalion Landing Team

Bn—Battalion

Brig—Brigade

Btry—Battery

CAS—Close Air Support

CCF—Chinese Communist Forces

CG—Commanding General

CinCFE—Commander in Chief, Far East

CinCUNC—Commander in Chief, United Nations Command

CinCPacFlt—Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

CMC—Commandant of the Marine Corps

CNO—Chief of Naval Operations

Co—Company

CO—Commanding Officer

ComdD—Command Diary (also called Historical Diary, or War Diary)

ComNavFE—Commander, Naval Forces, Far East

ComServPac—Commander, Service Force, Pacific

CONUS—Continental United States

COP—Combat Outpost

CP—Command Post

CPX—Command Post Exercise

CSG—Combat Service Group

CTE—Commander Task Element

CTF—Commander Task Force

CTG—Commander Task Group

CVE—Escort Aircraft Carrier

CVL—Light Aircraft Carrier

Div—Division

DMZ—Demilitarized Zone

DOW—Died of Wounds

Dtd—Dated

DUKW—Marine Amphibious Truck

ECIDE(U)—East Coast Island Defense Element (Unit)

ECM—Electronic Countermeasures

Engr—Engineer

EUSAK—Eighth United States Army in Korea

F2H-2P—McDonnell “Banshee” Two-Engine Jet Fighter (photo model)

F3D-2—Douglas “Skyknight” Two-Engine Jet Fighter

F4U—Vought “Corsair” Single-Engine Fighter

F7F-3N—Grumman “Tigercat” Twin-Engine Night Fighter

F9F-2,4,5—Grumman “Panther” Single-Engine Jet Fighter

F-80—Air Force “Shooting Star” Fighter Aircraft

F-84—Air Force “Thunderjet” Fighter Aircraft

FAC—Forward Air Controller

FAF—Fifth Air Force

FASRon—Fleet Air Service Squadron

FDC—Fire Direction Center

FEAF—Far East Air Forces

FECOM—Far East Command

FMFLant—Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic

FMFPac—Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

FO—Forward Observer (artillery)

FY—Fiscal Year

HE—High Explosive

Hedron—Headquarters Squadron

H&I—Harassing & Interdiction

HMR—Marine Helicopter Transport Squadron

HO3S-1—Sikorsky Three-Place Observation Helicopter

Hq—Headquarters

HQMC—Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps

HRS-1—Sikorsky Single-Engine Helicopter

H&S—Headquarters and Service

HTL-4—Bell Two-Place Helicopter

Interv—Interview

JCS—Joint Chiefs of Staff

JOC—Joint Operations Center

KCOMZ—Korean Communication Zone (sometimes KComZ)

KIA—Killed in Action

KMAG—Korean Military Advisory Group

KMC—Korean Marine Corps

KMC/RCT—Korean Marine Corps Regimental Combat Team

KPR—Kimpo Provisional Regiment

KSC—Korean Service Corps

LogCom—Logistical Command

Ltr—Letter

LST—Landing Ship, Tank

LVT—Landing Vehicle, Tracked

M4A3E8—Flame Tank, Medium

M-46—Medium Tank

MAC—Military Armistice Commission

MACG—Marine Air Control Group

MAG—Marine Aircraft Group

Mar—Marine(s)

MARLEX—Marine Landing Exercise

MASRT—Marine Air Support Radar Team

MAW—Marine Aircraft Wing

MBP—Main Battle Position

MDL—Military Demarcation Line

MGCIS—Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron

MIA—Missing in Action

MIG—Russian Single-Seat Jet Fighter-Interceptor

MLR—Main Line of Resistance

MOH—Medal of Honor

MOS—Military Occupation Specialty

Mosquito—Single Engine Plane used as Airborne FAC and for Target Spotting

MP—Military Police

MPQ—Ground Radar-Controlled Bombing

MS—Manuscript

Msg—Message

MSR—Main Supply Route

MTACS—Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron

MT—Motor Transport

NCAS—Night Close Air Support

NCO—Noncommissioned Officer

NGF—Naval Gunfire

NKPA—North Korean People's Army

N.d.—Date not given

NNRC—Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission

NNSC—Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission

N.t.—Title not given

OCMH—Office of the Chief of Military History (USA)

OE-1—Cessna Single-Engine Light Observation Plane

OOB—Order of Battle

OP—Observation Post (Sometimes used to refer to an Outpost)

OPLR—Outpost Line of Resistance

OY—Consolidated—Vultee Light Observation Plane

PIR—Periodic Intelligence Report

PO-2—Russian Trainer Aircraft

POW—Prisoner of War

PPSH—Soviet-made 7.62mm Submachine ("Burp") Gun

Prov—Provisional

PUC—Presidential Unit Citation

R4D—Douglas Twin-Engine Transport (Navy and Marine Corps designation of C-47)

R5D—Douglas Four-Engine Transport (Navy and Marine Corps designation of C-54)

RCT—Regimental Combat Team

ROK—Republic of Korea

SAR—Special Action Report

SecDef—Secretary of Defense

SecNav—Secretary of Navy

Serv—Service

Sig—Signal

SOP—Standing Operating Procedure

TACC—Tactical Air Coordination Center

TADC—Tactical Air Direction Center

TAFC—Turkish Armed Forces Command

TAO—Tactical Air Observer

TE—Task Element

T/E—Table of Equipment

TF—Task Force

TG—Task Group

Tk—Tank

T/O—Table of Organization

TOT—Time on Target Fuze

TU—Task Unit

UN—United Nations

UNC—United Nations Command

USA—United States Army

USAF—United States Air Force

USMC—United States Marine Corps

USN—United States Navy

VMA—Marine Attack Squadron

VMC—Marine Composite Squadron

VMF—Marine Fighter Squadron

VMF(N)—Marine Night (All-Weather) Fighter Squadron

VMJ—Marine Photographic Squadron

VMO—Marine Observation Squadron

VMR—Marine Transport Squadron

VT—Variable Time Fuze

WCIDE(U)—West Coast Island Defense Element (Unit)

WIA—Wounded in Action

WP—White Phosphorous Shell

YAK—Russian Fighter Aircraft

Operations in West Korea

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Appendix B. Korean War Chronology

1950

25 Jun	North Korean People's Army, with 60,000 troops and 100 Rssian tanks, crosses 38th Parallel to invade South Korea.
25 Jun	United Nations Security Council calls for end of aggression and withdrawal of NKPA troops.
27 Jun	UN, adopting a U.S. resolution, proclaims NKPA attack a breach of world peace. Asks member nations to assist ROK in repelling invasion
27 Jun	Pres Truman orders U.S. air-sea units to support ROK and for U.S. Seventh Fleet to neutralize Formosan Strait.
28 Jun	NKPA captures Seoul, South Korean capital.
29 Jun	Pres Truman orders naval blockade of Korean coast; authorizes Far East Commander, Gen MacArthur, to send U.S. ground troops into Korea.
30 Jun	Pres Truman receives Congressional authorization to order into active service any or all reserve components of Armed Forces, for a period of 21 months.
2 Jul	CNO directs that Marine reinforced regiment with supporting air be prepared for assignment to Far East.
2 Jul	CinCFE requests Marine RCT-air unit for Far East. This was inception of 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, formed less than a week later.
3 Jul	Inchon captured by North Koreans.
5 Jul–4 Aug	UNC fights series of delaying actions in Korea.
7 Jul	U.N. Security Council authorizes formation of a United Nations Command as counterforce against NKPA aggression.
7 Jul	1st ProvMarBrig activated at Camp Pendleton, under Bgen Edward A. Craig. Basic elements of 6,534-man Brigade are 5th Marines and MAG-33.
8 Jul	Gen MacArthur named Commander, UNC.
10 Jul	CinCUNC asks Joint Chiefs of Staff to authorize expansion of Marine Brigade to full war-strength division.
12–14 Jul	1st ProvMarBrig embarks for Korean theater.
12 Jul	LtGen Walton H. Walker named CG, Eighth U.S. Army in Korea.
19 Jul	CinCUNC makes 2d request for Marine division.
19 Jul	Pres Truman authorizes Defense Dept to call up reserve units and individuals.
19 Jul	CMC alerts Marine Corps organized reserve units for call to active duty following Presidential announcement.

20 Jul	CMC, Gen Clifton B. Cates, orders to duty Organized Marine Corps ground reserve units, consisting of 22 units and 4,830 personnel. Partial callup for 6,000 air reservists in 30 Marine VMF and 12 MGCI squadrons.
20 Jul	Taejon, temporary ROK capital, captured.
21 Jul	CinCUNC makes 3d request for Marine division.
25 Jul	UNC defense at Pusan deteriorates. CinCUNC orders 1st MarProvBrig directly to Korea.
25 Jul	JCS directs Marine Corps to build 1stMarDiv to war-strength.
31 Jul	Masan and Chinju fall to enemy.
2–3 Aug	1st ProvMarBrig arrives Pusan. Moves to bivouac area near Masan.
3 Aug	First Marine air strike launched by VMF-214.
4 Aug	Pusan Perimeter established by UNC in southeastern end of Korea.
4 Aug	First evacuation of casualties from Pusan by Marine VMO-6 helicopters.
6 Aug	First air mission flown by VMF-323.
6–8 Aug	CinCUNC confers with U.S. military-diplomatic officials about proposed Inchon amphibious landing.
7–13 Aug	Marine Brigade engaged in first combat operations at Chinju.
10 Aug	First Marine helicopter rescue made by VMO-6 to recover downed pilot.
10–24 Aug	1stMarDiv units embark for Korea.
16 Aug	EUSAK X Corps activated for coming Inchon-Seoul operation. Principal elements are 1stMarDiv and Army 7thInfDiv.
17 Aug	Marine Brigade opens battle for Obong-ni (“No Name”) Ridge, leading way to destruction of enemy bridgehead at Naktong and first UNC victory in Korea.
17 Aug	7th Marines activated at Camp Pendleton and on 1 Sep embarks for Far East, arriving 21 Sep.
1–5 Sep	NKPA launches all-out offensive to break UNC perimeter defense at Pusan. In Second Naktong Battle, Brigade contains enemy at Yongsan.
13 Sep	1st ProvMarBrig deactivated and absorbed by 1stMarDiv for Inchon operation.
15 Sep	D-Day, Inchon amphibious assault, spearheaded by 1stMarDiv.
17 Sep	1stMarDiv (5th Marines) recaptures Kimpo Airfield.
19–25 Sep	Enemy resistance at Pusan begins to collapse. NKPA troops in retreat north from Pusan.
27 Sep	1stMarDiv recaptures Seoul. ROK Capital officially liberated 29 Sep.
30 Sep	Communist China Foreign Minister Chou En-lai warns: “The Chinese people will not supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by the imperialists.”
30 Sep–1 Oct	ROK 3d Div crosses 38th Parallel in pursuit of retreating NKPA.
7 Oct	UN General Assembly authorizes UNC forces to cross 38th Parallel to defeat NKPA.
10 Oct	Wonsan, east coast port at 39th Parallel, captured by ROK troops.
10 Oct	Chinese repeat warning of intervention in Korean conflict.

16 Oct	First Chinese Communist troops secretly enter Korea from Manchuria.
19 Oct	Pyongyang, North Korean Capital at 39th Parallel, captured by EUSAK.
26 Oct	Chinese troops attack ROK units at Yalu River and points south of Sino-Korean border.
26 Oct	1stMarDiv lands at Wonsan, establishes security for port, and drives north.
1 Nov	UNC forward elements reach positions along Yalu. First Russian-built MIG appears along Yalu to attack U.S. aircraft.
2 Nov	Strong Chinese and NKPA forces attack EUSAK at Unsan, causing withdrawal across Chongchon River. First identification of Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) in Korea.
3–7 Nov	Initial Marine encounter with CCF. 7th Marines units defeat major elements of 124th CCF Division.
6 Nov	MacArthur warns JCS that movement of CCF across Yalu threatens UNC position.
15 Nov	Marine units reach Chosin Reservoir area in X Corps drive north.
24 Nov	MacArthur announced “win the war” offensive. EUSAK begins advance toward Yalu.
26–27 Nov	CCF, 200,000-strong, attack EUSAK troops forcing withdrawal. 1stMarDiv isolated at Yudam-ni, west of Chosin. MSR cut.
28 Nov–3 Dec	1stMarDiv turns back CCF attacks. Prepares to move south. Regroups at Hagaru-ri for drive to Hungnam.
4 Dec	Pyongyang recaptured by enemy.
5–7 Dec	1stMarDiv evacuates wounded by air and fights through to Koto-ri.
6 Dec	Innovation of using airborne TADC as tactical CP to control air support.
10 Dec	First Marine jet squadron to fly in combat, VMF-311, begins operations.
11 Dec	1stMarDiv completes fighting breakout from Chosin entrapment. Begins march to join rest of X Corps at Hungnam.
15 Dec	1stMarDiv deployed from Hungnam to Pusan.
15 Dec	UNC establishes new defensive line at 38th Parallel. Marine division routes enemy guerrilla forces in Masan-Pohang-
18 Dec–27 Jan	Marine division routes enemy guerrilla forces in Masan-Pohang- Sondong-Andong area.
23 Dec	EUSAK CG Walker killed in jeep accident. Gen Matthew B. Ridgway named to succeed him.
24 Dec	Hungnam evacuation completed by X Corps.
29 Dec	Large enemy buildup reported north of 38th Parallel, preparing for new attack.

1951

31 Dec 50–1 Jan	Enemy launches all-out offensive against UNC across 38th Parallel, pushing EUSAK back 10-12 miles.
4 Jan	Seoul recaptured by Communists.
7–15 Jan	Enemy offensive halted, UNC sets up new defense line along Pyongtaek-Wonju axis, at 37th Parallel.

25 Jan	UNC reassumes offensive. Operation THUNDERBOLT launched by I and IX Corps to regain territory south of Han River.
Jan–Feb	1stMarDiv continues antiguerrilla operations in Masan area.
7 Feb	Communists forced north of Han River. UNC retakes Inchon peninsula.
mid-Feb	1stMarDiv reassigned from X to IX Corps.
21 Feb	Operation KILLER, a general limited objective advance by U.S. IX and X Corps, ordered by Gen Ridgway. 1stMarDiv reenters frontlines for operation.
7 Mar	Operation RIPPER begins in central and eastern zones, with advance across Han by IX and X Corps.
14 Mar	Seoul retaken by U.S. Eighth Army for second time.
27–31 Mar	1stMarDiv occupies 28,000-meter sector north of Hongchon. UNC elements reach 38th Parallel.
1–21 Apr	1stMarDiv in general advance north to the Hwachon Reservoir.
8 Apr	Operation RIPPER clears enemy troops from South Korea east of Imjin River.
11 Apr	Pres Truman relieves Gen MacArthur as CinCUNC, replacing him by Gen Ridgway, CG, EUSAK. LtGen James A. Van Fleet named Commander, EUSAK.
15 Apr	UNC establishes defensive line along 38th Parallel, or KANSAS Line. Enemy heavily emplaced in Chorwon-Kumhwa-Pyonggang (“The Iron Triangle”) assembly area.
22 Apr–8 Jul	CCF launches all-out “Spring Offensive.”
23–27 Apr	1stMarDiv halts CCF left flank breakthrough of IX Corps, establishes defense line in Chunchon vicinity.
30 Apr	UNC completes withdrawal to new defense line north of Seoul. Intelligence reports indicate CCF plans renewed attack.
1 May	1stMarDiv reassigned to X Corps.
9 May	1st MAW squadrons participate in FAF 300-plane strike on Sinuiju, near Yalu. Biggest raid of war to date.
16 May	Second phase of enemy offensive begins. CCF drives south from Iron Triangle area, making penetrations 15–20 miles deep along the front.
20 May	FAF launches Operation STRANGLE, massive all-out interdiction effort.
21 May	UNC launches counter offensive, pushes enemy north of 38th Parallel again. 1stMarDiv drives toward Yanggu at eastern end of Hwachon Reservoir.
30 May	Eighth Army back on KANSAS Line again.
1–16 Jun	1stMarDiv advances northeast from Hwachon Reservoir to Punchbowl. Claws out daily gains of 1,000–2,000 meters, reaching objective despite heavy NKPA fire.
mid-Jun	UNC forces consolidate positions at 38th Parallel. UNC front approximately the same line as when Communist spring offensive began.
23 Jun	UN Soviet delegate, Jacob Malik, proposes cease-fire discussions.
30 Jun	UN notifies enemy of its readiness to discuss an armistice.

10 Jul	Truce talks begin at Kaesong and fighting dies down along front. UN delegation led by U.S. Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy. Communists represented by LtGen Nam Il, NKPA.
26 Jul	Negotiators at Kaesong agree on preliminary agenda.
5 Aug	UNC suspends truce talks because of armed enemy troops in neutral area. Cease-fire talks resumed 10 Aug.
22 Aug	Communists halt cease-fire talks, charge UN aircraft has violated neutrality zone.
31 Aug	In final UNC offensive action of war, 1stMarDiv opens assault at Punchbowl. UN launches limited attacks to straighten line.
5 Sep	1stMarDiv gains initial objectives in Punchbowl area, new ridgeline to become part of Line MINNESOTA, EUSAK defensive line. Heavy attacks by IX Corps at Heartbreak and Bloody Ridge.
13 Sep	HMR-161 effects first Marine mass helicopter combat resupply maneuver, Operation WINDMILL I.
18 Sep	Marines advance to Soyang River, north of Punchbowl.
21 Sep	Operation SUMMIT, first helicopter deployment of a combat unit, lands 224 fully-equipped troops and 17,772 lbs of cargo in Punchbowl area.
25 Oct	Following two weeks of discussion between liaison officers, truce talks resumed at new site, Panmunjom.
28 Oct	Cease-fire line agreed upon as present line of contact.
11 Nov	HMR-161 conducts first frontline relief of a Marine battalion, in Operation SWITCH.
12 Nov	Gen Ridgway, CinCUNC, orders EUSAK Commander, Gen Van Fleet to cease offensive operations and begin active defense of UN front.
Nov–Dec	General stalemate along Korean battlefront during truce discussions.
18 Dec	Prisoner of war lists exchanged by UN and Communists.

1952

2 Jan	UNC proposes principle of “voluntary repatriation” in POW exchange.
3 Jan	UNC proposal violently rejected by Communists.
Jan–Apr	Disorders in UNC prison camps as screening of prisoners begins
22 Feb	Communist Korean Foreign Affairs Minister charges America with renewed bacteriological warfare attacks in North Korea. Chinese Communist Foreign Minister Chou En-Lai, issues similar statement on 8 Mar, alleging U.S. flyers participate in “germ warfare.”
17 Mar	1stMarDiv reassigned from X Corps eastern-Korea position to I Corps far western end of EUSAK line. Takes over approximately 35 miles of Line JAMESTOWN on 24 Mar.
28 Apr	Adm Joy presents UN “final offer,” insists on voluntary repatriation principle.
7–11 May	Rioting prisoners at Koje-do camp seize Gen Dodd and hold him hostage, until order restored.

12 May	Gen Mark W. Clark succeeds Ridgway as CinCUNC, upon latter's departure to assume NATO command from Gen Eisenhower.
22 May	MajGen William K. Harrison succeeds Adm Joy as chief of UN delegation at Panmunjom.
Jun–Oct	General stalemate along battlefront while truce talks deadlocked on POW repatriation question. Sharp limited objective attacks made by enemy against UNC defensive line.
9–16 Aug	First major Marine ground action in western Korea, Battle of Bunker Hill (1st Marines).
19–20 Aug	HMR-161 Operation RIPPLE introduces tactical innovation of transporting 4.5-inch rocket battery weapons and personnel to new firing position.
29 Aug	Largest one-day FAF air assault of entire war, "All United Nations Air Effort" sends 1,403 sorties against North Korean Capital, Pyongyang.
22–26 Sep	First resupply of MLR regiment by helicopter in Operation HAYLIGHT.
8 Oct	UNC adjourns armistice talks "indefinitely"; complete deadlock on POW question.
26–28 Oct	Battle of the Hook (7th Marines).
4 Nov	Dwight D. Eisenhower elected President.
17 Nov	India introduces compromise truce plan at United Nations.
2 Dec	President-elect Eisenhower begins three-day tour of Korea.
3 Dec	UN General Assembly adopts compromise Indian resolution by 54 to 5 vote.

1953

Jan–Feb	Winter lull in fighting. Cease-fire talks remain suspended.
2 Feb	President Eisenhower, in State of Union message, ends "neutralization" of Formosa Strait.
11 Feb	Gen Maxwell D. Taylor assumes EUSAK command from Gen Van Fleet.
22 Feb	UNC proposes exchange of sick and wounded POWs, as preliminary step in full exchange of prisoners.
5 Mar	Premier Joseph Stalin of Russia dies. Georgi Malenkov named to succeed him.
26–30 Mar	1stMarDiv combat outposts Vegas-Reno-Carson (5th Marines) under heavy attack.
28 Mar	Communists accept UN proposal to discuss exchange of sick and wounded POWs.
30 Mar	Chou En-lai indicates Communists will accept Indian UN compromise proposal. Truce talks to be resumed.
12 Apr	1st MAW flies first night CAS missions, using intersecting searchlight beams to mark enemy targets.
20–26 Apr	Exchange of sick and wounded POWs, "Operation LITTLE SWITCH," takes place at Panmunjom, under direction of Munsan-ni Provisional Command.
26 Apr	Truce talks resumed at Panmunjom.
5 May	1stMarDiv relieved by U.S. 25thInfDiv; 1st Division assigned mission of I Corps Reserve.

7 May	Communists accept UN proposal that prisoners unwilling to be repatriated be kept in neutral custody within Korea, rather than be removed elsewhere to a neutral nation.
28–30 May	Savage fighting while truce details worked out by negotiators. CCF launches regimental-strength attack against I Corps sector. Heavy action in Nevada Cities and Hook area outposts. Marine tanks and artillery in support of defending 25thInfDiv line units.
6 Jun	ROK national Assembly demands freedom for anti-Communist North Koreans held in South Korean POW camps. Civilian demonstrations break out in various EUSAK and I Corps localities.
8 Jun	Agreement reached on POW question. POW nonrepatriates to be turned over to five-member neutral commission to decide disposition of POW cases. Pres Rhee declares armistice terms unacceptable to South Korea.
9 Jun	ROK National Assembly unanimously rejects truce terms.
10–17 Jun	Communists launch heaviest offensive in two years against ROK II Corps sector in Kumsong area. Heavy penetrations, with ROK II Corps pushed 4000 yards south to new MLR.
18 Jun	Breakout of 25,000 North Korean anti-Communist prisoners from South Korean POW camps, assisted by ROK guards. Release ordered by Pres Rhee as protest against proposed armistice.
18–20 Jun	Communists accuse UNC of complicity in freeing prisoners; truce talks suspended.
23–25 Jun	Pres Rhee continues opposition to truce terms. Walter Robinson, U.S. Asst. Sec. of State for Far East and Gen Mark Clark start confidential talks with Rhee.
7–8 Jul	COPs Berlin-East Berlin (7th Marines right regimental sector) under attack during Marine relief of 25thInfDiv.
8 Jul	1stMarDiv assumes operational control of its former MLR sector, relieving 25thInfDiv.
8 Jul	Communists agree to resume armistice negotiations; talks reconvened 10 July.
11 Jul	Robertson announces that Pres Rhee will no longer oppose truce terms.
11 Jul	Maj John F. Bolt, VMF-115, becomes first Marine jet ace with kill of his fifth and sixth MIGs.
13–20 Jul	CCF launches even larger offensive than June attack along central Korean front. IX and ROK II Corps MLR reestablished south of Kumsong River.
19 Jul	Negotiators at Panmunjom reach agreement on truce.
19 Jul	Marine outposts Berlin-East Berlin overrun; I Corps decrees positions should not be retaken.
24–27 Jul	Heavy enemy attack in Berlin Complex (“Boulder City”) area held by 7th and 1st Marines.
27 Jul	Cease-fire agreement signed at Panmunjom at 1000. Fighting ends. Armistice effective at 2200.
5 Aug–6 Sep	Final exchange of prisoners in Operation BIG SWITCH, at Panmunjom.

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Appendix C. Command and Staff List, March 1952-July 1953

1st Marine Division

Commanding General

MajGen John T. Selden (to 28 Aug 1952)

MajGen Edwin A. Pollock (from 29 Aug)

MajGen Randolph McC. Pate (from 16 Jun 1953)

Asst Division Commander

BGen William J. Whaling (to 23 Mar 1952)

BGen Merrill B. Twining (from 24 Mar)

BGen Robert O. Bare (from 13 Jun)

BGen Joseph C. Burger (from 31 Mar 1953)

Chief of Staff

Col Austin R. Brunelli (to 10 Oct 1952)

Col Henry W. Buse, Jr. (from 11 Oct)

Col Lewis W. Walt (from 15 Jun 1953)

G-1

Col Walter N. Flournoy (to 31 Mar 1952)

Col John F. Dunlap (from 1 Apr)

Col Sidney M. Kelly (from 11 Sep)

Col Albert F. Metze (from 1 Jun 1953)

Col Wendell H. Duplantis (from 20 Jul)

G-2

LtCol James H. Tinsley (to 9 Apr 1952)

Col Sidney S. Wade (from 10 Apr)

LtCol William R. Watson, Jr. (from 24 Apr)

Col Clarence A. Barninger, Jr. (from 11 Oct)

Col William F. Prickett (from 20 Dec)

Col Loren E. Haffner (from 1 Apr 1953)

Col James E. Mills (from 10 Jul)

G-3

LtCol Gordon D. Gayle (to 22 Apr 1952)

LtCol James H. Tinsley (from 24 Apr)

Col Russell E. Honsowetz (from 15 Jun)

Col Eustace R. Smoak (from 16 Dec)

Col Lewis W. Walt (from 18 Apr 1953)

LtCol Jess P. Ferrill, Jr. (from 15 Jun)

G-4

Col Robert A. McGill (to 27 Aug 1952)

Col Thomas A. Culhane (from 28 Aug)

Col Kenneth A. King (from 12 Nov)

Col Richard H. Crockett (from 15 Dec)

Col Thomas S. Ivey (from 15 May 1953)

Special Staff

Adjutant

Maj James K. Young (to 5 May 1952)

Maj Charles T. Lamb (from 6 May)

Maj Clyde W. Shealy (from 24 Feb 1953)

Maj George K. Acker (from 1 Jun)

Air Officer

LtCol Edward V. Finn (to 14 Mar 1952)

LtCol Walter F. Cornnell (from 15 Mar)

LtCol William E. Abblitt (from 12 Feb 1953)

Anti-Tank Officer

Maj Harold C. Howard (to 4 Aug 1952)

Maj Herbert E. L. Zastrow (from 5 Aug)

LtCol Earl W. Gardner (from 18 Nov)

Maj Marshall Salvaggio (from 10 Jan 1953)

Capt William F. Doehler (from 6 Apr)

Amphibian Tractor Officer

LtCol Michiel Dobervich (to 1 Aug 1952)

LtCol Edwin B. Wheeler (from 2 Aug)

LtCol George S. Saussy, Jr. (from 7 Nov)

LtCol Frank R. Wilkinson, Jr. (from 16 Mar 1953)

Maj John McN. Rosebush (from 16 Jun)

Armored Amphibian Officer

LtCol John T. O'Neill (to 5 Aug 1952)

Maj James L. Jones (from 6 Aug)

LtCol Henry G. Lawrence, Jr. (from 12 Aug)

LtCol Fenlon A. Durand (from 4 Dec)

Maj Ralph J. Parker, Jr. (from 16 May 1953)

LtCol Maurice C. Goodpasture (from 15 Jul)

Artillery Officer

Col Frederick P. Henderson (to 20 Sep 1952)

Col Harry N. Shea (from 21 Sep)

Col James E. Mills (from 22 Feb 1953)

Col Manley L. Curry (from 5 Jul)

Chaplain

Cdr Walter S. Peck, Jr., USN (to 16 Apr 1952)

Cdr Edward A. Slattery, USN (from 17 Apr)

Cdr Lonnie W. Meachum, USN (from 28 Dec)

Chemical Warfare and Radiological Defense Officer

Maj Harold C. Howard (to 4 Aug 1952)

Maj Herbert E. L. Zastrow (from 5 Aug)

LtCol Earl W. Gardner (from 18 Nov)

Maj Marshall Salvaggio (from 10 Jan 1953)

Capt Gerald W. Gibson (from 30 Jan)

Dental Officer

Capt Francis C. Snyder, USN (to 26 Apr 1952)

Cdr Clifford H. Rice, USN (from 27 Apr)

Capt William M. Fowler, USN (from 26 May)

Capt James R. Justice, USN (from 12 Mar 1953)

Embarkation Officer

LtCol John H. Papurca (to 1 Mar 1952)

LtCol James F. Coady (from 2 Mar)

LtCol Richard S. Johnson (from 5 Sep)

Maj Edwin J. St. Peter (from 6 Nov)

LtCol John N. Rentz (from 24 Nov)

LtCol Sidney F. Jenkins (from 12 May 1953)

Engineer Officer

Col August L. Vogt (to 5 Jul 1952)

(None listed for 6-16 July)

Col Robert E. Fojt (from 17 Jul)

LtCol Harry D. Clarke (from 1 Feb 1953)

Col Walter R. Lytz (from 1 Apr)

Exchange Officer

Capt Benjamin Reed (to 28 Nov 1952)

Capt John H. Thomas (from 29 Nov)

Food Director

1stLt Herbert E. McNabb (to 15 Jun 1952)

Maj Louis P. Penny (from 16 Jun)

Maj Francis K. Bernardini (from 23 Apr 1953)

Historical Officer

2dLt Francis X. Goss (to 22 Mar 1952)

Capt Robert F. Seward (from 23 Mar)

Capt William R. Smith (from 16 Jul)

1stLt Virgil S. Price (from 8 Nov)

2dLt John J. Creamer, Jr. (from 7 Dec)

Capt Verle E. Ludwig (from 6 Apr 1953)

2dLt Thomas A. MacCalla (from 22 Jul)

Inspector

Col William K. Davenport, Jr. (to 17 Mar 1952)

Col Thomas C. Moore (from 18 Mar)

Col Eustace R. Smoak (from 18 Jul)

Col Clayton O. Totman (from 9 Aug)

Col Wallace M. Nelson (from 5 Dec)

Col Albert F. Metze (from 29 Apr 1953)

Col Manley L. Curry (from 1 Jun)

Col Edwin C. Ferguson (from 13 Jul)

Legal Officer

LCdr Arnold W. Eggen, USN (to 12 Jan 1953)

Cdr Earl C. Collins, USN (from 13 Jan)

LtCol Raymond G. Coyne (from 8 Jul)

Motor Transport Officer

Maj Walter R. O Quinn (to 14 May 1952)

LtCol Kenneth E. Martin (from 15 May)

LtCol Hugh J. Chapman (from 12 Mar 1953)

LtCol Jack F. McCollum (from 29 Jun)

Naval Gunfire Officer

Maj John V. Downs (to 5 Aug 1952)

LtCol William P. Pala (from 6 Aug)

LtCol Robert D. Shaffer (from 16 Sep)

LtCol Henry H. Reichner, Jr. (from 20 Dec)

LtCol Robert D. Shaffer (from 26 Apr 1953)

Capt Robert J. Daeschler (from 15 Jul)

Ordnance Officer

Maj Harold C. Borth (to 5 May 1952)

LtCol William F. Pulver (from 6 May)

Maj Joseph O. Weist (from 4 Jun)
Maj Stanley Tesko (from 21 Oct)
LtCol Marshall R. Pilcher (from 1 Apr 1953)
LtCol Samuel L. Grigsby (from 1 Jun)

Postal Officer
CWO George C. Hunter (to 25 Jun 1952)
2dLt Frederick T. McNamara, Jr. (from 26 Jun)
2dLt Rudolph R. Hendrick (from 18 May 1953)
CWO Emerson R. Murrell (from 2 Jun)

Provost Marshal
LtCol William F. Pulver (to 31 Mar 1952)
LtCol Sidney J. Altman (from 1 Apr)
LtCol Frederick R. Findtner (from 15 Aug)
LtCol Jess P. Ferrill (from 12 Jan 1953)
LtCol Harold R. Warner, Jr. (from 18 Apr)
Maj Walter L. Williams (from 23 Jul)

Public Information Officer
1stLt Robert S. Gray (to 5 May 1952)
1stLt Robert F. Coll (from 6 May)
Maj Charles F. McKiever (from 5 Jul)
Capt Bem Price (from 7 Nov)
Capt Verle E. Ludwig (from 21 Jul 1953)

Shore Party Officer
LtCol Warren S. Sivertsen (to 26 Jul 1952)
Col William G. Robb (from 27 Jul)
LtCol Russell Duncan (from 2 Oct)
Col Glenn C. Funk (from 3 Dec)
Col William H. Barba (from 21 Mar 1953)

Signal Officer
LtCol Jino J. D'Allessandro (to 5 Apr 1952)
LtCol John E. Morris (from 6 Apr)
LtCol Eugene A. Dueber (from 18 Aug)
LtCol Ralph M. Wismer (from 14 Nov)
LtCol Frank G. Casserly (from 27 Jul 1953)

Supply Officer
Col Chester R. Allen (to 27 Apr 1952)
Col Hawley C. Waterman (from 28 Apr)
Col LeRoy Hauser (from 1 Feb 1953)

Special Services Officer

LtCol John E. Gorman (to 23 Jul 1952)

Maj Alfred A. Tillmann (from 24 Jul)

Maj William J. Kohler (from 8 Nov)

Capt Don H. Blanchard (from 20 Apr 1953)

Surgeon

Capt Louis P. Kirkpatrick, USN (to 18 Jun 1952)

Capt Lawrence E. Bach, USN (from 19 Jun)

Capt Walter R. Miller, USN (from 25 Apr 1953)

Tank Officer

Maj Walter E. Reynolds, Jr. (to 20 May 1952)

LtCol John I. Williamson, Jr. (from 21 May)

LtCol Charles W. McCoy (from 16 Apr 1953)

Headquarters Battalion

Commanding Officer

Col Robert T. Stivers, Jr. (to 5 Jul 1952)

Maj Anthony R. Frankiewicz (from 6 Jul)

LtCol Oscar F. Peatross (from 12 Jul)

LtCol John F. Corbett (from 11 Sep)

Col Alexander W. Gentlemen (from 21 Nov)

LtCol John C. Landrun (from 16 May 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Corbin L. West (to 16 Mar 1952)

Maj Anthony R. Frankiewicz (from 17 Mar)

Maj Charles F. McKiever (from 10 Nov)

Maj John K. Hogan (from 31 Jan 1953)

(None listed for 29Feb-14May)

Capt Joseph Hornstein (from 15 May)

Commanding Officer, Headquarters Company

Capt “J” E. Hancey (to 9 Mar 1952)

Capt Robert J. McKay (from 10 Mar)

1stLt George C. Schatteman (from 6 May)

Maj Louis A. Cortright (from 1 Jul)

2dLt Neil O. Snepp (from 17 Jul)

Maj Val Price, Jr. (from 29 Aug)

Capt Joseph Hornstein (from 15 Jan 1953)

Capt Robert A. Hohmann (from 15 May)

Capt Martin S. Hauge (from 28 May)

Commanding Officer, Military Police Company

LtCol William F. Pulver (to 31 Mar 1952)

LtCol Sidney J. Altman (from 1 Apr)

LtCol Frederick R. Findtner (from 15 Aug)

LtCol Jess P. Ferrill, Jr. (from 12 Jan 1953)

LtCol Harold B. Warner, Jr. (from 18 Apr)

Maj Walter L. Williams (from 23 Jul)

Commanding Officer, Reconnaissance Company

Maj Ephraim Kirby-Smith (to 10 Jun 1952)

Capt James O. Webb (from 11 Jun)

Capt James H. A. Flood (from 11 Sep)

Maj Dermott H. MacDonnell (from 3 Dec)

Maj Marvin D. Perskie (from 21 Jun 1953)

1st Marines

Commanding Officer

Col Sidney S. Wade (to 9 Apr 1952)

Col Walter N. Flournoy (from 10 Apr)

Col Walter F. Layer (from 25 Jul)

Col Hewitt D. Adams (from 21 Nov)

Col Wallace M. Nelson (from 1 May 1953)

Executive Officer

LtCol Clifford F. Quilici (to 26 Mar 1952)

Col Clarence A. Barninger, Jr. (from 27 Mar)

LtCol Carlo A. Rovetta (from 2 May)

LtCol Glenn R. Long (from 16 Sep)

LtCol Sidney F. Jenkins (from 4 Feb 1953)

LtCol Lowell E. English (from 8 May)

LtCol Harold C. Boehm (from 2 Jul)

1st Battalion, 1st Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol John H. Papurca (to 2 Aug 1952)

LtCol Louis N. King (from 3 Aug)

LtCol Max H. LaGrone (from 13 Sep)

Col Frederick R. Findtner (from 14 Jan 1953)

LtCol Stanley M. Adams (from 5 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Ralph "C" Rosacker (to 5 Apr 1952)
Maj Leo V. Gross (from 6 Apr)
Maj John K. Logan (from 14 Jul)
Maj William C. Chip (from 20 Aug)
Maj John K. Hogan (from 30 Dec)
Maj Marvin D. Perskie (from 4 Feb 1953)
Maj Roger D. Peterson (from 19 Jun)

2d Battalion, 1st Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol Thell H. Fisher (to 1 Apr 1952)
LtCol Clifford F. Quilici (from 2 Apr)
LtCol Roy J. Batterton, Jr. (from 23 Jun)
LtCol Charles E. Warren (from 18 Oct)
LtCol George A. Gililland (from 9 Feb 1953)
LtCol Frank A. Long (from 1 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj Frank J. Harte (to 5 May 1952)
Maj Fletcher R. Wycoff (from 6 May)
Maj John N. Rentz (from 29 Jul)
Maj John P. McNeill (from 21 Aug)
Maj Horace C. Reifel (from 9 Mar 1953)
Maj John B. Bristow (from 20 Apr)
Maj Albert S. Dooley, Jr. (from 1 Jul)

3d Battalion, 1st Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol Spencer H. Pratt (to 11 Apr 1952)
LtCol Carlo A. Rovetta (from 12 Apr)
LtCol Gerard T. Armitage (from 2 May)
LtCol Sidney J. Altman (from 20 Aug)
LtCol Ernest G. Atkin, Jr. (from 6 Dec)
LtCol Lowell E. English (from 1 Apr 1953)
LtCol Roy D. Miller (from 6 May)

Executive Officer

Maj Robert V. Perkins (to 2 Jul 1952)
Maj Wesley R. Christie (from 3 Jul)

Maj Charles S. Robertson (from 27 Oct)
Maj Norman C. Smyle (from 3 Jan 1953)
Maj Robert D. Thurston (from 26 Mar)
Maj Walter L. Williams (from 20 May)
Maj John T. Quinn (from 2 Jul)

5th Marines
Commanding Officer
Col Thomas A. Culhane, Jr. (to 15 Aug 1952)
Col Eustace R. Smoak (from 16 Aug)
Col Lewis W. Walt (from 10 Dec)
Col Harvey C. Tschirgi (from 14 Apr 1953)
Executive Officer
LtCol John A. Saxten (to 1 Jun 1952)
LtCol Franklin B. Nihart (from 2 Jun)
LtCol William S. McLaughlin (from 20 Jul)
LtCol Jess P. Ferrill, Jr. (from 21 Aug)
LtCol Edwin B. Wheeler (from 2 Jan 1953)
LtCol James H. Finch (from 23 May)
LtCol James Taul (from 18 Jul)

1st Battalion, 5th Marines
Commanding Officer
LtCol Franklin B. Nihart (to 24 May 1952)
Maj Paul H. Bratten, Jr. (from 25 May)
LtCol Alexander W. Gentleman (from 15 Jul)
LtCol Edwin B. Wheeler (from 11 Nov)
LtCol Jonas M. Platt (from 26 Dec)
LtCol Jackson B. Butterfield (from 29 Apr 1953)
Executive Officer
Maj Hildeburn R. Martin (to 4 May 1952)
Maj Lyle K. London (from 5 May)
Maj Robert H. Twisdale (from 29 Aug)
Maj William C. Doty, Jr. (from 25 Jan 1953)
Maj Thomas W. Pearson (from 2 Apr)
Maj George R. Burke (from 11 Jun)
Maj Charles E. McPartlin, Jr. (from 22 Jun)

2d Battalion, 5th Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol William H. Cushing (to 10 Jun 1952)

LtCol Thomas J. Cross (from 11 Jun)

LtCol William S. McLaughlin (from 20 Aug)

LtCol Oscar F. Peatross (from 11 Sep)

LtCol James H. Finch (from 27 Feb 1953)

LtCol Andrew C. Geer (from 14 May)

Executive Officer

Maj Robert S. Hudson (to 10 Jun 1952)

Maj John C. Lundrigan (from 11 Jun)

Maj Philip H. McArdle (from 16 Jul)

Maj Paul C. Scofield (from 19 Dec)

Maj Thomas M. Fields (from 26 Jun 1953)

3d Battalion, 5th Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol William S. McLaughlin (to 15 Jul 1952)

LtCol Oscar T. Jensen, Jr. (from 16 Jul)

LtCol Robert J. Oddy (from 16 Nov)

LtCol John T. Hill (from 11 Apr 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Paul H. Bratten, Jr. (to 22 May 1952)

Maj Clifford J. Robichaud, Jr. (from 23 May)

Maj Joseph A. Bruder, Jr. (from 7 Jul)

Maj Vernon Burtman (from 1 Nov)

Maj Joseph S. Buntin (from 7 Feb 1953)

7th Marines

Commanding Officer

Col Russell E. Honsowetz (to 10 Jun 1952)

Col Thomas C. Moore, Jr. (from 11 Jun)

Col Loren E. Haffner (from 5 Nov)

Col Glenn C. Funk (from 27 Mar 1953)

Executive Officer

LtCol John D. Wiggins (to 17 Jul 1952)

LtCol Fenlon A. Durand (from 18 Jul)

LtCol Richard D. Strickler (from 24 Nov)

LtCol Robert S. Howell (from 22 Mar 1953)
LtCol Russell Duncan (from 26 May)
LtCol Stanley J. Nelson (from 31 Jul)

1st Battalion, 7th Marines
Commanding Officer
LtCol George W. E. Daughtry (to 2 Aug 1952)
LtCol Leo J. Dulacki (from 3 Aug)
LtCol James C. Short (from 22 Nov)
LtCol Henry G. Lawrence, Jr. (from 28 Dec)
LtCol Harry A. Hadd (from 18 May 1953)
Executive Officer
Maj Henry V. Joslin (to 14 Jul 1952)
Maj Theodore R. Cathey (from 15 Jul)
Maj James C. Short (from 23 Jul)
Maj Floyd M. Johnson, Jr. (from 2 Aug)
Maj Roy H. Thompson (from 1 Dec)
Maj Glenn E. Ferguson (from 3 Jun 1953)
Maj Joseph R. Motelewski (from 25 Jun)

2d Battalion, 7th Marines
Commanding Officer
LtCol Noel C. Gregory (to 18 Jul 1952)
LtCol Anthony Caputo (from 19 Jul)
LtCol Richard S. Johnson (from 12 Nov)
LtCol Alexander D. Cereghino (from 19 Mar 1953)
LtCol Joseph C. Missar (from 21 Jul)
Executive Officer
Maj Erwin Madsen (to 19 Apr 1952)
Maj William J. Zaro (from 20 Apr)
Maj James C. Fetters (from 8 Jun)
Maj Richard H. Mickle (from 24 Oct)
Maj Littleton K. Smith (from 16 Apr 1953)
Maj Ralph E. June (from 17 Jun)
Maj Don P. Wyckoff (from 17 Jul)

3d Battalion, 7th Marines
Commanding Officer

LtCol Houston Stiff (to 26 Apr 1952)
Maj Franklin C. Bacon (from 27 Apr)
LtCol Gerald F. Russell (from 17 Jun)
LtCol Charles D. Barrett, Jr. (from 13 Oct)
LtCol Russell Duncan (from 14 Mar 1953)
LtCol Paul M. Jones (from 26 May)

Executive Officer

Maj Franklin C. Bacon (to 26 Apr 1952)
Maj Richard M. Remington (from 27 Apr)
Maj Harold T. Clemens (from 28 Aug)
Maj Guy L. Wade (from 13 Oct)
Maj Alfred A. Tillman (from 23 Oct)
Maj John Mesko (from 25 May 1953)

11th Marines

Commanding Officer

Col Frederick P. Henderson (to 20 Sep 1952)
Col Harry N. Shea (from 21 Sep)
Col James E. Mills (from 22 Feb 1953)
Col Manly L. Curry (from 5 Jul)

Executive Officer

LtCol Lewis A. Jones (to 4 Jun 1952)
LtCol Robert F. Steidtmann (from 5 Jun)
LtCol Earl W. Gardner (from 16 Jan 1953)
LtCol Robert D. Heinl, Jr. (from 6 May)
Maj Joseph E. Fogg (from 6 Jul)
LtCol Wade H. Hitt (from 9 Jul)

1st Battalion, 11th Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol James R. Haynes (to 24 Jun 1952)
LtCol David S. Randall (from 25 Jun)
LtCol Olin W. Jones, Jr. (from 2 Nov)
LtCol Earl W. Gardner (from 8 May 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Harold E. Nelson (to 21 Jun 1952)
Maj Herbert E. L. Zastrow (from 22 Jun)
Maj Lee P. Vance (from 26 Jul)

Maj Harry L Sherwood, Jr. (from 14 Nov)
Maj Thomas L. Randall (from 17 Dec)
Maj John J. Jarvis, Jr. (from 25 Mar 1953)

2d Battalion, 11th Marines
Commanding Officer
LtCol George B. Thomas (to 2 May 1952)
LtCol William P. Pala (from 3 May)
LtCol Bert Davis, Jr. (from 6 Aug)
LtCol Arthur J. Bachhuber (from 17 Nov)
LtCol William H. Atkinson (from 10 Feb 1953)
Maj Max Berueffy, Jr. (from 21 May)
LtCol Gordon H. West (from 18 Jul)
Executive Officer
Maj Morris R. Snead (to 10 Jun 1952)
Maj Edward L. Fossum (from 11 Jun)
LtCol Bert Davis, Jr. (from 1 Jul)
Maj Roy E. Moffett (from 10 Aug)
Maj Max Berueffy, Jr. (from 2 Sep)
Maj Joseph F. Donahoe, Jr. (from 24 May 1953)
Maj Herman Poggemeyer, Jr. (from 13 Jul)

3d Battalion, 11th Marines
Commanding Officer
LtCol Henry E. W. Barnes (to 13 Jul 1952)
LtCol Charles O. Rogers (from 14 Jul)
LtCol Daniel S. Pregnall (from 27 Nov)
LtCol Alfred L. Owens (from 25 Mar 1953)
Maj Dale D. Meyers (from 28 Jul)
Executive Officer
LtCol Charles A. Lipot (to 5 Jul 1952)
Maj Joseph S. Gardner (from 6 Jul)
Maj William J. Kohler (from 27 Jul)
Maj Lawrence L. Graham (from 17 Nov)
Maj Robert M. Jenkins (from 15 Dec)
Maj Adoph J. Honeycutt (from 28 Mar 1953)
Maj Robert C. Hilliard (from 7 May)
Maj Leslie L. Page (from 12 Jun to 26 Jul)

4th Battalion, 11th Marines

Commanding Officer

LtCol William M. Gilliam (to 11 Apr 1952)
LtCol Bruce F. Hillam (from 12 Apr)
Maj Carl A. Nielsen (from 16 Jun)
LtCol Raymond D. Wright (from 16 Jul)
Maj William J. Sullivan (from 18 Dec)
LtCol Robert D. Shaffer (from 20 Dec)
Maj David L. Moberly (from 23 Apr 1953)
LtCol Henry H. Reichner, Jr. (from 27 Apr)

Executive Officer

LtCol Bruce F. Hillam (to 16 Apr 1952)
Maj Richard H. Jeschke, Jr. (from 17 Apr)
Maj Carl A. Nielsen (from 11 Jun)
Maj Edward E. Davis (from 16 Jun)
Maj William J. Sullivan (from 17 Oct)
Maj David L. Moberly (from 22 Feb 1953)
Maj Johnny Jennings (from 2 May)
Maj George W. Carrington, Jr. (from 13 Jun)

7th Motor Transport Battalion

Commanding Officer

Maj Herbert E. Pierce (to 1 Jul 1952)
LtCol Robert B. McBroom (from 2 Jul)
Maj John H. Faggart (from 27 Jul)
Maj Robert S. Anderson (from 16 Jun 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Ben Sutts (to 15 Aug 1952)
Maj John J. Howe (from 16 Aug)
Maj Joseph P. Cushing (from 20 Nov)
Maj Alfred G. McCormick (from 26 Apr 1953)

1st Ordnance Battalion

Commanding Officer

Maj Harold C. Borth (to 5 May 1952)
LtCol William F. Pulver (from 6 May)
Maj Marshall R. Pilcher (from 26 Aug)

Maj Maurice C. Pulliam (from 25 Mar 1953)

Executive Officer

Capt Frederick V. Osborn (to 5 May 1952)

Maj Harold C. Borth (from 6 May)

Maj Marshall R. Pilcher (from 16 Jul)

Maj Frederick V. Osborn (from 26 Aug)

Maj Allen F. Stockdale (from 1 Sep)

Maj Frederick V. Osborn (from 15 Sep)

Maj Stanley P. Bulkowski (from 4 Nov)

Maj Maurice C. Pullian (from 21 Dec)

Maj Stanley P. Bulkowski (from 25 Mar 1953)

Maj Jack G. Fitzgerald (from 4 Jul)

1st Service Battalion

Commanding Officer

LtCol Bernard W. McLean (to 18 May 1952)

LtCol Charles E. Warren (from 19 May)

LtCol Edwin A. Law (from 1 Oct)

LtCol Hugh J. Chapman (from 5 Jul 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj George E. Allison (to 27 Oct 1952)

Maj James C. Fetters (from 28 Oct)

Maj Robert “J” Vroegindewey (from 19 Mar 1953)

1st Tank Battalion

Commanding Officer

Maj Walter E. Reynolds, Jr. (to 20 May 1952)

LtCol John I. Williamson (from 21 May)

LtCol Charles W. McCoy (from 16 Apr 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Edward C. Nelson, Jr. (to 15 Jun 1952)

Maj Robert B. Jeter (from 16 Jun)

Maj William W. Day (from 21 Feb 1953)

Maj Francis C. Hogan (from 6 May)

1st Armored Amphibian Battalion

Commanding Officer

LtCol John T. O’Neill (to 5 Aug 1952)

Maj James L. Jones (from 6 Aug)
LtCol Henry G. Lawrence, Jr. (from 12 Aug)
LtCol Fenlon A. Durand (from 4 Dec)
Maj Ralph J. Parker, Jr. (from 16 May 1953)
LtCol Maurice C. Goodpasture (from 15 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj James L. Jones (to 5 Aug 1952)
Maj David Young (from 6 Aug)
Maj James L. Jones (from 12 Aug)
Maj Ralph J. Parker, Jr. (from 21 Nov)
Maj Robert S. Wilson (from 16 May 1953)

1st Motor Transport Battalion

Commanding Officer

LtCol Howard E. Wertman (to 15 May 1952)
Maj Walter R. O'Quinn (from 16 May)
LtCol Robert B. McBroom (from 27 Jul)
LtCol Robert E. McCook (from 24 Mar 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Raymond L. Luckel (to 2 Aug 1952)
Maj Marvin D. Grush (from 3 Aug)
Maj Joseph P. Cushing (from 6 Sep)
Maj Gobe Smith, Jr. (from 4 Oct)
Maj Robert C. McNab, Jr. (from 17 Feb 1953)

1st Combat Service Group

Commanding Officer

Col Russell N. Jordahl (to 29 Jun 1952)
Col Kenneth A. King (from 30 Jun)
LtCol Sidney F. Jenkins (from 8 Nov)
Col James T. Wilbur (from 8 Dec)
Col Edwin C. Ferguson (from 8 Feb 1953)
Col James A. Moreau (from 8 Jul)

Executive Officer

LtCol James G. Kelly (to 20 May 1952)
Col Frank M. Reinecke (from 21 May)
LtCol William H. Cushing (from 11 Jun)
LtCol Sidney F. Jenkins (from 8 Dec)

LtCol Max H. LaGrone (from 28 Jan 1953)
LtCol Tillman N. Peters (from 15 Mar)
Maj Harvey B. Atkins (from 11 May)

1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion
Commanding Officer
LtCol Michiel Dobervich (to 1 Aug 1952)
LtCol Edwin B. Wheeler (from 2 Aug)
LtCol George S. Saussy, Jr. (from 7 Nov)
LtCol Frank R. Wilkinson, Jr. (from 16 Mar 1953)
Maj John McN. Rosebush (from 16 Jun)
Executive Officer
Maj William L. Eubank (to 3 Jun 1952)
Maj George S. Saussy, Jr. (from 4 Jun)
Maj William E. Lunn (from 7 Nov)
Maj John McN. Rosebush (from 24 Mar 1953)
Maj John J. DePalma (from 20 Jun)

1st Shore Party Battalion
Commanding Officer
LtCol Warren S. Sivertsen (to 26 Jul 1952)
Col William G. Robb (from 27 Jul)
LtCol Russell Duncan (from 2 Oct)
Col Glenn C. Funk (from 3 Dec)
Col William H. Barba (from 21 Mar 1953)
Executive Officer
Maj Frederick F. Draper (to 3 Jun 1952)
Maj William E. Buron (from 4 Jun)
LtCol Clyde P. Ford (from 12 Aug)
LtCol Francis X. Witt, Jr. (from 3 Mar 1953)
LtCol Eugene A. Dueber, Jr. (from 18 Apr)
LtCol James M. Joyner (from 8 Jul)

1st Engineer Battalion
Commanding Officer
LtCol John V. Kelsey (to 5 May 1952)
LtCol Harry D. Clarke (from 6 May)
LtCol Francis W. Augustine (from 1 Dec)

LtCol Francis X. Witt, Jr. (from 20 Apr 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Grover C. Williams, Jr. (to 5 Jun 1952)

Maj Francis W. Augustine (from 6 Jun)

Maj George W. Torbert (from 1 Dec)

Maj Donald V. Nahrgang (from 26 Jun 1953)

1st Medical Battalion

Commanding Officer

Cdr Richard Lawrence, Jr., USN (to 31 Aug 1952)

Cdr William W. Ayres, USN (from 1 Sep)

Executive Officer

Cdr James C. Luce, USN (to 12 May 1952)

(none listed from 13 May to 8 Jun)

LCdr James A. McLaughlin, USN (from 9 Jun)

Cdr Roald N. Grant, USN (from 24 Aug to 21 Sep)

(none listed from 22 Sep to 25 Apr 1953)

Lt Roger D. Williams, USN (from 26 Apr)

1st Signal Battalion

Commanding Officer

LtCol John E. Morris (to 3 Apr 1952)

LtCol Alton L. Hicks (from 4 Apr)

LtCol Jacob E. Glick (from 3 Aug)

LtCol Eugene A. Dueber, Jr. (from 16 Feb 1953 to 22 Apr 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Ernest C. Bennett (to 4 Apr 1952)

Maj Bolish J. Kozak (from 5 Apr)

Maj Mauro J. Padalino (from 12 Jul)

Maj Frederick J. Cramer (from 30 Dec)

Maj John J. Reber (from 8 Feb 1953 to 22 Apr 1953)

(This battalion was disbanded on 22 Apr 1953.)

1st Marine Aircraft Wing (1st MAW)

Commanding General

MajGen Christian F. Schilt (to 11 Apr 1952)

MajGen Clayton C. Jerome (from 12 Apr 1952)

MajGen Vernon E. Megee (from 9 Jan 1953)

Asst Commanding General

BGen Frank H. Lamson-Scribner (to 30 Aug 1952)

BGen Alexander W. Kreiser, Jr. (from 31 Aug)

Chief of Staff

Col Arthur F. Binney (to 30 Apr 1952)

Col Frank H. Schwable (from 1 May)

Col John Wehle (from 9 Jul)

Col Samuel S. Jack (from 8 Sep)

Col John C. Munn (from 8 May 1953)

Asst Chief of Staff, G-1

Col Robert O. Bisson (to 7 Sep 1952)

Col Lewis H. Delano, Jr. (from 8 Sep)

LtCol William M. Frash (from 11 May 1953)

Col Lawrence B. Clark (from 29 May)

Asst Chief of Staff, G-2

Col John W. Stage (to 14 May 1952)

LtCol Chester A. Henry, Sr. (from 15 May)

Maj Donald E. Kramer (from 22 Jul)

LtCol Harold Granger (from 16 Sep)

Col Arthur R. Stacy (from 25 Jul 1953)

Asst Chief of Staff, G-3

Col Stanley W. Trachta (to 8 Apr 1952)

Col William R. Wendt (from 9 Apr)

Col Louis B. Robertshaw (from 2 Sep)

Col Charles H. Hayes (from 29 Sep)

Col William D. Roberson (from 30 May 1953)

Col Frank H. Wirsig (from 5 Jul)

Asst Chief of Staff, G-4

Col Elmer T. Dorsey (to 24 Mar 1952)

Col Robert E. Galer (from 25 Mar)

Col Robert W. Clark (from 24 May)

Col Richard D. Hughes (from 11 Feb 1953)

Col Richard M. Baker (from 4 Jul)

Headquarters Squadron, 1st MAW

Commanding Officer

Maj Earl C. Miles (to 29 May 1952)

Maj David R. Moak (from 30 May)

Maj Charles H. Woodley (from 1 Sep)
Maj Lionel D. Hastings (from 26 Sep)
Maj Charles W. Boggs, Jr. (from 1 Mar 1953)
Maj Fred J. Gilhuly (from 1 Jul)

Marine Wing Service Squadron 1 (MWSS-1; decommissioned 1 Jul 1953) and
Marine Wing Service Group 17 (MWSG-17; commissioned 1 Jul 1953)
Commanding Officer
Col John Wehle (to 8 Apr 1952)
LtCol Birney B. Truitt (from 9 Apr)
LtCol Donald D. Blue (from 17 Jul)
Col Lyle H. Meyer (from 21 Sep)
LtCol Francis K. Coss (from 11 May 1953)
Col Robert J. Johnson (from 30 Jun)
Executive Officer
LtCol Birney B. Truitt (to 8 Apr 1952)
Maj William L. Woodruff (from 9 Apr)
Maj Edward L. Schnettler (from 4 Jun)
Maj Franklin L. Kemper (from 26 Aug)
LtCol William G. Voss (from 20 Dec)
LtCol Francis K. Coss (from 21 Apr 1953)
Maj Elswin P. Dunn (from 11 May)
LtCol Charles J. Prall (from 6 Jul)

Headquarters Squadron, MWSG-17 (commissioned 1 Jul 1953)
Commanding Officer
Capt James D. Ireland (from 1 Jul 1953)

Marine Air Base Squadron 17 (MABS-17; activated 1 Jul 1953)
Commanding Officer
Maj Bryce Howerton (from 1 Jul 1953)

Marine Aircraft Repair Squadron 17 (MARS-17; activated 1 Jul 1953)
Commanding Officer
Maj Vincent Franano (from 1 Jul 1953)
Maj James G. Fox (from 29 Jul)

Marine Air Control Group 2 (MACG-2)

Commanding Officer

Col Frederick R. Payne (to 18 May 1952)

Col John W. Stage (from 19 May)

Col Jack R. Cram (from 11 Jul)

Col Kenneth D. Kerby (from 16 Feb 1953)

Executive Officer

LtCol Russell D. Rupp (to 1 May 1952)

LtCol Philip "L" Crawford (from 2 May)

LtCol William A. Houston, Jr. (from 20 Jun)

LtCol Harold L. Lantz (from 11 Aug)

LtCol Lawrence F. Fox (from 24 Feb 1953)

LtCol Randolph C. Berkeley, Jr. (from 23 May)

LtCol John S. Flickinger (from 10 Jun)

LtCol Morris E. Flater (from 21 Jun)

Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron 2 (MTACS-2)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Hensley Williams (to 2 Jun 1952)

Maj Clinton E. Jones (from 3 Jun)

LtCol William H. Whitaker, Jr. (from 1 Aug)

LtCol Frederick M. Rauschenbach (from 21 Aug)

LtCol Arthur C. Lowell (from 28 Jan 1953)

Col Joseph A. Gerath, Jr. (from 20 Feb)

LtCol Randolph C. Berkeley, Jr. (from 11 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Clinton E. Jones (to 2 Jun 1952)

Capt John F. Driftmier (from 3 Jun)

Maj George C. Henshaw (from 28 Aug)

Maj Thomas H. Hughes, Jr. (from 25 Sep)

LtCol Arthur C. Lowell (from 20 Feb 1953)

(none listed from 15 Mar to 9 Jul)

Capt Robert L. Dietrichson (from 10 Jul)

Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron 1 (MGCIS-1)

Commanding Officer

Maj Fred A. Steele (to 15 Aug 1952)

Maj Henry W. Hise (from 16 Aug)

Maj Wallace G. Wethe (from 16 Oct)

Lt Col Joseph F. Wagner, Jr. (from 3 Feb 1953)
Maj Randal A. Yarberry (from 1 Jun)
LtCol Harold F. Brown (from 23 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Marvin R. Bridges, Jr (to 11 Apr 1952)
Capt William J. Wachsler (from 12 Apr)
Capt Francis K. McManus (from 22 May)
Maj William Sloane (from 1 Aug)
Maj Romeo F. Bordigon (from 4 Oct)
Maj Tolbert T. Gentry (from 2 Nov)
Maj Francis F. Rotter (from 8 Jan 1953)
Capt John E. Dixon (from 31 May)
Maj Randal A. Yarberry (from 23 Jun)

Marine Ground Control Intercept Squadron 3 (MGCIS-3)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Owen M. Hines (to 20 May 1952)
Maj James H. Foster (from 21 May)
LtCol Robert J. Hoey (from 14 Jun)
LtCol Kenneth D. Frazier (from 16 Aug)
Lt Col John B. Maas, Jr. (from 3 Feb 1953)
Maj Nathan B. Peevey, Jr. (from 19 May)
Maj James E. Lovin, Jr. (from 1 Jul)
LtCol Lowell D. Grow (from 27 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj James H. Foster (to 1 Jun 1952)
Capt Lee B. Swindall (from 2 Jun)
Maj Roy A. Thorson (from 21 Jun)
Maj Raleigh E. Fletcher (from 5 Sep)
Maj Francis E. Lee, Jr. (from 29 Oct)
Maj Nathan B. Peevey, Jr. (from 4 Feb 1953)
Capt William K. Lebo (from 19 May)
Maj Thomas E. Archer (from 20 Jun)
Maj James E. Lovin, Jr. (from 27 Jul)

Marine Composite Squadron 1 (VMC-1; activated 15 Sep 1952)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Lawrence F. Fox (to 24 Jan 1953)

LtCol Ernest C. Fusan (from 25 Jan)
LtCol Thomas "H" Mann, Jr. (from 16 Mar)
Maj George H. Linnemeier (from 6 Apr)
LtCol Wilbur A. Free (from 1 Jun)

Marine Aircraft Group 12 (MAG-12)
Commanding Officer
Col Elmer T. Dorsey (to 24 May 1952)
Col Robert E. Galer (from 25 May)
Col John P. Condon (from 10 Aug)
Col George S. Bowman, Jr. (from 13 Jan 1953)
Col Edward B. Carney (from 1 Apr)
Executive Officer
Lt Col Robert J. Hoey (to 5 Jun 1952)
Lt Col Joseph A. Gray (from 6 Jun)
Col George S. Bowman, Jr. (from 17 Aug)
Lt Col Barnette Robinson (from 20 Feb 1953)
Col Robert J. Johnson (from 19 Mar)
Col William F. Hausman (from 30 Jun)

Headquarters Squadron, MAG-12
Commanding Officer
Capt George Byers, Jr. (to 22 Apr 1952)
1stLt Daniel F. McConnell (from 24 Apr)
Maj Godfrey Muller (from 1 Jul)
Capt William M. Crooks (from 18 Sep)
Capt Edgar F. Remington (from 21 Dec)
Capt Bradford N. Slenning (from 15 May 1953)

Marine Air Base Squadron 12 (MABS-12)
Commanding Officer
LtCol Carl M. Longley (to 31 Mar 1952)
Maj Sumner H. Whitten (from 1 Apr)
LtCol Graham H. Benson (from 25 Aug)
LtCol Barnette Robinson (from 11 Oct)
LtCol Eystein J. Nelson (from 1 Jan 1953)
LtCol Richard M. Huizenga (from 1 Mar)
LtCol Rufus D. Sams (from 1 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj Robert A. Collett (to 31 Mar 1952)
Maj LeRoy T. Frey (from 1 Apr)
Maj Oscar C. Hauge, Jr. (from 26 May)
Maj Sumner H. Whitten (from 18 Aug)
LtCol Barnette Robinson (from 18 Sep)
Maj Frank Hick (from 11 Oct)
Maj Harry J. Anderson (from 20 Jan 1953)
LtCol Rufus D. Sams (from 14 Apr)
Maj Donald A. McMillan (from 11 Jul)

Marine Aircraft Maintenance Squadron 12 (MAMS-12)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Joseph A. Gray (to 31 May 1952)
Maj James G. G. Taylor (from 1 Jun)
Maj William M. Johnston, Jr. (from 19 Aug)
Maj Leonard I. Beatty (from 29 Dec)
LtCol Walter E. Gregory (from 20 Feb 1953)
LtCol Clarence H. Moore (from 27 Jun)
Maj Mervin L. Taylor (from 18 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj Robert E. Will (to 26 Apr 1952)
Maj James G. G. Taylor (from 27 Apr)
Capt Robert T. Kinsey (from 1 Jun)
Maj James G. G. Taylor (from 19 Aug)
Maj Warren L. MacQuarrie (from 1 Sep)
Maj John R. Hyneman (from 15 Dec)
Maj Leonard I. Beatty (from 20 Feb 1953)
Maj Alexander Gagyi (from 15 Apr)
Maj Mervin L. Taylor (from 12 Jul)

Marine Attack Squadron 121 (VMA-121)

Commanding Officer

LtCol William Q. Houston, Jr. (to 19 Jun 1952)
LtCol Philip “L” Crawford (from 20 Jun)
LtCol Wayne M. Cargill (from 11 Sep)
LtCol Richard M. Huizenga (from 7 Dec)
LtCol John E. Hughes (from 1 Mar 1953)

Maj Richard L. Braun (from 21 Apr)
LtCol Harold B. Penne (from 16 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj Henry W. Horst (to 31 May 1952)
Maj Robert H. Brumley (from 1 Jun)
Maj Julius B. Griffin (from 30 Jul)
LtCol Donald D. Blue (from 2 Nov)
LtCol Roy R. Hewitt (from 11 Dec)
LtCol John E. Hughes (from 17 Jan 1953)
Maj Mervin L. Taylor (from 1 Mar)
Maj Robert C. Woten (from 16 Jul)

Marine Fighter Squadron 212 (VMF-212; redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 212 [VMA-212] on 10 Jun 1952)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Robert L. Bryson (to 9 Jun 1952)
LtCol Graham H. Benson (from 10 Jun)
LtCol Maurice W. Fletcher (from 5 Sep)
LtCol Charles E. Dobson, Jr. (from 25 Oct)
LtCol Barnette Robinson (from 1 Jan 1953)
LtCol Louis R. Smunk (from 29 Feb)
Maj Edward C. Kicklighter (from 1 Jun)
LtCol James R. Wallace (from 19 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Richard B. Elliott (to 29 Feb 1952)
Maj Roy A. Thorson (from 8 Mar)
Maj Leslie C. Reed (from 10 Jun)
LtCol Walter E. Gregory (from 25 Oct)
Maj Norman O'Bryan (from 20 Feb 1953)
Maj Edward C. Kicklighter (from 7 Mar)
Maj Donald A. McMillan (from 1 Jun)
Maj Edward C. Kicklighter (from 19 Jun)
Maj Boris J. Frankovic (from 20 Jul)

START

Marine Fighter Squadron 323 (VMF-323; redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 323 [VMA-323] on 30 Jun 1952; transferred from operational control of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on 7 Jul 1953)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Richard L. Blume (to 25 Apr 1952)
Maj William A. Weir (from 26 Apr)

LtCol Henry S. Miller (from 1 Jun)
LtCol Kenneth R. Chamberlain (from 1 Sep)
LtCol Williard C. Lemke (from 20 Nov)
LtCol William M. Frash (from 13 Jan 1953)
LtCol Clarence H. Moore (from 11 Apr to 26 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj William A. Weir (to 8 Jun 1952)
Maj Richard E. Pryor (from 9 Jun)
Maj Eystein J. Nelson (from 1 Sep)
Maj Thomas M. Forsyth, Jr. (from 20 Nov)
LtCol Clarence H. Moore (from 2 Jan 1953)
Lt Col Frederick M. Rauschenbach (from 29 Jan)
Maj Robert C. Woten (from 3 May to 26 Jun)

Marine Attack Squadron 332 (VMA-332; came under the operational control of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on 29 May 1953)

Commanding Officer

LtCol John B. Berteling (from 29 May 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Gordon L. Allen (from 29 May 1953)

Marine Attack Squadron (VMA-251; attached to 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on 9 Jun 1953)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Harold A. Harwood (from 9 Jun 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj James W. Merritt (from 9 Jun 1953)

Marine Night-Fighter Squadron 513 (VMF(N)-513)

Commanding Officer

LtCol John R. Burnett (to 11 Jun 1952)
Col Peter D. Lambrecht (from 12 Jun)
LtCol Jack C. Scott (from 19 Jun)
LtCol Homer G. Hutchinson, Jr. (from 9 Sep)
LtCol Robert F. Conley (from 20 Jan 1953)
LtCol Ross S. Mickey (from 6 May)
LtCol Robert L. Conrad (from 10 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj Frank H. Simonds (to 19 Apr 1952)

Maj William D. Patterson, Jr. (from 23 Apr)
Lt Col Jack C. Scott (from 15 Aug)
Maj Gorden E. Gray (from 20 Aug)
LtCol Jack C. Scott (from 8 Sep)
LtCol Jack B. Winters (from 14 Sep)
Maj Dave E. Severance (from 20 Jan 1953)
Maj Richard M. Hunt (from 9 Jun)
LtCol Robert L. Conrad (from 24 Jun)
Maj Richard M. Hunt (from 10 Jul)

Marine Aircraft Group 33 (MAG-33)
Commanding Officer
Col Martin A. Severson (to 23 May 1952)
Col John P. Condon (from 24 May)
Col Herbert H. Williamson (from 11 Aug)
Col Louis B. Robertshaw (from 22 Oct)
Col Arthur R. Stacy (from 10 May 1953)
Col John L. Smith (from 24 Jul)
Executive Officer
LtCol Vernon O. Ullman (to 13 May 1952)
LtCol Graham H. Benson (from 14 May)
Col Herbert H. Williamson (from 26 Jul)
LtCol Darrell D. Irwin (from 11 Aug)
Col John P. Coursey (from 17 Aug)
Col Arthur R. Stacy (from 25 Mar 1953)
LtCol James K. Dill (from 11 May)
LtCol Thomas V. Murto, Jr. (from 26 Jul)

Headquarters Squadron, MAG-33
Commanding Officer
Capt Allen R. Schutter (to 30 May 1952)
Maj Guy M. Cloud (from 1 Jun)
Maj Richard J. Collins (from 21 Jul)
Maj Reuel H. Pietz (from 1 Nov)
Maj Thomas J. Cushman, Jr. (from 14 Apr 1953)
Capt Jerry N. Hendershot (from 26 May)

Marine Air Base Squadron 33 (MABS-33)

Commanding Officer

Maj Frank P. Barker, Jr. (to 9 Jun 1952)

Maj John W. Zuber (from 10 Jun)

Maj William D. Patterson, Jr. (from 6 Aug)

Maj Kenneth B. Nelson (from 9 Dec)

Lt Col Bernard McShane (from 21 Apr 1953)

LtCol Arthur M. Moran (from 1 Jun)

LtCol Jack Cosley (from 26 Jul)

Executive Officer

Maj George K. Harshberger (to 1 May 1952)

Maj Summerfield M. Taylor, Jr. (from 2 May)

Capt Frederic T. Watts, Jr. (from 11 Aug)

Maj Harold N. McLaffey (from 2 Oct)

Maj Darwin P. Glaese (from 23 Dec)

Capt George J. Collins (from 22 May 1953)

Marine Aircraft Maintenance Squadron 33 (MAMS-33)

Commanding Officer

Maj Zadik Collier (to 1 Sep 1952)

Maj William N. Case (from 2 Sep)

Maj Patrick Harrison (from 5 Feb 1953)

Maj Julian P. Craigmiles (from 29 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Alton C. Bennett (from 1 Aug 1952)

Maj John L. Herndon (from 12 Aug)

Maj James Aldworth (from 2 Dec)

Capt Marshall S. Austin (from 22 April 1953)

Marine Fighter Squadron 115 (VMF-115)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Thomas M. Coles (to 20 May 1952)

Maj John W. Zuber (from 21 May)

LtCol Robert C. Armstead (from 5 Jun)

Maj Wallace G. Wethe (from 17 Jul)

LtCol Royce W. Coln (from 18 Aug)

LtCol John B. Maas, Jr. (from 29 Sep)

LtCol Stoddard G. Cortelyou (from 1 Feb 1953)

LtCol Joe L. Warren (from 31 Mar)

LtCol Lynn H. Stewart (from 5 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Conrad G. Winter (to 26 Apr 1952)

Maj John W. Zuber (from 27 Apr)

Maj Griffith B. Doyle (from 21 May)

Maj Wallace G. Wethe (from 10 Jun)

Maj Arthur N. Nehf, Jr. (from 5 Aug)

LtCol Joseph F. Wagner, Jr. (from 19 Nov)

Lt Col Joe L. Warren (from 2 Feb 1953)

Maj Carol Bernard (from 31 Mar)

Maj James H. Phillips (from 25 Jun)

Marine Fighter Squadron 311 (WMF-311)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Darrell D. Irwin (to 2 Jun 1952)

Maj Henry W. Hise (from 3 Jun)

Maj Kenneth D. Frazier (from 10 Jun)

Maj William J. Sims (from 26 Jun)

LtCol Arthur H. Adams (from 1 Oct)

LtCol Francis K. Coss (from 1 Feb 1953)

LtCol Arthur M. Moran (from 21 Apr)

LtCol Bernard McShane (from 1 Jun)

Executive Officer

Maj Jay E. McDonald (to 27 Mar 1952)

Maj Henry W. Hise (from 28 Mar)

Maj Kenneth D. Frazier (from 26 Jun)

Maj Harold A. Langstaff, Jr. (from 22 Aug)

Maj Williams J. Sims (from 1 Oct)

LtCol Walter R. Bartosh (from 12 Oct)

LtCol Arthur M. Moran (from 20 Jan 1953)

Maj John Skinner, Jr. (from 21 Apr)

Maj William D. Heier (from 3 Jul)

Marine Attack Squadron (VMA-312; on 16 Jun 1953, this squadron was reassigned to the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing)

Commanding Officer

LtCol Joe H. McGlothlin, Jr. (to 8 Apr 1952)

LtCol Robert E. Smith, Jr. (from 9 Apr)

LtCol George C. Axtell, Jr. (from 11 Jul)
LtCol Robert E. Cameron (from 4 Oct)
LtCol Winston E. Jewson (from 25 Jan to 15 Jun 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj Alexander S. Walker, Jr. (to 7 Apr 1952)
Maj Edmond P. Hartsock (from 9 Apr)
Maj Walter D. Persons (from 11 Jul)
Maj Marshall C. Gregory (from 1 Sep)
Maj James W. Baker (from 13 Jan 1953)
Maj Grover R. Betzer (from 2 Feb)
Maj James L. Cooper (from 4 May to 10 Jun)

Marine Photographic Squadron 1 (VMJ-1)

Commanding Officer

Maj Robert R. Read (to 13 May 1952)
LtCol Vernon O. Ullman (from 14 May)
LtCol William H. Whitaker (from 11 Sep)
LtCol Howard L. Walter (from 1 Nov)
LtCol William M. Ritchey (from 16 Feb 1953)
LtCol Leslie T. Bryan, Jr. (from 15 May)

Executive Officer

Maj Albert E. James (to 3 Jun 1952)
Maj Marion B. Bowers (from 4 Jun)
Maj Grant W. McCombs (from 18 Jul)
LtCol William H. Whitaker (from 28 Aug)
Maj Grant W. McCombs (from 11 Sep)
Maj Howard L. Walter (from 2 Oct)
Maj Louis Conti (from 6 Nov)
LtCol Grant W. McCombs (from 14 Dec)
Maj Louis Conti (from 5 Feb 1953)
Maj John E. Worlund (from 1 Apr)

Marine Helicopter Transport Squadron 161 (HMR-161)

Commanding Officer

Col Keith B. McCutcheon (to 7 Aug 1952)
LtCol John F. Carey (from 8 Aug)
Col Owen A. Chambers (from 15 Mar 1953)

Executive Officer

Maj James R. Dyer (to 10 May 1952)
Maj Zigmund J. Radolinski (from 11 May)
LtCol David M. Danser (from 28 May)
LtCol Russel R. Riley (from 1 Sep)
Maj Gilbert Percy (from 3 Jun 1953)
Lt Col John H. King, Jr. (from 1 Jul)

Marine Observation Squadron 6 (VMO-6)
Commanding Officer
LtCol William H. Herring (to 10 May 1952)
Maj Wallace J. Slappey, Jr. (from 11 May)
LtCol Elkin S. Dew (from 11 Sep)
LtCol William A. Cloman, Jr. (from 2 Feb 1953)
LtCol Earl E. Anderson (from 1 Jul)
Executive Officer
Maj William G. MacLean, Jr. (to 25 Jun 1952)
Maj Lynn E. Midkiff (from 26 Jun)
Maj Alton W. McCully (from 5 Feb 1953)
Maj John A. Hood (from 15 May)

1st 90mm AAA Gun Battalion
Battalion Commander
Col Max C. Chapman (to 22 Nov 1952)
Col Edgar O. Price (from 23 Nov)
LtCol Henry S. Massie (from 7 Apr 1953)
Executive Officer
LtCol Kenneth P. Dunkle (to 30 Apr 1952)
Maj Thomas J. Matthews (from 1 May)
Maj Robert H. Twisdale (from 15 Mar 1953)
Maj Henry V. Leasure (from 9 Jun)

Operations in West Korea

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Appendix F. Marine Pilots and Enemy Aircraft Downed in Korean War

21Apr51: 1stLt Harold D. Daigh (VMF-312, F4U-4, USS *Bataan*), 1 YAK

21Apr51: Capt Phillip C. DeLong (VMF-312, F4U-4, USS *Bataan*), 2 YAKs

30Jun51: Capt Edwin B. Long (VMF(N)-513, F7F-3N), 1 PO-2 (first enemy aircraft destroyed at night by UNC)

12Jul51: Capt Donald L. Fenton (VMF(N)-513, F4U-5NL), 1 PO-2

23Sep51: Maj Eugene A. Van Gundy (VMF(N)-513, F7F-3N), 1 PO-2

4Nov51: Maj William F. Guss (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

5Mar52: Capt Vincent J. Marzello (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

16Mar52: LtCol John S. Payne (1st MAW; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

7June52: 1stLt John W. Andre (VMF(N)-513, F4U-5NL), 1 YAK-9

10Sep52: Capt Jesse G. Folmar (VMA-312, F4U, USS *Sicily*), 1 MIG

15Sep52: Maj Alexander J. Gillis (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

28Sep52: Maj Alexander J. Gillis (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 2 MIGs

3Nov52: Maj William T. Stratton, Jr. (VMF(N)-513, F3D-2), 1 YAK-15 (first enemy jet aircraft destroyed through use of airbone intercept radar equipped fighter)

8Nov52: Capt Oliver R. Davis (VMF(N)-513, F3D-2), 1 MIG

10Dec52: 1stLt Joseph A. Corvi (VMF(N)-513, F3D-2), 1 PO-2 (first enemy aircraft destroyed by means of lock-on radar gear)

12Jan53: Maj Elswin P. Dunn (VMF(N)-513, F3D-2), 1 MIG

20Jan53: Capt Robert Wade (MAG-33; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

28Jan53: Capt James R. Weaver (VMF(N)-513, F3D-2), 1 MIG

31Jan53: LtCol Robert F. Conley (VMF(N)-513, F3D-2), 1 MIG

7Apr53: Maj Roy L. Reed (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

12Apr53: Maj Roy L. Reed (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

16May53: Maj John F. Bolt (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

18May53: Capt Harvey L. Jensen (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

22Jun53: Maj John F. Bolt (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

24Jun53: Maj John F. Bolt (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

30Jun53: Maj John F. Bolt (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

11Jul53: Maj John F. Bolt (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 2 MIGs

12Jul53: Maj John H. Glenn (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

19Jul53: Maj John H. Glenn (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

20Jul53: Maj Thomas M. Sellers (VMF-115; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 2 MIGs

22Jul53: Maj John H. Glenn (VMF-311; on temporary exchange duty with Fifth Air Force), 1 MIG

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Operations in West Korea
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Appendix G. Unit Citations

PRESIDENTAL UNIT CITATION

The President of the Republic of Korea takes profound pleasure in citing for outstanding and superior performance of duty during the period 26 October 1950 to 27 July 1953

THE FIRST UNITED STATES MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED)

for the award of

PRESIDENTAL UNIT CITATION

Landing at Wonsan on 26 October 1950 the First United States Marine Division (Reinforced) advanced to Yudam-ni where they engaged the Chinese Communist Forces. The heroic and courageous fighting of the First United States Marine Division (Reinforced), which was outnumbered but never outfought by the Chinese Communist Forces; coupled with its fight against the terrible winter weather in this return to Hungnam, has added another glorious page to the brilliant history of the United States Marines. After regrouping and retraining, the First United States Marine Division (Reinforced) rejoined the United Nations Forces and began the attack to the north which drove the aggressors relentlessly before them. The enemy spring offensive during April 1951 which threatened to nullify the recent United Nations gains was successfully repulsed by the First Marine Division (Reinforced) and when other Republic of Korea Forces were heavily pressed and fighting for survival the timely offensive by this Division gave heart to the peoples of Korea. In March 1952 the First Marine Division (Reinforced) assumed responsibility of defending the western flank of the Eighth Army. In carrying out the responsibilities of this assignment the Marines won everlasting glory at Bunker Hill. Continuing active operations against the Communist enemy until the Armistice, the First Marine Division (Reinforced) inflicted heavy losses upon the aggressors and successfully repulsed their assaults upon strong point Vegas and Reno during March 1953, and during July 1953, just prior to the signing of the Armistice, again threw back the enemy in several days of severe fighting at strong points Berlin and East Berlin. Although suffering heavy losses during these engagements the First Marine Division (Reinforced) was at all times successful in maintaining the integrity of the United Nations' positions within their assigned sector. The First United States Marine Division (Reinforced), by its unparalleled fighting courage and steadfast devotion to duty, has won the undying affection and gratitude of the Korean people. During its entire campaign the First United States Marine Division (Reinforced) remained true to its motto of "Semper Fidelis". In keeping faith with the highest traditions of its own country the First United States Marine Division (Reinforced) kindled new hope in the breasts of all free men and women in the Republic of Korea. This Citation carries with it the right to wear the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon by each individual member of the First United States Marine Division (Reinforced) who served in Korea during the stated period.

/S/SYNGMAN RHEE

President

[*Note:* The Korean PUC, for the period 26 Oct 50 to 15 Feb 53, was presented to the 1stMarDiv in March 1953.

Later, President Syngman Rhee furnished a second citation extending the period to include 16 Feb-27 Jul 53. The division was thus cited for the overall period 26 Oct 50 to 27 Jul 53, and the entire period is considered one award. Decorations & Medals Br., HQMC.]

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

The President of the Republic of Korea takes profound pleasure in citing for outstanding and superior performance of duty

THE FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

The First Marine Aircraft Wing has distinguished itself in support of United Nations Forces in Korea from 27 February 1951 to 11 June 1953. During this period, Marine Aircraft flew over 80,000 combat sorties braving intense opposition to strike enemy fortifications, weapons and logistical installations throughout North Korea. These extensive combat operations, often conducted in hazardous weather, have provided United Nations' ground forces with unparallelled close air support and have inflicted heavy casualties and tremendous damage on enemy forces. Flying from forward Korean bases and from naval aircraft carriers, Marine aircraft have continually harassed ?? communication and transportation systems, successfully curtailing the resupply of hostile front line troops. The exceptional achievements of the officers and men of the First Marine Aircraft Wing have materially assisted the Republic of Korea in its fight for freedom. Their outstanding performance oftenreflects great credit upon themselves and is in accord with the highest traditions of military service.

The citation carries with it the right to wear the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon by each individual member of the First Marine Aircraft Wing who served in Korea during the stated period.

/S/ SYNGMAN RHEE
President

PRESIDENTAL UNIT CITATION

The President of the Republic of Korea takes pleasure in citing

THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS ADVISORY COMPONENT
UNITED STATES NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

for outstanding service to the people of Korea and for aid in the development of the Korean Marine Corps during the period February 1953 to 27 July 1954.

While attached to the Republic of Korea Marine Corps the United States Marine Advisory Component performed commendable service by giving valuable advice and guidance thus enabling the Korean Marine Corps to attain a ready status for any emergency.

By their initiative and constant attention the officers and men have contributed materially to the effective operation of all offices and departments of the Korean Marine Corps. Their thorough knowledge of techniques and military matters has helped in the practical routine training and in the fitting of the Korean Marine Corps for effective combat duty.

By exemplary conduct and indomitable spirit the United States Marine Corps Advisory Component has

left a permanent imprint on the Korean Marine Corps which will assist in the accomplishment of the missions assigned to it in the future.

The outstanding service of the officers and men of the United States Marine Corps Advisory Component is in the best tradition of the United States Naval Service and this Presidential Unit Citation is given in recognition of their significant contribution to the welfare of the Republic of Korea.

/S/ SYNGMAN RHEE
President

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

FIRST MARINE DIVISION, REINFORCED

for service as set forth in the following CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service during operations against enemy aggressor forces in Korea from 11 August 1952 to 5 May 1953 and from 7 to 27 July 1953. During these periods the First Marine Division, Reinforced, maintained the integrity of over thirty-five miles of defense line in Panmunjom Truce Area against the constant aggressions of the enemy. During the time the Division was in the lines, it was under fire and attack by a resolute, well-equipped and fanatical hostile force. The Division maintained an aggresssive defense and constantly kept the enemy off balance by continuously patrolling, probing and raiding enemy positions, accompanied by the full weight of artillery and air support. Commencing in August 1952, and frequently thereafter, during the months of October 1952, March 1953, and July 1953, the enemy launched a series of large scale attacks to capture certain terrain features critical to the defense of friendly lines. The outposts and main defensive positions called Bunker Hill, The Hook, Reno, Carson, Vegas, Berlin and East Berlin, along with certain smaller outposts, gave title to battles of unsurpassed ferocity in which the full effort of the Marine Division was required to hurl back the attackers at heavy cost to both the Division and the enemy. That the lines in the Division sector remained firm and unbreached at the cessation of hostilities on 27 July 1953 gave eloquent tribute to the resourcefulness, courage, professional acumen and stamina of the members of the First Marine Division, Reinforced. Their inspiring and unyielding devotion to the fulfillment of their vital mission reflects the highest credit upon themselves and the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the First Marine Division, Reinforced, during the periods 11 August 1952 to 5 May 1953 and 7 to 27 July 1953, or any part thereof, are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON. This included all organic units of the Division and the following reinforcing units:

FLEET MARINE FORCE UNITS AND DETACHMENTS: 1st 4.5 Rocket Battery; 1st Combat Service Group; 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion; 7th Motor Transport Battalion; 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion; 1st Amphibian Truck Company; Team #1, 1st Provisional Historical Platoon; 1st Fumigation and Bath Platoon; 1st Air Delivery Platoon; Radio Relay Team, 1st Signal Operations Company; Detachment, 1st Explosive Ordnance

Disposal Company; 2nd Platoon, Auto Field Maintenance Company; 1st Provisional Truck Company; Detachment, 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company.

UNITED STATES ARMY UNITS: (For such periods not included in Army Unit Awards) 1st Bn, 32nd Regt, 7th Inf Div; 7th Inf Div; 74th Truck Co; 513th Truck Co; 3rd Plt, 86th Engr Searchlight Co (passed to operational control of 11th Marines); 558th Trans Truck Co (Amphibious, was attached to 7th MT Bn, FMF); 196th Field Arty Bn; 92nd Army Engr Searchlight Plt; 181st CIC Det USA; 163rd MIS Det USA (Unit redesignated 1 Sep 1952 to MIS Plt); TLO Det USA; UNMACK Civil Affairs Team USA; 61st Engr Co; 159th Field Arty Bn (155 Howitzer); 623rd Field Arty Bn; 17th Field Arty Bn "C" Btry; 204th Field Arty Bn "B" Btry; 84th Engr Construction Bn; 1st Bn, 15th US Inf Regt; 1st Bn, 65th US Inf Regt; 1st Bn, 9th Regt, 2nd US Div (attached to KPR); Recon Co, 7th US Inf Div; 461st Inf Bn; Heavy Mortars, 7th Inf Div; 204th Field Arty Bn "A" Btry; 69th Field Arty Bn; 64th Field Arty Bn; 8th Field Arty Bn; 90th Field Arty Bn; 21st AAA-AW Bn; 89th Tank Bn; 441st CIC Det, USA; Prov Bn, USA (Dets 31st and 32nd RCTS); Co D, 10th Engr (C) Bn, USA; Tank Co, 31st Inf, USA; Hqr Co, 31st Inf, USA; 2nd Bn, 31st Inf, USA (less Co E); 185th Engr (C) Bn, USA (less Co A); Co B, 1st Bn, 31st Inf, USA.

CHARLES S. THOMAS
Secretary of the Navy

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, REINFORCED

for service as set forth in the following CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service during operations against enemy aggressor forces in Korea from 1 August 1952 to 27 July 1953. Flying more than 45,000 combat sorties against determined opposition during this period, the First Marine Aircraft Wing, Reinforced, struck repeatedly and effectively at enemy troops, fortifications, logistical installations and lines of communication throughout North Korea. These extensive combat operations provided friendly ground forces with decisive close air support during such battles as Bunker Hill, The Hook, Reno, Carson, Vegas, Berlin and East Berlin, and inflicted heavy casualties and tremendous damage upon the enemy. Operating from naval aircraft carriers and from forward Korean bases, Marine aircraft continually harassed enemy communication and transportation systems, curtailing the movement of hostile troops to the front lines, and provided the air defense of South Korea. The notable record achieved by the First Marine Aircraft Wing, Reinforced, is an eloquent tribute to the resourcefulness, courage and stamina of all her gallant officers and men. Their inspiring and unyielding devotion to duty in the fulfillment of these vital tasks reflect the highest credit upon themselves and the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the First Marine Aircraft Wing, Reinforced, during the above period, or any part thereof, are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON. This includes all organic units and the following reinforcing units: Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 1; 1st

90mm Anti-Aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion; and Ground Control Approach Unit 41M.

CHARLES S. THOMAS
Secretary of the Navy

EXTRACT
GENERAL ORDERS NO. 16
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Washington 25, D.C., 3 March 1954
DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION—Citation of Unit—Section 1

1—DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION.—As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec. I, WD Bul, 22, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec. III, WD Bul 11, 1942), the following unit is cited under AR 220-315 in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction. The citation reads as follows:

1. The Third Turkish Brigade, Turkish Armed Forces Command, and the following attached units: The Turkish Liaison Detachment, 8215th Army Unit; Company B, 1st Marine Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division; and Company C, 1st Marine Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division, are cited for outstanding performance of duty and extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy near Munsan-ni, Korea, during the period 28 to 29 May 1953. On the night of 28 May, an assault, supported by a heavy barrage, was launched by a powerful enemy force, determined to wrest outposts “Elko,” “Carson,” and “Vegas” from friendly hands. The valiant troops occupying these positions were soon surrounded and hand-to-hand combat ensued. With great tenacity and courage, the friendly troops fought on until, with only three of them still standing on outpost “Carson,” the first position fell. Despite the tremendous number of casualties they had suffered, the foe intensified the attack on the two remaining terrain features, rushing repeatedly up the slopes only to be hurled back by the gallant defenders. Friendly reinforcements arrived together with concentrated artillery support. All fire power was brought to bear on the charging enemy, as the defending troops fought desperately to hold. The foe came on in seemingly endless numbers and friendly tanks moved into highly vulnerable positions to fire at close range. Friendly casualties were heavy, but the toll of enemy dead was enormous. The determined foe paid apparently no attention to their thousands of casualties and appeared prepared to sacrifice thousands more to gain their objectives. Realizing that these friendly outposts could not hope to stand in the face of the endless waves of hostile troops, the friendly command ordered the outpost defenders to withdraw to the main line of resistance. The extraordinary heroism, singleness of purpose, and magnificent fighting spirit exhibited by the members of the Third Turkish Brigade, Turkish Armed Forces Command, and attached units throughout this crucial battle, resulted in the frustration of enemy plans to breach the main line of resistance, thus reflecting the greatest credit on themselves and the military profession.

By order of the Secretary of the Army:
OFFICIAL:

WM. E. BERGIN
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General
M. B. RIDGWAY
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the PRESDENTIAL UNIT CITATION to

MARINE OBSERVATION SQUADRON SIX

for service as set forth in the following CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy aggressor forces in Korea from August 1950 to 27 July 1953. Pioneering in the development of front-line helicopter evacuation of casualties, Marine Observation Squadron Six skillfully carried out unprecedented low-altitude evacuation flights during all hours of the day and night over rugged mountainous terrain in the face of enemy fire and extremely adverse weather, thereby saving untold lives and lessening the suffering of wounded marines. In addition, this valiant squadron completed thousands of day and night artillery spotting, reconnaissance and tactical air control missions, contributing materially to the extensive damage inflicted upon enemy positions, supply lines and troop concentrations. The splendid record achieved by Marine Observation Squadron Six attests to the courage, determination and esprit de corps of the officers and men of this unit and was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President,
CHARLES S. THOMAS
Secretary of the Navy

Operations in West Korea

Pat Meid and James M. Yingling

Appendix H. Armistice Agreement

VOLUME I. TEXT OF AGREEMENT

Agreement between the Commander in Chief, United Nations Command, on the one hand, and the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, on the other hand, concerning a military armistice in Korea.

PREAMBLE

The undersigned, the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, on the one hand, and the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, on the other hand, in the interest of stopping the Korean conflict, with its great toll of suffering and bloodshed on both sides, and with the objective of establishing an armistice which will insure a complete cessation of hostilities and of all acts of armed force in Korea until a final peaceful settlement is achieved, do individually, collectively, and mutually agree to accept and to be bound and governed by the conditions and terms of armistice set forth in the following Articles and Paragraphs, which said conditions and terms are intended to be purely military in character and to pertain solely to the belligerents in Korea.

Article I. MILITARY DEMARCATION LINE AND DEMILITARIZED ZONE

1. A Military Demarcation Line shall be fixed and both sides shall withdraw two (2) kilometers from this line so as to establish a Demilitarized Zone between the opposing forces. A Demilitarized Zone shall be established as a buffer zone to prevent the occurrence of incidents which might lead to a resumption of hostilities.

2. The Military Demarcation Line is located as indicated on the attached map.

3. The Demilitarized Zone is defined by a northern and a southern boundary as indicated on the attached map.

4. The Military Demarcation Line shall be plainly marked as directed by the Military Armistice Commission hereinafter established. The Commanders of the opposing sides shall have suitable markers erected along the boundary between the Demilitarized Zone and their respective areas. The Military Armistice Commission shall supervise the erection of all markers placed along the Military Demarcation Line and along the boundaries of the Demilitarized Zone.

5. The waters of the Han River Estuary shall be open to civil shipping of both sides wherever one bank is controlled by one side and the other bank is controlled by the other side. The Military Armistice Commission shall prescribe rules for the shipping in that part of the Han River Estuary indicated on the attached map. Civil shipping of each side shall have unrestricted access to the land under the military control of that side.

6. Neither side shall execute any hostile act within, from, or against the Demilitarized Zone.

7. No person, military or civilian, shall be permitted to cross the Military Demarcation Line unless specifically authorized to do so by the Military Armistice Commission.

8. No person, military or civilian, in the Demilitarized Zone shall be permitted to enter the territory under

the military control of either side unless specifically authorized to do so by the Commander into whose territory entry is sought.

9. No person, military or civilian, shall be permitted to enter the Demilitarized Zone except persons concerned with the conduct of civil administration and relief and persons specifically authorized to enter by the Military Armistice Commission.

10. Civil administration and relief in that part of the Demilitarized Zone which is south of the Military Demarcation Line shall be the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command; and civil administration and relief in that part of the Demilitarized Zone which is north of the Military Demarcation Line shall be the joint responsibility of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers. The number of persons, military or civilian, from each side who are permitted to enter the Demilitarized Zone for the conduct of civil administration and relief shall be as determined by the respective Commanders, but in no case shall the total number authorized by either side exceed one thousand (1,000) persons at any one time. The number of civil police and the arms to be carried by them shall be as prescribed by the Military Armistice Commission. Other personnel shall not carry arms unless specifically authorized to do so by the Military Armistice Commission.

11. Nothing contained in this Article shall be construed to prevent the complete freedom of movement to, from, and within the Demilitarized Zone by the Military Armistice Commission, its assistants, its Joint Observer Teams with their assistants, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission hereinafter established, its assistants, its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams with their assistants, and of any other persons, materials, and equipment specifically authorized to enter the Demilitarized Zone by the Military Armistice Commission. Convenience of movement shall be permitted through the territory under the military control of either side over any route necessary to move between points within the Demilitarized Zone where such points are not connected by roads lying completely within the Demilitarized Zone.

Article II. CONCRETE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CEASE-FIRE AND ARMISTICE

A. General

12. The Commanders of the opposing sides shall order and enforce a complete cessation of all hostilities in Korea by all armed forces under their control, including all units and personnel of the ground, naval, and air forces, effective twelve (12) hours after this Armistice Agreement is signed. (See Paragraph 63 hereof for effective date and hour of the remaining provisions of this Armistice Agreement.)

13. In order to insure the stability of the Military Armistice so as to facilitate the attainment of a peaceful settlement through the holding by both sides of a political conference of a higher level, the Commanders of the opposing sides shall:

a. Within seventy-two (72) hours after this Armistice becomes effective, withdraw all of their military forces, supplies, and equipment from the Demilitarized Zone except as otherwise provided herein. All demolitions, minefields, wire entanglements, and other hazards to the safe movement of personnel of the Military Armistice Commission or its Joint Observer Teams, known to exist within the Demilitarized Zone after the withdrawal of military forces therefrom, together with lanes known to be free of all hazards, shall be reported to the Military Armistice Commission by the Commander of the side whose forces emplaced such hazards.

Subsequently, additional safe lanes shall be cleared; and eventually, within forty-five (45) days after the termination of the seventy-two (72) hour period, all such hazards shall be removed from the Demilitarized Zone as directed by and under the supervision of the Military Armistice Commission. At the termination of the seventy-two (72) hour period, except for unarmed troops authorized a forty-five (45) day period to complete salvage operations under Military Armistice Commission supervision, such units of a police nature as may be specifically requested by the Military Armistice Commission and agreed to by the Commanders of the opposing sides, and personnel authorized under Paragraphs 10 and 11 hereof, no personnel of either side shall be permitted to enter the Demilitarized Zone.

b. Within ten (10) days after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, withdraw all of their military forces, supplies and equipment from the rear and the coastal islands and waters of Korea of the other side. If such military forces are not withdrawn within the stated time limit, and there is no mutually agreed and valid reason for the delay, the other side shall have the right to take any action which it deems necessary for the maintenance of security and order. The term “coastal islands,” as used above, refers to those islands which, though occupied by one side at the time when this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, were controlled by the other side on 24 June 1950; provided, however, that all the islands lying to the north and west of the provincial boundary line between HWANGHAE-DO and KYONGGI-DO shall be under the military control of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People’s Army and the Commander of the Chinese People’s Volunteers except the island groups of PAENGYONG-DO (37°58'N, 124°40'E), TAECHONG-DO (37°50'N, 124°42'E), SOCHONG-DO (37°46'N, 124°46'E), YONPYONG-DO (37°38'N, 125°40'E), and U-DO (37°36'N, 125°58'E), which shall remain under the military control of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command. All the islands on the west coast of Korea lying south of the above-mentioned boundary line shall remain under the military control of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command.

c. Cease the introduction into Korea of reinforcing military personnel; provided, however, that the rotation of units and personnel, the arrival in Korea of personnel on a temporary duty basis, and the return to Korea of personnel after short periods of leave or temporary duty outside of Korea shall be permitted within the scope prescribed below. “Rotation” is defined as the replacement of units or personnel by other units or personnel who are commencing a tour of duty in Korea. Rotation personnel shall be introduced into and evacuated from Korea only through the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof. Rotation shall be conducted on a man-for-man basis; provided, however, that no more than thirty-five thousand (35,000) persons in the military service shall be admitted into Korea by either side in any calendar month under the rotation policy. No military personnel of either side shall be introduced into Korea if the introduction of such personnel will cause the aggregate of the military personnel of that side admitted into Korea since the effective date of this Armistice Agreement to exceed the cumulative total of the military personnel of that side who have departed from Korea since that date. Reports concerning arrivals in and departures from Korea of military personnel shall be made daily to the Military Armistice Commission and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, such reports shall include places of arrival and departure and the number of persons arriving at or departing from each such place. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, through its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams, shall conduct supervision and inspection of the rotation of units and personnel authorized above, at the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph

43 hereof.

d. Cease the introduction into Korea of reinforcing combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition; provided, however, that combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition which are destroyed, damaged, worn out, or used up during the period of the armistice may be replaced on the basis of piece-for-piece of the same effectiveness and the same type. Such combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition shall be introduced into Korea only through the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof. In order to justify the requirement for combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition to be introduced into Korea for replacement purposes, reports concerning every incoming shipment of these items shall be made to the Military Armistice Commission and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission; such reports shall include statements regarding the disposition of the items being replaced. Items to be replaced which are removed from Korea shall be removed only through the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, through its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall conduct supervision and inspection of the replacement of combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition authorized above, at the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof.

e. Insure that personnel of their respective commands who violate any of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement are adequately punished.

f. In those cases where places of burial are a matter of record and graves are actually found to exist, permit graves registration personnel of the other side to enter, within a definite time limit after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, the territory of Korea under their Military control, for the purpose of proceeding to such graves to recover and evacuate the bodies of the deceased military personnel of that side, including deceased prisoners of war. The specific procedures and the time limit for the performance of the above task shall be determined by the Military Armistice Commission. The Commanders of the opposing sides shall furnish to the other side all available information pertaining to the places of burial of the deceased military personnel of the other side.

g. Afford full protection and all possible assistance and cooperation to the Military Armistice Commission, its Joint Observer Teams, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, and its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams, in the carrying out of their functions and responsibilities hereinafter assigned; and accord to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, and to its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams, full convenience of movement between the headquarters of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof over main lines of communication agreed upon by both sides, and between the headquarters of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and the places where violations of this Armistice Agreement have been reported to have occurred. In order to prevent unnecessary delays, the use of alternate routes and means of transportation will be permitted whenever the main lines of communication are closed or impassable.

h. Provide such logistic support, including communications and transportation facilities, as may be required by the Military Armistice Commission and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and their Teams.

i. Each construct, operate, and maintain a suitable airfield in their respective ports of the Demilitarized

Zone in the vicinity of the headquarters of the Military Armistice Commission, for such uses as the Commission may determine.

j. Insure that all members and other personnel of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission hereinafter established shall enjoy the freedom and facilities necessary for the proper exercise of their function, including privileges, treatment, and immunities equivalent to those ordinarily enjoyed by accredited diplomatic personnel under international usage.

14. This Armistice Agreement shall apply to all opposing ground forces under the military control of either side, which ground forces shall respect the Demilitarized Zone and the area of Korea under the military control of the opposing side.

15. This Armistice Agreement shall apply to all opposing naval forces, which naval forces shall respect the waters contiguous to the Demilitarized Zone and to the land area of Korea under the military control of the opposing side, and shall not engage in blockade of any kind of Korea.

16. This Armistice Agreement shall apply to all opposing air forces, which air forces shall respect the air space over the Demilitarized Zone and over the area of Korea under the military control of the opposing side, and over the waters contiguous to both.

17. Responsibility for compliance with and enforcement of the terms and provisions of this Armistice Agreement is that of the signatories hereto and their successors in command. The Commanders of the opposing sides shall establish within their respective commands all measures and procedures necessary to insure complete compliance with all of the provisions hereof by all elements of their commands. They shall actively cooperate with one another and with the Military Armistice Commission and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in requiring observance of both the letter and the spirit of all of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement.

18. The costs of the operations of the Military Armistice Commission and of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and of their Teams shall be shared equally by the two opposing sides.

B. Military Armistice Commission

1. Composition

19. A Military Armistice Commission is hereby established.

20. The Military Armistice Commission shall be composed of ten (10) senior officers, five (5) of whom shall be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and five (5) of whom shall be appointed jointly by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People’s Army and the Commander of the Chinese People’s Volunteers. Of the ten members, three (3) from each side shall be of general or flag rank. The two (2) remaining members on each side may be major generals, brigadier generals, colonels, or their equivalents.

21. Members of the Military Armistice Commission shall be permitted to use staff assistants as required.

22. The Military Armistice Commission shall be provided with the necessary administrative personnel to establish a Secretariat charged with assisting the Commission by performing record-keeping, secretarial, interpreting, and such other functions as the Commission may assign to it. Each side shall appoint to the Secretariat a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary and such clerical and specialized personnel as required by the Secretariat. Records shall be kept in English, Korean, and Chinese, all of which shall be equally authentic.

23. a. The Military Armistice Commission shall be initially provided with and assisted by ten (10) Joint

Observer Teams, which number may be reduced by agreement of the senior members of both sides on the Military Armistice Commission.

b. Each Joint Observer Team shall be composed of not less than four (4) nor more than six (6) officers of field grade, half of whom shall be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and half of whom shall be appointed jointly by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers. Additional personnel such as drivers, clerks, and interpreters shall be furnished by each side as required for the functioning of the Joint Observer Teams.

2. Functions and Authority

24. The general mission of the Military Armistice Commission shall be to supervise the implementation of this Armistice Agreement and to settle through negotiations any violations of this Armistice Agreement.

25. The Military Armistice Commission shall:

a. Locate its headquarters in the vicinity of PANMUNJOM (37°57'29" N, 126°40'00" E). The Military Armistice Commission may relocate its headquarters at another point within the Demilitarized Zone by agreement of the senior members of both sides on the Commission.

b. Operate as a joint organization without a chairman.

c. Adopt such rules of procedure as it may, from time to time, deem necessary.

d. Supervise the carrying out of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement pertaining to the Demilitarized Zone and to the Han River Estuary.

e. Direct the operations of the Joint Observer Teams.

f. Settle through negotiations any violations of this Armistice Agreement.

g. Transmit immediately to the Commanders of the opposing sides all reports of investigations of violations of this Armistice Agreement and all other reports and records of proceedings received from the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission.

h. Give general supervision and direction to the Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War and the Committee for Assisting the Return of Displaced Civilians, hereinafter established.

i. Act as an intermediary in transmitting communications between the Commanders of the opposing sides; provided however, that the foregoing shall not be construed to preclude the Commanders of both sides from communicating with each other by any other means which they may desire to employ.

j. Provide credentials and distinctive insignia for its staff and its Joint Observer Teams, and a distinctive marking for all vehicles, aircraft, and vessels, used in the performance of its mission.

26. The mission of the Joint Observer Teams shall be to assist the Military Armistice Commission in supervising the carrying out of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement to the Demilitarized Zone and to the Han River Estuary.

27. The Military Armistice Commission, or the senior member of either side thereof, is authorized to dispatch Joint Observer Teams to investigate violations of this Armistice Agreement reported to have occurred in the Demilitarized Zone or in the Han River Estuary; provided, however, that not more than one half of the Joint Observer Teams which have not been dispatched by the Military Armistice Commission may be dispatched at any one time by the senior member of either side on the Commission.

28. The Military Armistice Commission, or the senior member of either side thereof, is authorized to request the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission to conduct special observations and inspections at places outside the Demilitarized Zone where violations of this Armistice Agreement have been reported to have occurred.

29. When the Military Armistice Commission determines that a violation of this Armistice Agreement has occurred, it shall immediately report such violation to the Commanders of the opposing sides.

30. When the Military Armistice Commission determines that a violation of this Armistice Agreement has been corrected to its satisfaction, it shall so report to the Commanders of the opposing sides.

3. General

31. The Military Armistice Commission shall meet daily. Recesses of not to exceed seven (7) days may be agreed upon by the senior members of both sides; provided, that such recesses may be terminated on twenty-four (24) hour notice by the senior member of either side.

32. Copies of the record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Military Armistice Commission shall be forwarded to the Commanders of the opposing sides as soon as possible after each meeting.

33. The Joint Observer Teams shall make periodic reports to the Military Armistice Commission as required by the Commission and, in addition, shall make such special reports as may be deemed necessary by them, or as may be required by the Commission.

34. The Military Armistice Commission shall maintain duplicate files of the reports and records of proceedings required by this Armistice Agreement. The Commission is authorized to maintain duplicate files of such other reports, records, etc., as may be necessary in the conduct of its business. Upon eventual dissolution of the Commission, one set of the above files shall be turned over to each side.

35. The Military Armistice Commission may make recommendations to the Commanders of the opposing sides with respect to amendments or additions to this Armistice Agreement. Such recommended changes should generally be those designed to insure a more effective armistice.

C. Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission

1. Composition

36. A Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission is hereby established.

37. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall be composed of four (4) senior officers, two (2) of whom shall be appointed by neutral nations nominated by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, namely, SWEDEN and SWITZERLAND, and two (2) of whom shall be appointed by neutral nations nominated jointly by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, namely, POLAND and CZECHOSLOVAKIA. The term "neutral nations" as herein used is defined as those nations whose combatant forces have not participated in the hostilities in Korea. Members appointed to the Commission may be from the armed forces of the appointing nations. Each member shall designate an alternate member to attend those meetings which for any reason the principal member is unable to attend. Such alternate members shall be of the same nationality as their principals. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission may take action whenever the number of members present from the neutral nations nominated by one side is equal to the number of members present from the neutral nations nominated by the other

side.

38. Members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall be permitted to use staff assistants furnished by the neutral nations as required. These staff assistants may be appointed as alternate members of the Commission.

39. The neutral nations shall be requested to furnish the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission with the necessary administrative personnel to establish a Secretariat charged with assisting the Commission by performing necessary record-keeping, secretarial, interpreting, and such other functions as the Commission may assign to it.

40. a. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall be initially provided with, and assisted by, twenty (20) Neutral Nations Inspection Teams, which number may be reduced by agreement of the senior members of both sides on the Military Armistice Commission. The Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall be responsible to, shall report to, and shall be subject to the direction of, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission only.

b. Each Neutral Nations Inspection Team shall be composed of not less than four (4) officers, preferably of field grade, half of whom shall be from the neutral nations nominated by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and half of whom shall be from the neutral nations nominated jointly by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers. Members appointed to the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams may be from the armed forces of the appointing nations. In order to facilitate the functioning of the Teams, sub-teams composed of not less than two (2) members, one of whom shall be from a neutral nation nominated by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and one of whom shall be from a neutral nation nominated by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, may be formed as circumstances require. Additional personnel such as drivers, clerks, interpreters, and communications personnel, and such equipment as may be required by the Teams to perform their missions, shall be furnished by the Commander of each side, as required, in the Demilitarized Zone and in the territory under his military control. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission may provide itself and the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams with such of the above personnel and equipment of its own as it may desire; provided, however, that such personnel shall be personnel of the same neutral nations of which the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission is composed.

2. Functions and Authority

41. The mission of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall be to carry out the functions of supervision, observation, inspection, and investigation, as stipulated in Subparagraphs 13c and 13d and Paragraph 28 hereof, and to report the results of such supervision, observation, inspection, and investigation to the Military Armistice Commission.

42. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall:

a. Locate its headquarters in proximity to the headquarters of the Military Armistice Commission.

b. Adopt such rules of procedure as it may, from time to time, deem necessary.

c. Conduct, through its members and its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams, the supervision and inspection provided for in Sub-paragraphs 13c and 13d of this Armistice Agreement at the ports of entry

enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof, and the special observations and inspections provided for in Paragraph 28 hereof at those places where violations of this Armistice Agreement have been reported to have occurred. The inspection of combat air-craft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition by the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall be such as to enable them to properly insure that reinforcing combat aircraft, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition are not being introduced into Korea; but this shall not be construed as authorizing inspections or examinations of any secret designs or characteristics of any combat aircraft, armored vehicle, weapon, or ammunition.

d. Direct and supervise the operations of the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams.

e. Station five (5) Neutral Nations Inspection Teams at the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof located in the territory under the military control of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command; and five (5) Neutral Nations Inspection Teams at the ports of entry enumerated in Paragraph 43 hereof located in the territory under the military control of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese Peoples Volunteers; and establish initially ten (10) mobile neutral Nations Inspection Teams in reserve, stationed in the general vicinity of the headquarters of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, which number may be reduced by agreement of the senior members of both sides on the Military Armistice Commission. Not more than half of the mobile Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall be dispatched at any one time in accordance with requests of the senior member of either side on the Military Armistice Commission.

f. Subject to the provisions of the preceding Sub-paragraph, conduct without delay investigations of reported violations of this Armistice Agreement, including such investigations of reported violations of this Armistice Agreement as may be requested by the Military Armistice Commission or by the senior member of either side on the Commission.

g. Provide credentials and distinctive insignia for its staff and its Neutral Nations Inspection Teams, and a distinctive marking for all vehicles, aircraft, and vessels, used in the performance of its mission.

43. Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall be stationed at the following ports of entry:

Territory under the military control of the United Nations command

INCHON (37°28'N, 126°38'E)

TAEGU (35°52'N, 128°36'E)

PUSAN (35°06'N, 129°02'E)

KANGNUNG (37°45'N, 128°54'E)

KUNSAN (35° 59'N, 126°43'E)

Territory under the military control of the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers

SINUIJU (40°'N, 124°24'E)

CHONGJIN (41°46'N, 129°49'E)

HUNGNAM (39°50'N, 127°37'E)

MANPO (41°09'N, 126°18'E)

SINANJU (39°36'N, 125°36'E)

These Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall be accorded full convenience of movement within the

areas and over the routes of communication set forth on the attached map.

3. General

44. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall meet daily. Recesses of not to exceed seven (7) days may be agreed upon by the members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission; provided, that such recesses may be terminated on twenty-four (24) hour notice by any member.

45. Copies of the record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall be forwarded to the Military Armistice Commission as soon as possible after each meeting. Records shall be kept in English, Korean, and Chinese.

46. The Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall make periodic reports concerning the results of their supervision, observations, inspections, and investigations to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission as required by the Commission and, in addition, shall make such special reports as may be deemed necessary by them, or may be required by the Commission. Reports shall be submitted by a Team as a whole, but may also be submitted by one or more individual members thereof; provided, that the reports submitted by one or more individual members thereof shall be considered as informational only.

47. Copies of the reports made by the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams shall be forwarded to the Military Armistice Commission by the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission without delay and in the language in which received. They shall not be delayed by the process of translation or evaluation. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall evaluate such reports at the earliest practicable time and shall forward their findings to the Military Armistice Commission as a matter of priority. The Military Armistice Commission shall not take final action with regard to any such report until the evaluation thereof has been received from the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. Members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and of its Teams shall be subject to appearance before the Military Armistice Commission, at the request of the senior member of either side on the Military Armistice Commission, for clarification of any report submitted.

48. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission shall maintain duplicate files of the reports and records of proceedings required by this Armistice Agreement. The Commission is authorized to maintain duplicate files of such other reports, records, etc., as may be necessary in the conduct of its business. Upon eventual dissolution of the Commission, one set of the above files shall be turned over to each side.

49. The Neutral Supervisory Commission may make recommendations to the Military Armistice Commission with respect to amendments or additions to this Armistice Agreement. Such recommended changes should generally be those designed to insure a more effective armistice.

50. The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, or any member thereof, shall be authorized to communicate with any member of the Military Armistice Commission.

Article III. ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO PRISONERS OF WAR

51. The release and repatriation of all prisoners of war held in the custody of each side at the time this Armistice Agreement becomes effective shall be effected in conformity with the following provisions agreed upon by both sides prior to the signing of this Armistice Agreement.

a. Within sixty (60) days after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, each side shall, without offering any hindrance, directly repatriate and hand over in groups all those prisoners of war in its custody who

insist on repatriation to the side to which they belonged at the time of capture. Repatriation shall be accomplished in accordance with the related provisions of this Article. In order to expedite the repatriation process of such personnel, each side shall, prior to the signing of the Armistice Agreement, exchange the total numbers, by nationalities, of personnel to be directly repatriated. Each group of prisoners of war delivered to the other side shall be accompanied by rosters, prepared by nationality, to include name, rank (if any) and internment or military serial number.

b. Each side shall release all those remaining prisoners of war, who are not directly repatriated, from its military control and from its custody and hand them over to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission for disposition in accordance with the provisions in the Annex hereto: “Terms of Reference for Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.”

c. So that there may be no misunderstanding owing to the equal use of three languages, the act of delivery of a prisoner of war by one side to the other side shall, for the purposes of this Armistice Agreement, be called “repatriation” in English, “song hwan” in Korean, and “ch’ien fan” in Chinese, notwithstanding the nationality or place of residence of such prisoner of war.

52. Each side insures that it will not employ in acts of war in the Korean conflict any prisoner of war released and repatriated incident to the coming into effect of this Armistice Agreement.

53. All the sick and injured prisoners of war who insist upon repatriation shall be repatriated with priority. Insofar as possible, there shall be captured medical personnel repatriated concurrently with the sick and injured prisoners of war, so as to provide medical care and attendance en route.

54. The repatriation of all the prisoners of war required by Sub-paragraph 51a hereof shall be completed within a time limit of sixty (60) days after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective. Within this time limit each side undertakes to complete the repatriation of the above-mentioned prisoners of war in its custody at the earliest practicable time.

55. PANMUNJOM is designated as the place where prisoners of war will be delivered and received by both sides. Additional place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war in the Demilitarized Zone may be designated, if necessary, by the Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War.

56. a. A Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War is hereby established. It shall be composed of six (6) officers of field grade, three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and three (3) of whom shall be appointed jointly by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People’s Army and the Commander of the Chinese People’s Volunteers. This Committee shall, under the general supervision and direction of the Military Armistice Commission, be responsible for coordinating the specific plans of both sides for the repatriation of prisoners of war and for supervising the execution by both sides of all of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement relating to the repatriation of prisoners of war. It shall be the duty of this Committee to coordinate the timing of the arrival of prisoners of war at the place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war from the prisoner of war camps of both sides; to make, when necessary, such special arrangements as may be required with regard to the transportation and welfare of sick and injured prisoners of war; to coordinate the work of the joint Red Cross teams, established in Paragraph 57 hereof, in assisting in the repatriation of prisoners of war; to supervise the implementation of the arrangements for the actual repatriation of

prisoners of war stipulated in Paragraphs 53 and 54 hereof; to select, when necessary, additional place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war, and to carry out such other related functions as are required for the repatriation of prisoners of war.

b. When unable to reach agreement on any matter relating to its responsibilities, the Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War shall immediately refer such matter to the Military Armistice Commission for decision. The Commission for Repatriation of Prisoners of War shall maintain its headquarters in proximity to the headquarters of the Military Armistice Commission.

c. The Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War shall be dissolved by the Military Armistice Commission upon completion of the program of repatriation of prisoners of war.

57. a. Immediately after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, joint Red Cross teams composed of representatives of the national Red Cross Societies of the countries contributing forces to the United Nations Command on the one hand, and representatives of the Red Cross Society of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and representatives of the Red Cross Society of the People's Republic of China on the other hand, shall be established. The joint Red Cross teams shall assist in the execution by both sides of those provisions of this Armistice Agreement relating to the repatriation of all the prisoners of war specified in Sub-paragraph 51a hereof, who insist upon repatriation, by the performance of such humanitarian services as are necessary and desirable for the welfare of the prisoners of war. To accomplish this task, the joint Red Cross teams shall provide assistance in the delivering and receiving of prisoners of war by both sides at the place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war, and shall visit the prisoner of war camps of both sides to comfort the prisoners of war and to bring in and distribute gift articles for the comfort and welfare of the prisoners of war. The joint Red Cross teams may provide services to prisoners of war while en route from prisoner of war camps to the place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war.

b. The Joint Red Cross teams shall be organized as set forth below:

(1) One team shall be composed of twenty (20) members, namely, ten (10) representatives from the national Red Cross Societies of each side, to assist in the delivering and receiving of prisoners of war by both sides at the place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war. The chairmanship of this team shall alternate daily between representatives from the Red Cross Societies of the two sides. The work and services of this team shall be coordinated by the Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War.

(2) One team shall be composed of sixty (60) members, namely, thirty (30) representatives from the national Red Cross Societies of each side, to visit the prisoners of war camps under the administration of the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers. This team may provide services to prisoners of war while en route from the prisoner of war camps to the place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war. A representative of the Red Cross Society of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or of the Red Cross Society of the People's Republic of China shall serve as chairman of this team.

(3) One team shall be composed of sixty (60) members, namely, thirty (30) representatives from the national Red Cross Societies of each side, to visit the prisoner of war camps under the administration of the United Nations Command. This team may provide services to prisoners of war while en route from the prisoner of war camps to the place(s) of delivery and reception of prisoners of war. A representative of a Red Cross Society

of a nation contributing forces to the United Nations Command shall serve as chairman of this team.

(4) In order to facilitate the functioning of each joint Red Cross team, sub-teams composed of not less than two (2) members from the team, with an equal number of representatives from each side, may be formed as circumstances require.

(5) Additional personnel such as drivers, clerks, and interpreters, and such equipment as may be required by the joint Red Cross teams to perform their missions, shall be furnished by the Commander of each side to the team operating in the territory under his military control.

(6) Whenever jointly agreed upon by the representatives of both sides or any joint Red Cross team, the size of such team may be increased or decreased, subject to confirmation by the Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War.

c. The Commander of each side shall cooperate fully with the joint Red Cross teams in the performance of their functions, and undertakes to insure the security of the personnel of the joint Red Cross team in the area under his military control. The Commander of each side shall provide such logistic, administrative, and communications facilities as may be required by the team operating in the territory under his military control.

d. The joint Red Cross teams shall be dissolved upon completion of the program of repatriation of all the prisoners of war specified in Sub- paragraph 51a hereof, who insist upon repatriation.

58. a. The Commander of each side shall furnish to the Commander of the other side as soon as practicable, but not later than ten (10) days after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, the following information concerning prisoners of war:

(1) Complete data pertaining to the prisoners of war who escaped since the effective date of the data last exchanged.

(2) Insofar as practicable, information regarding name, nationality, rank, and other identification data, date and cause of death, and place of burial, of those prisoners of war who died while in his custody.

b. If any prisoners of war escape or die after the effective date of the supplementary information specified above, the detaining side shall furnish to the other side, through the Committee for Repatriation of Prisoners of War, the data pertaining thereto in accordance with the provisions of Sub-paragraph 58a hereof. Such data shall be furnished at ten-day intervals until the completion of the program of delivery and reception of prisoners of war.

c. Any escaped prisoner of war who returns to the custody of the detaining side after the completion of the program of delivery and reception of prisoners of war shall be delivered to the Military Armistice Commission for disposition.

59. a. All civilians who, at the time this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, are in territory under the military control of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and who, on 24 June 1950, resided north of the Military Demarcation Line established in this Armistice Agreement shall, if they desire to return home, be permitted and assisted by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, to return to the area north of the Military Demarcation Line; and all civilians, who, at the time this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, are in territory under the military control of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People’s Army and the Commander of the Chinese People’s Volunteers, and who, on 24 June 1950, resided south of the Military

Demarcation Line established in this Armistice Agreement shall, if they desire to return home, be permitted and assisted by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers to return to the area south of the Military Demarcation Line. The Commander of each side shall be responsible for publicizing widely throughout territory under his military control the contents of the provisions of this Sub-paragraph, and for calling upon the appropriate civil authorities to give necessary guidance and assistance to all such civilians who desire to return home.

b. All civilians of foreign nationality who, at the time this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, are in territory under the military control of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers shall, if they desire to proceed to territory under the military control of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, be permitted and assisted to do so; all civilians of foreign nationality who, at the time this Armistice Agreement becomes effective, are in territory under the military control of the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, shall, if they desire to proceed to territory under the military control of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, be permitted and assisted to do so. The Commander of each side shall be responsible for publicizing widely throughout the territory under his military control the contents of the provisions of this Sub-paragraph, and for calling upon the appropriate civil authorities to give necessary guidance and assistance to all such civilians of foreign nationality who desire to proceed to territory under the military control of the Commander of the other side.

c. Measures to assist in the return of civilians provided for in Subparagraph 59a hereof and the movement of civilians provided for in Subparagraph 59b hereof shall be commenced by both sides as soon as possible after this Armistice Agreement becomes effective.

d. (1) A Committee for Assisting the Return of Displaced Civilians is hereby established. It shall be composed of four (4) officers of field grade, two (2) of whom shall be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, and two (2) of whom shall be appointed jointly by the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers. This Committee shall, under the general supervision and direction of the Military Armistice Commission, be responsible for coordinating the specific plans of both sides for assistance to the return of the above-mentioned civilians, and for supervising the execution of both sides of all of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement relating to the return of the above-mentioned civilians. It shall be the duty of this Committee to make necessary arrangements, including those of transportation, for expediting and coordinating the movement of the above-mentioned civilians; to select the crossing point(s) through which the above-mentioned civilians will cross the Military Demarcation Line; to arrange for security at the crossing points; and to carry out such other functions as are required to accomplish the return of the above-mentioned civilians.

(2) When unable to reach agreement on any matter relating to its responsibilities, the Committee for Assisting the Return of Displaced Civilians shall immediately refer such matter to the Military Armistice Commission for decision. The Committee for Assisting the Return of Displaced Civilians shall maintain its headquarters in proximity to the headquarters of the Military Armistice Commission.

(3) The Committee for Assisting the Return of Displaced Civilians shall be dissolved by the Military

Armistice Commission upon fulfillment of its mission.

Article IV. RECOMMENDATION TO THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED ON BOTH SIDES

60. In order to insure the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, the military Commanders of both sides hereby recommend to the governments of the countries concerned on both sides that, within three (3) months after the Armistice Agreement is signed and becomes effective, a political conference of a higher level of both sides be held by representatives appointed respectively to settle through negotiation the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, etc.

Article V. MISCELLANEOUS

61. Amendments and additions to this Armistice Agreement must be mutually agreed to by the Commanders of the opposing sides.

62. The Articles and Paragraphs of this Armistice Agreement shall remain in effect until expressly superseded either by mutually acceptable amendments and additions or by provision in an appropriate agreement for a peaceful settlement at a political level between both sides.

63. All of the provisions of this Armistice Agreement, other than Paragraph 12, shall become effective at 2200 hours on 27 July 1953.

Done at Panmunjom, Korea, at 1000 hours on the 27th day of July 1953, in English, Korean, and Chinese, all texts being equally authentic.

KIM IL SUNG
Marshall, Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Supreme Commander, Korean People's Army
PENG THE-HUAI
Commander, Chinese People's Volunteers
MARK W. CLARK
General, United States Army
Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command
PRESENT
NAM IL
General, Korean People's Army
Senior Delegate, Delegation of the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers
WILLIAM K. HARRISON, JR.
Lieutenant General, United States Army
Senior Delegate, United Nations Command Delegation

ANNEX

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR NEUTRAL NATIONS REPATRIATION COMMISSION

(See Sub-paragraph 51b)

1. In order to ensure that all prisoners of war have the opportunity to exercise their right to be repatriated following an armistice, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, Czechoslovakia and India shall each be requested by both

sides to appoint a member to a Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission which shall be established to take custody in Korea of those prisoners of war who, while in the custody of the detaining powers, have not exercised their right to be repatriated. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall establish its headquarters within the Demilitarized Zone in the vicinity of Panmunjom, and shall station subordinate bodies of the same composition as the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission at those locations at which the Repatriation Commission assumes custody of prisoners of war. Representatives of both sides shall be permitted to observe the operations of the Repatriation Commission and its subordinate bodies to include explanations and interviews.

2. Sufficient armed forces and any other operating personnel required to assist the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in carrying out its functions and responsibilities shall be provided exclusively by India, whose representative shall be the umpire in accordance with the provisions of Article 132 of the Geneva Convention and shall also be chairman and executive agent of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. Representatives from each of the other four powers shall be allowed staff assistants in equal number not to exceed fifty (50) each. When any of the representatives of the neutral nations is absent for some reason, that representative shall designate an alternate representative of his own nationality to exercise his functions and authority. The arms of all personnel provided for in this Paragraph shall be limited to military police type small arms.

3. No force or threat of force shall be used against the prisoners of war specified in Paragraph 1 above to prevent or effect their repatriation, and no violence to their persons or affront to their dignity or self-respect shall be permitted in any manner for any purpose whatsoever (but see Paragraph 7 below). This duty is enjoined on and entrusted to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. This Commission shall ensure that prisoners of war shall at all times be treated humanely in accordance with the specific provisions of the Geneva Convention, and with the general spirit of that Convention.

II. CUSTODY OF PRISONERS OF WAR

4. All prisoners of war who have not exercised their right of repatriation following the effective date of the Armistice Agreement shall be released from the military control and from the custody of the detaining side as soon as practicable, and, in all cases, within sixty (60) days subsequent to the effective date of the Armistice Agreement to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission at locations in Korea to be designated by the detaining side.

5. At the time the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission assumes control of the prisoner of war installations, the military forces of the detaining side shall be withdrawn therefrom, so that the locations specified in the preceding Paragraph shall be taken over completely by the armed forces of India.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of Paragraph 5 above, the detaining side shall have the responsibility for maintaining and ensuring security and order in the areas around the locations where the prisoners of war are in custody and for preventing and restraining any armed forces (including irregular armed forces) in the area under its control from any acts of disturbance and intrusion against the locations where the prisoners of war are in custody.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of Paragraph 3 above, nothing in this agreement shall be construed as derogating from the authority of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission to exercise its legitimate functions

and responsibilities for the control of the prisoners of war under its temporary jurisdiction.

III. EXPLANATION

8. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, after having received and taken into custody all those prisoners of war who have not exercised their right to be repatriated, shall immediately make arrangements so that within ninety (90) days after the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission takes over the custody, the nations to which the prisoners of war belong shall have freedom and facilities to send representatives to locations where such prisoners of war are in custody to explain to all the prisoners of war depending upon these nations their rights and to inform them of any matters relating to their return to their homelands, particularly of their full freedom to return home to lead a peaceful life, under the following provisions:

a. The number of such explaining representatives shall not exceed seven (7) per thousand prisoners of war held in custody by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission; and the minimum authorized shall not be less than a total of five (5);

b. The hours during which the explaining representatives shall have access to the prisoners shall be as determined by the Neutral Repatriation Commission, and generally in accord with Article 53 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War;

c. All explanations and interviews shall be conducted in the presence of a representative of each member nation of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and a representative from the detaining side;

d. Additional provisions governing the explanation work shall be prescribed by the Neutral Repatriation Commission, and will be designed to employ the principles enumerated in Paragraph 3 above and in this Paragraph;

e. The explaining representatives, while engaging in their work, shall be allowed to bring with them necessary facilities and personnel for wireless communications. The number of communications personnel shall be limited to one team per location at which explaining representatives are in residence, except in the event all prisoners of war are concentrated in one location, in which case, two (2) teams shall be permitted. Each team shall consist of not more than six (6) communications personnel.

9. Prisoners of war in its custody shall have freedom and facilities to make representations and communications to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and to representatives and subordinate bodies of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and to inform them of their desires on any matter concerning the prisoners of war themselves, in accordance with arrangements made for the purpose by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.

IV. DISPOSITION OF PRISONERS OF WAR

10. Any prisoner of war who, while in the custody of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, decides to exercise the right of repatriation, shall make an application requesting repatriation to a body consisting of a representative of each member nation of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. Once such an application is made, it shall be considered immediately by majority vote the validity of such application. Once such an application is made to and validated by the Commission or one of its subordinate bodies, the prisoner of war concerned shall immediately be transferred to and accommodated in the tents set up for those who are ready to be repatriated. Thereafter, he shall, while still in the custody of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission,

be delivered forthwith to the prisoner of war exchange point at Panmunjom for repatriation under the procedure prescribed in the Armistice Agreement.

11. At the expiration of ninety (90) days after the transfer of custody of the prisoners of war to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, access of representatives to captured personnel as provided for in Paragraph 8 above, shall terminate, and the question of disposition of the prisoners of war who have not exercised their right to be repatriated shall be submitted to the Political Conference recommended to be convened in Paragraph 60, Draft Armistic Agreement, which shall endeavor to settle this question within thirty (30) days, during which period the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall continue to retain custody of those prisoners of war. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall declare the relief from the prisoners of war status to civilian status of any prisoners of war who have not exercised their right to be repatriated and for whom no other disposition has been agreed to by the Political Conference within one hundred and twenty (120) days after the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission has assumed their custody. Thereafter, according to the application of each individual, and those who choose to go to neutral nations shall be assisted by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and the Red Cross Society of India. This operation shall be completed within thirty (30) days, and upon its completion, the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall immediately cease its functions and declare its dissolution. After the dissolution of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, whenever and wherever any of those above-mentioned civilians who have been relieved from the prisoner of war status desire to return to their fatherlands, the authorities of the localities where they are shall be responsible for assisting them in returning to their fatherlands.

V. RED CROSS VISITATION

12. Essential Red Cross service for prisoners of war in custody of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall be provided by India in accordance with regulations issued by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.

VI. PRESS COVERAGE

13. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall insure freedom of the press and other news media in observing the entire operation as enumerated herein, in accordance with procedures to be established by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.

VII. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR PRISONERS OF WAR

14. Each side shall provide logistical support for the prisoners of war in the area under its military control, delivering required support to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission at an agreed delivery point in the vicinity of each prisoner of war installation.

15. The cost of repatriating prisoners to the exchange point at Panmunjom shall be borne by the detaining side and the cost from the exchange point by the side on which said prisoners depend in accordance with Article 118 of the Geneva Convention.

16. The Red Cross Society of India shall be responsible for providing such general service personnel in the prisoner of war installations as required by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.

17. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall provide medical support for the prisoners of war as may be practicable. The detaining side shall provide medical support as practicable upon the request of the

Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and specifically for those cases requiring extensive treatment or hospitalization. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall maintain custody of prisoners of war during such hospitalization. The detaining side shall facilitate such custody. Upon completion of treatment, prisoners of war shall be returned to a prisoners of war installation as specified in Paragraph 4 above.

18. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission is entitled to obtain from both sides such legitimate assistance as it may require in carrying out its duties and tasks, but both sides shall not under any name and in any form interfere or exert influence.

VIII. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR THE NEUTRAL NATIONS REPATRIATION COMMISSION

19. Each side shall be responsible for providing logistical support for the personnel of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission stationed in the area under its military control, and both sides shall contribute on an equal basis to such support within the Demilitarized Zone. The precise arrangements shall be subject to determination between the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and the detaining side in each case.

20. Each of the detaining sides shall be responsible for protecting the explaining representatives from the other side white in transit over lines of communication within its area, as set forth in Paragraph 23 for the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, to a place of residence and while in residence in the vicinity of but not wthin each of the locations where the prisoners of war are in custody. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall be responsible for the security of such representatives within the actual limits of the locations where the prisoners of war are in custody.

21. Each of the detaining sides shall provide transportation, housing, communication, and other agreed logistical support to the explaining representatives of the other side while they are in the area under its military control. Such services shall be provided on a reimbursable basis.

IX. PUBLICATION

22. After the Armistice Agreement becomes effective, the terms of this agreement shall be made known to all prisoners of war who, while in the custody of the detaining side, have not exercised their right to be repatriated.

X. MOVEMENT

23. The movement of the personnel of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and repatriated prisoners of war shall be over lines of communication, as determined by the command(s) of the opposing side and the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. A map showing these lines of communication shall be furnished the command of the opposing side and the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. Movement of such personnel, except within locations as designated in Paragraph 4 above, shall be under the control of and escorted by, personnel of the side in whose area the travel is being undertaken; however, such movement shall not be subject to any obstruction and coercion.

XI. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

24. The interpretation of this agreement shall rest with the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. The Neutral Repatriation Commission, and/or any subordinate bodies to which functions are designed or assigned by the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, shall operate on the basis of majority vote.

25. The Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission shall submit a weekly report to the opposing

Commanders on the status of prisoners of war in its custody, indicating the numbers repatriated and remaining at the end of each week.

26. When this agreement has been acceded to by both sides and by the five powers named herein, it shall become effective upon the date the Armistice becomes effective.

Done at Panmunjom, Korea, at 1400 hours on the 8th day of June 1953, in English, Korean, and Chinese, all texts being equally authentic.

NAM IL

General, Korean People's Army

Senior Delegate, Delegation of the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers

WILLIAM K. HARRISON, JR.

Lieutenant General, United States Army

Senior Delegate, United Nations Command Delegation

Operations in West Korea
Pat Meid and James M. Yingling

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U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 1

Click here to view photo

(12/28/50) Hungnam is destroyed by a Navy demolition team as UN forces evacuate the port city.

Click here to view photo

(9/23/51) USS *Toledo* (CA-133) fires 5 inch salvo at enemy installations in Wonsan, Korea.

Click here to view photo

(9/14/50) USS *Rowan* (DD-782) escorts USS *Mt. McKinley* (AGC-7) off the Korean coast en route to Inchon.

Click here to view photo

(3/18/52) The heavy cruiser USS *St. Paul*, (right) goes alongside the battleship *Wisconsin*, (center) to transfer wounded South Korean Marines while destroyer *Buck*, (left) gets her mail.

Click here to view photo

(8/7/51) The destroyer *Mason* is dwarfed by the towering, mist covered mountains of North Korea. *Mason* was teamed with the battlewagon *New Jersey* on a special mission of bombarding Communist troops lodged in the ridges pictured in the foreground when this photo was taken.

Click here to view photo

(7/1/51) On 29 June 1950, cruiser *Juneau* (CLAA-119) is the first Navy ship to fire her guns at the North Korean invaders.

Click here to view photo

USS *Juneau* (CLAA-119) at anchor in Kagoshima Wan on 25 June 1950, first day of the war.

Click here to view photo

Destroyer *Lyman K. Swenson* (DD-729) at sea in 1953.

Click here to view photo

(1/10/53) Providing anti-aircraft and anti-submarine protection for ships of Task Force 77, destroyer *Collet* cuts through the Sea of Japan off the coast of Korea.

Click here to view photo

Destroyer *Collet* (DD-730) in the 1950s.

Click here to view photo

Destroyer *Mansfield* (DD-728) in 1953.

Click here to view photo

(12/14/50) A temporary wooden bow is attached to USS *Mansfield* after losing her bow to a mine in Korean waters.

Click here to view photo

The destroyer *Dehaven* (DD-727), decks awash in a rough sea, refuels from an aircraft carrier off the coast of North Korea, typifying Navy “on the spot” replenishment.

Click here to view photo

(10/12/51) The veteran heavy cruiser *Toledo* takes its battle station off the East coast of Korea as part of Task Force 77.

Click here to view photo

(12/10/52) USS *Rochester* (CA-124) in a Japanese port preparing for her third cruise in Korean Waters. The heavy cruiser compiled an impressive record in two previous tours in the Far East, having aided in the amphibious landing at Inchon and the evacuation of Hungnam.

Click here to view photo

(1/24/51) Officers and enlisted men of the cruiser *Rochester* line the decks of the ship on arrival at Pearl Harbor to watch hula dancers performing on the dock

Click here to view photo
Heavy cruiser *Rochester* (CA-124) in 1952.

Click here to view photo
(10/21/50) USS *Helena* (CA-75) fires a broadside salvo at Chong Jin, Korea, 39 miles from the Soviet border.

Click here to view photo
Heavy cruiser *Helena* (CA-75) in the 1950s.

Click here to view photo
A cruiser and destroyer take a break from combat operations to refuel from a U.S. Navy oiler in 1951.

Click here to view photo
Destroyer *George K. MacKenzie* (DD-836) while at sea in February,1951.

Click here to view photo

(12/23/50) The heavy cruiser *Saint Paul* fires a salvo turning night into day.

Click here to view photo

In this photograph, six vessels moored alongside the repair ship *Jason* represent four nations in the UN naval forces operating off Korea. The vessels are: USS *Hamner*, USS *Gloucester*, Colombian ship ARCC *Aimirante Padilla*, Australian HMAS *Murchison*, South Korean ROK *Taedong*, and USS *Dextrous*.

Click here to view photo

(6/18/52) The battleship *Iowa* (center) takes fueling lines from a Navy tanker (top) during refueling operations off the coast of Korea. A destroyer (bottom) takes fuel from the *Iowa*.

Click here to view photo

(12/13/52) USS *Waxbill* (AMS-39) under fire by enemy shore batteries while laying a smoke screen in Wonsan Harbor, Korea.

Click here to view photo

(12/28/50) USS *Begor* (APD-127) lies at anchor ready to load the last UN landing craft as a huge explosion rips harbor installations at Hungnam.

Click here to view photo

(5/19/51) British cruiser Kenya replenishes its depleted fuel and ammunition stores in a Far East port after completing an extended cruise in Korean waters. The cruiser is a unit of the United Nations Blockading and Escort Force commanded by RADM Allan E. Smith, USN.

Click here to view photo

(1/23/53) The gun captain of this ice-covered mount inspects the de-icing job before him aboard the carrier *Oriskany* (CVA-34) in Korean waters.

Click here to view photo

(4/2/52) The battleship *Wisconsin*'s 40-mm guns open fire on a Communist railroad train as the Seventh Fleet flagship presses her attack on Red transportation facilities close to the coastline.

Click here to view photo

Battleship *New Jersey* sailors watch F4U Corsair fighters landing aboard the aircraft carrier *Boxer* (CV-21).

Click here to view photo

(5/14/52) Row after row of 16-inch powder charges on the deck of USS *Iowa* at a port in southern Japan.

Click here to view photo

(7/1/50) Crewmen stand alert at the gun turrets of the cruiser *Rochester* (CA-124).

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 2

Click here to view photo
Destroyer *Ernest G. Small* (DD-838) in 1952.

Click here to view photo
Damage control efficiency saved the destroyer *Small* when she struck a mine off the coast of Korea. The destroyer backs slowly toward Japan where temporary repairs will make the ship seaworthy for a trip to the United States.

Click here to view photo
The destroyer *Ernest G. Small* (DD-838), with its temporary bow, at dock in 1951.

Click here to view photo
(10/24/50) Two Seventh Fleet minesweepers work in a North Korean minefield at Wonsan, prior to invasion.

Click here to view photo

The crew of a disposal boat brings in a mine at Wonsan Harbor, Korea.

Click here to view photo

(8/22/50) The 8-inch guns of No. 3 turret on a U.S. Navy cruiser take a North Korean military target under fire off the east coast of Korea.

Click here to view photo

(10/16/50) An unscathed church amid the rubble of Pohang verifies the pin point accuracy of U.S. naval bombardment.

Click here to view photo

The American cruiser *Toledo* on the Korean East Coast during a shore bombardment.

Click here to view photo
An LSMR (Landing Ship Medium, Rocket) sends up flaming rockets.

Click here to view photo
USS *Comstock* (LSD-19), flagship for UN forces during landings at Chinnampo and Wonsan, Korea.

Click here to view photo
Attack cargo ship *Achernar* (AKA-53) at sea in 1952.

Click here to view photo
Attack Cargo ship *Thuban* (AKA-19) at sea in 1951.

Click here to view photo
(7/26/51) Attack transport *George Clymer*, (APA-27), moored at U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan.

Click here to view photo

USS *George Clymer* (PA-27) and USS *Pickaway* (PA-45) loading out at night.

Click here to view photo

(2/51) Attack transport *Henrico* (APA-45).

Click here to view photo

Transport *George Clymer* (PA-27) at sea in 1951 as part of the vital Korean War logistics effort.

Click here to view photo

(3/26/52) USS *Fort Marion* (LSD-22).

Click here to view photo

Attack cargo ship *Union* (AKA-106) at sea in 1953.

Click here to view photo

(3/26/51) Under the Seabees' know-how an LST does more than carry cargo. Here an LST is married to a causeway to provide a flow of needed supplies to shore.

Click here to view photo

(6/11/52) LST 799 conducts vital helicopter rescue operations in Wonsan Harbor. In one 24-hour period the ship's helicopter picked up three Navy pilots who had been forced to ditch at Wonsan because of damage to their aircraft.

Click here to view photo

Korea-bound troops debark from an U.S. Army transport at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation, California in 1950.

Click here to view photo

(10/2/50) Transports unload supplies for U.S. troops in Korea at Pusan.

Click here to view photo

(7/2/50) Troops board ships at a Japanese port for movement to the South Korean war zone.

Click here to view photo

A ground crewman at an advanced air base assembles deadly napalm bombs for use in Korea.

Click here to view photo

(11/1/51) A tired South Korean laborer hitches a ride to the airstrip on a train load of bombs at an American airfield in Korea.

Click here to view photo

Supplies aboard USS *Achernar* accompany Marines as they prepare to make an invasion somewhere along the Korean coast.

Click here to view photo

(10/13/52) Between sweeping assignments, minesweeper boats and their crews rest aboard the LSD USS *Fort Marion* in Wonsan Harbor.

Click here to view photo

(4/10/51) A U.S. Navy helicopter drops supplies to the deck of USS *Fort Marion* (LSD-22) off the North Korean coast.

Click here to view photo

(9/15/50) Sunrise in Inchon Harbor, as seen from the amphibious force flagship *Mt. McKinley*.

Click here to view photo

(9/15/50) A volley of rockets supports the first wave of Marines heading for the beach.

Click here to view photo

U.S. Army DUKWs bring supplies and equipment to shore from ships at Pusan Harbor, Korea.

Click here to view photo

(10/26/50) U.S. Marines dash ashore from LCVP's (Landing Craft, Vehicle and Personnel) during the invasion of Wonsan.

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 3

Click here to view photo

(11/4/50) Ten LST's (Landing Ship Tank) of the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet disgorge their freight of military vehicles at Blue Beach, Wonsan, Korea, where the 1st Marine Division was put ashore in late October.

Click here to view photo

(9/16/50) One bulldozer pulls another across the muddy shore of Wolmi Island, as equipment is unloaded from LST's.

Click here to view photo

(12/15/50) Tons of ammunition along a railroad track in Hungnam as landing craft aid the UN evacuation by taking aboard supplies and personnel.

Click here to view photo

(2/23/51) South Korean Marines land on the beaches of Sindo Island, after a heavy bombardment by U.S. Navy vessels.

Click here to view photo

(12/14/50) Hundreds of aviation gasoline drums lay at Hungnam prior to being loaded on to LST-898 during the withdrawal of the 1st Marine Division.

Click here to view photo

(9/4/50) An American soldier supervises the storage of combat rations by native labor at a Quartermaster Warehouse in Pusan, Korea.

Click here to view photo

Ten thousand bags of letters and packages are unloaded at a Korean port for delivery to U.S. combat forces at the front.

Click here to view photo

Christmas packages arrive for the worn-out Marines of the 7th Regiment near Koto-ri.

Click here to view photo

(9/15/50) Jeeps and ambulances pass two Russian-style tanks knocked out by U.S. Marines near the front in Inchon, Korea.

Click here to view photo

Marine Corps engineers repair a bridge in Korea as rolling stock detours through the riverbed.

Click here to view photo

(3/6/52) The Fifth Marines move out of “Camp Tripoli,” Korea as they are airlifted to the eastern sector to thwart enemy guerillas.

Click here to view photo

Arms and equipment accompany an artillery unit as it moves into a mountain pass, somewhere on the Korean front.

Click here to view photo

U.S. Marines engaging Chinese Communists in northern Korea take a respite from the fighting.

Click here to view photo

(7/31/50) Two artillerymen rest in the rain between firing missions against the enemy, somewhere in Korea.

Click here to view photo

(4/5/52) Map in hand, a second lieutenant outlines an upcoming patrol for the men in his unit.

Click here to view photo

(4/5/52) Leaving his underground bunker, a Navy hospital corpsman hikes to a nearby Marine-occupied bunker on the eastern front with a cup of warm broth.

Click here to view photo

(12/22/50) – U.S. Marines rest in the snow after moving out of Kodari, Korea.

Click here to view photo

A Marine rifle squad in Korea fans out behind an M-46 tank.

Click here to view photo

Marine tanks blast their way through enemy positions near Seoul to prepare the way for the Leatherneck infantrymen's assault.

Click here to view photo

First Division Leathernecks pass destroyed and abandoned equipment during their breakout from Chosin to the sea.

Click here to view photo

(12/22/50) U.S. Marines and tanks near Kodari, Korea.

Click here to view photo

(7/19/50) Two Marines report by field telephone from a platoon command post somewhere in Korea.

Click here to view photo

U.S. Marines drive forward to battle Chinese Communist units during recent fighting in Korea as Leatherneck aviators piloting F4U-5 Corsairs provide close air support for the troops.

Click here to view photo

(1/5/51) Elements of the First Marine Division rest on a snow-covered Korean roadside after successfully overcoming an enemy ambush.

Click here to view photo

Marines advance up a steep road past knocked-out tanks of Russian design. In the foreground, South Korean civilians remove a litter carrying a dead soldier to the rear area.

Click here to view photo

As tanks are unloaded in the background, Marines relax at a railway station before moving on to the front.

Click here to view photo

(4/8/52) Marines move out on an early morning patrol.

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(4/4/52) With enemy troops in the area, crawling through a barbed wire entanglement is precarious. Two Marine sniper hunters keep a watchful lookout while their buddies start into the wire.

Click here to view photo

(2/21/52) A U.S. Marine infantry mortar crew goes into action against the enemy, somewhere on the Korean central front.

Click here to view photo

(10/28/52) Armor clad Marines hug the dirt in hastily erected trenches as incoming enemy artillery and mortar shells blanket the area. Hook Ridge, since dubbed “The Hook”, is near Magae-Dong, Korea, and on the Marines’ main line of resistance northwest of Koranpo-ri on the western front. The previous day, the 1st Marines had driven 800 Chinese Communists from this strategic position through bitter fighting.

Click here to view photo

(9/20/50) Marines of the Republic of Korea arrive across the Han River on the way to Seoul.

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A Weapons Company section sets up its mortar to take Communist positions under fire near the Chosin Reservoir.

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 4

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Through icy mountain passes, Chinese Communist attacks, and roadblocks, the First Marine Division and fleeing natives come down from Koto-ri. The Marines brought out their wounded and nearly all of their equipment.

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(9/50) Marines pushing to the summit of the Korean heights near the Naktong River are taken under fire by enemy mortars.

Click here to view photo

(4/5/52) Marines firing a mortar at enemy positions.

Click here to view photo

(10/28/52) Slung over his shoulders and neck like a vest, a Marine Ammo carrier waits impatiently as other Marines rip open ammunition boxes for front line troops.

Click here to view photo

Marines march south from Koto-ri, fighting their way through Chinese Communist hordes in the sub-zero weather of the mountains.

Click here to view photo

U.S. ground forces in Korea receive close air support in an attempt to flush enemy troops from their hillside entrenchment..

Click here to view photo

(6/13/50) Helicopters carry fully equipped Marines to a predetermined landing area, bypassing strong beach fortifications.

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(9/16/50) North Korean defenders of Wolmi-do and Inchon, captured by elements of the 1st Marine Division and South Korean Marines. During the U.S.-led invasion of Inchon, repeated attacks by sea and air led to many of the garrison troops losing the will to fight and surrendering at the first opportunity.

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A North Korean prisoner of war captured by U.S. Marines near Naktong River.

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(4/24/52) Chinese prisoners-of-war on the island of Kojedo in Korea, site of the United Nations Prisoner-of-War Camps. They are a part of a working detail assigned the job of unloading cargo from ships.

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(9/25/52) Smoke and debris from a 1000 pound bomb fills the sky near Taodoksan, North Korea, just behind enemy lines, as Corsair fighter-bombers support ground elements of the 1st Marine Division fighting in Korea.

Click here to view photo

A very important role for the helicopter, first tried in the Korean War, is evacuation of the wounded.

Click here to view photo

(2/26/52) His fellow GIs take a wounded infantryman to a waiting helicopter for transport to a Navy hospital ship offshore.

Click here to view photo

(5/16/52) Marines hurriedly load the last patient aboard an HTL-4 helicopter for evacuation to a rear area aid station.

Click here to view photo

Marines carry a wounded comrade from the front lines to a forward aid station.

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(8/12/52) At Yokosuka, Japan, crew members carefully carry their shipmates who were injured during a fire aboard the carrier *Boxer*.

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A group of women volunteers help several Korean battle casualties clean up during their short rest stop at Guam.

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(10/14/52) A Navy chaplain administers communion to personnel at the UN Base Camp, Munsan-ni, Korea.

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A Navy chaplain serving with the Fifth Marines, First Marine Division, conducting a service for Marine infantrymen atop “Vegas Hill.”

Click here to view photo

(4/3/51) Catholic Mass for Marines on the central Korean front.

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(12/13/50) Marines of the First Division pay their respects to fallen comrades during memorial services at the division's cemetery at Hamhung, Korea, following the break-out from Chosin Reservoir.

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(05/30/52) Marines bow their heads during Memorial ceremonies at Munsan-ni, Korea.

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Korean refugees aboard the Meredith Victory as the ship lifts more than 14,000 refugees from Hungnam, Korea to freedom (part of the nearly 98,000 Koreans evacuated from the city).

Click here to view photo

(7/19/52) One of five drifting Korean fishermen rescued by the escort destroyer *Taylor*.

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(2/18/54) In Pusan, a Korean sailor unloads one of 57 barrels of relief supplies at the Mary Knoll Clinic.

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(8/22/51) Having just destroyed a vital bridge while supporting front line UN troops, a group of Skyraider dive bombers and Corsair fighter-bombers rendezvous off the Korean coast on their return flight to USS *Boxer* (CV-21).

Click here to view photo

(5/8/51) On the 40th anniversary of naval aviation, a carrier-based F4U Corsair fires an anti-tank rocket at a target in Korea.

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(12/24/52) AD Skyraiders attack targets near Wonsan, Korea. Smoke and debris can be seen erupting skyward from the first plane's bombs.

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(7/15/51) A Navy F4U Corsair from USS *Boxer* levels out to observe the destruction he has wrought to a highway bridge near Wonsan.

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(9/10/51) A Navy Skyraider (inverted) and a Panther in an unusual configuration.

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(8/52) A Grumman F9F attached to USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA-31) flies over Task Force 77 engaged in three-carrier operations against North Korean targets. The carriers are USS *Bon Homme Richard*, USS *Essex* (CVA-9), and USS *Princeton* (CVA-37).

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(9/18/51) An F9F Panther jet returns to the aircraft carrier *Essex* after a successful air strike against Communist bridges, troops, and supplies. Flaps and hook are lowered for the recovery.

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 5

Click here to view photo

(8/52) A Grumman F9F attached to USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA-31) flies over Task Force 77 engaged in operations against North Korean targets.

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(5/1/51) F9F Panther jet aircraft from the carrier *Princeton* (center) wing homeward after an air strike against Communist forces attacking in Korea. Another carrier, USS *Philippine Sea* (upper right), cruises in readiness to receive planes on a similar mission.

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(10/52) An F9F jet jettisons fuel over Task Force 77 in the Sea of Japan prior to landing on USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA-31).

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(8/27/51) The destroyer *Tingley* in the Sea of Japan as Panther jet fighters from the fast carrier *Boxer* pass over

the elements of Task Force 77 on their way to attack supply lines and military installations in North Korea.

Click here to view photo

Panther jets, returning at dusk from a strike over North Korea, circle Task Force 77. Planes such as these helped demolish four North Korean hydroelectric power complexes, one of them the Yalu River's Suiho Dam, largest in the Orient, on 23-24 June 1952.

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(8/6/51) Two Navy F9F "Panther" jets move in on the devastated port of Wonsan, Korea (just beneath number 106 on the nose of the leftmost plane) as buildings hit by a previous strike continue to burn (right).

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(5/19/52) Four F9F Panthers of Squadron VF-781 in mid-flight, with the lead plane starting a turning maneuver. Assigned to Air Group 102, this squadron of fighter jets served twice in the Korean conflict: 30 May-30 Nov 1951 aboard USS *Bon Homme Richard*; and 28 Oct 1952-2 May 1953 with USS *Oriskany* (CVA-34).

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(5/23/52) A F9F "Panther" jet from the aircraft carrier *Boxer*, on an armed reconnaissance flight, takes a look at the damage done to a Communist airfield at Sandok in North Korea.

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(5/23/52) A Navy Panther jet fighter makes a high speed run on Communist installations near Kowon, North Korea, a familiar scene as the carrier-based jets carry out their daily rail interdiction missions.

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(6/9/51) A Navy Panther jet looks for targets near the North Korean city of Hungnam. Bomb craters left by planes of Carrier Task Force 77 can be seen in the background.

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(7/15/51) Two “Panther” jets from the aircraft carrier *Boxer* join a concentrated attack on the North Korean port of Wonsan.

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(7/15/51) A Navy Panther jet attacks supply dumps and warehouses near the North Korean village of Kowon, 20 miles northwest of Wonsan.

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(7/15/51) Navy aircraft over Korea.

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(12/14/52) A Navy F9F Panther jet of Fighter Squadron 72 from USS *Bon Homme Richard* passes over a Korean mountain range covered with the first snow of the winter.

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(12/7/51) A twin-jet Banshee wings its way over the port of Wonsan, Korea. The Navy's newest high powered jet fighter in the Korean War, the Banshee first flew into action from the carrier *Essex* in August, 1950.

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(6/7/51) A Royal Navy "Firefly" aircraft is launched from HMS Glory, a British light fleet carrier.

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(12/21/52) An F2H-2F and an F2H attached to USS *Kearsarge* (CVA-33) flying over Korea.

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(3/28/52) Taken from a Navy helicopter, this photograph shows conference tents and surrounding area of the Military Armistice Conference site at Panmunjom, Korea. Entrance to the immediate conference site is identifiable by the shrubs and sentry boxes on either side of the walkway.

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(10/13/51) UN and Communist Liaison officers and their staffs enter the new site of the Military Armistice conference at Panmunjom, Korea.

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(3/5/52) Guards at the entrance to the Panmunjom Military Armistice Conference site.

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(7/27/53) General Mark W. Clark, Commander-in-Chief, UN Command, signs the armistice agreement as Vice Admiral Robert P. Briscoe, COMNAVFE (center); and Vice Admiral Joseph J. Clark, Commander, Seventh U.S. Fleet, look on.

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(12/3/51) Maj. General Henry I. Hodes, USA, and Rear Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, USN, delegates to the Panmunjom Sub-Delegation Conference, inspect a 200 year old stone located by the roadside 100 yards from the conference tent. The stone was placed to commemorate the irrigation of the Pan Mun Valley for the benefit of local farmers.

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(5/1/52) Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, Commander Naval Forces, Far East and senior delegate to the Korean Military Armistice Conference arrives by sedan at Panmunjom for an Executive Session of the full delegation.

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(10/13/51) Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, returns to the UNC Advance Camp in Korea October 10 in anticipation of resumption of the Military Armistice talks. Rear Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, USN, (back to camera), is on hand to greet him.

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(9/25/52) General Mark Clark (kneeling center) studies the target data board on the fire control platform of the

battleship *Iowa* as she fires at targets in Wonsan Harbor. Looking on (center) is Vice Admiral J. J. Clark, Commander Seventh Fleet, and Vice Admiral Robert P. Briscoe, Commander Naval Forces, Far East.

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(11/2/50) U.S officers confer at Iwon.

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A Marine helicopter comes in for a landing aboard the carrier *Sicily*.

Click here to view photo
(6/30/51) A helicopter from USS *Boxer* (CV-21) lands on the flight deck after completing an air rescue mission.

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(3/15/53) F9F Panther jets taxi down a runway to position for take-off against Red targets in North Korea.

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(10/8/51) On the flight deck of the fast carrier *Bon Homme Richard*, three Navy photo planes get an inspection by plane captains before taking off.

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(11/16/50) Ordnance crewmen perform a final check of the F4U Corsair's armament aboard USS *Sicily* (CVE-18) prior to an air strike on Korea.

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(11/5/51) Belgian officials and a Belgian journalist inspect a Navy Panther jet on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier *Antietam* operating off the coast of Korea.

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 6

Click here to view photo

(7/30/51) Plane handlers push a F9F Panther jet fighter off the port elevator for storage on the hangar deck of USS *Boxer* (CV-21).

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(3/15/52) A crew of plane handlers spots a Panther in its assigned position on the flight deck of USS *Antietam*.

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Lt. (j.g.) William H. “Wild Bill” Elliott, USNR of Mill Valley, CA, is congratulated by Capt. Cameron Briggs, USN, skipper of USS *Boxer*, after making the 49,000th landing aboard the big Essex-class carrier.

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(6/25/51) Crewmen fuel Panther jet fighters on the flight deck of USS *Boxer* (CV-21) between strikes against enemy targets in Korea.

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(1/7/52) Crewmen use snow shovels to clean away the snow and ice covering the deck of USS *Essex* (CV-9).

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(12/28/50) Flight deck crews of USS *Badoeng Strait* (CVE-116) “turn to” on the ice and snow covered flight deck after an icy storm swept out of Manchuria to plague this ship operating off the Korean coast.

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(7/21/50) “Panther” jets aboard the U.S. Navy carrier *Valley Forge* (CVA-45) line up for takeoff on a strike against military targets in North Korea.

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A Panther taxis along the flight deck of the carrier *Boxer*.

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Atypical flight deck scene before an air strike on Korea.

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(1/18/52) A blinding snow storm slows TF-77 off the coast of Korea. Loaded for action, these *Essex* (CV-9) aircraft wait for a lull in the storm to launch strikes against the enemy.

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(3/4/52) Having been released from the arresting gear, a Corsair fighter plane of squadron VF-713 folds its wings in preparation to park on the flight deck of the flattop *Antietam* in Korean waters.

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(7/12/53) A flak-damaged Panther jet lands aboard the carrier *Philippine Sea* (CVA-47).

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(11/22/51) While attempting a landing with the use of only one landing gear, this Panther jet is stopped short of a crackup as his tail hook catches and holds an arresting wire stretching across the flight deck of the USS *Bon Homme Richard*.

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(8/26/51) An F9F jet gets the “cut” signal from a LSO as it returns to USS *Bon Homme Richard* from a strike on North Korea.

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(3/24/52) Somewhere off the Korean east coast, an F9F Panther jet touches down on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier *Valley Forge* (CV-45) to chalk up the 37,000th landing aboard the veteran Korean flattop.

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(11/15/50) An F9F Panther returns to USS *Leyte* (CV-32) after participating in a fighter sweep against a North Korean Communist force around Wonsan.

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(4/9/52) A Marine Landing Signal Officer aboard an escort carrier in Korean waters, “talks” a plane safely down.

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(11/3/52) The first Navy all-night jet fighter was a Douglas F3D with intercept radar. Major William T. Stratton, Jr., USMC, piloted an F3D when he and his radar operator successfully intercepted and shot down a Russian built YAK 15 of the North Korean Air Force.

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An oil painting of the attack on Hwachon Dam, 1 May 1951.

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(8/10/50) A bomb strike on an oil refinery at Wonsan.

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(6/16/52) The destruction noted in this photograph was once an enemy train. A couple of well-placed bombs by pilots from ships of Task Force 77 left it as pictured.

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(8/7/52) A copper ore processing plant at Kilchu, Korea, takes a beating from Corsair fighter-bombers and Skyraiders flying from the fast carrier *Princeton*.

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An F4U Corsair fires air-to-ground rockets in the mountains of Korea.

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(7/15/51) After pulling up out of his dive, a Navy Corsair levels off to look back at the destruction done to the target – an enemy highway bridge a few miles outside the beleaguered city of Wonsan on the east Korean coast.

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(5/8/52) The Navy and Air Force combined their assets in the air over Korea. Here, an Air Force F-80 Shooting Star releases a tank of napalm (below its left wing) destined for a supply building and courtyard filled with loaded supply vehicles at the Communist supply center at Suan, 35 miles southeast of Pyongyang.

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(8/4/50) A Navy F4U Corsair fighter leaves the deck of a U.S. Navy carrier operating off the coast of Korea to sortie against Communist-led North Korean Forces.

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(8/25/52) A Navy jet fighter is flung from the catapult of USS *Antietam* as the catapult officer (right) and an enlisted "talker" crouch to the flight deck to escape the following blast from the jet's exhaust.

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(12/5/50) An F9F Panther jet is spotted on the catapult in preparation for takeoff from USS *Princeton* (CV-37).

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An F9F fighter jet from squadron VF-837 takes to the air from the flight deck of USS *Antietam* (CVA-36).

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(4/30/51) U.S. Navy F9F jets take off from USS *Valley Forge* (CV-45) for a strike on Korean Communist targets.

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The escort carrier *Sicily*, home to Marine Squadron VMF-214, in the early 1950s.

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(7/14/50) The escort carrier *Badoeng Strait* (CVE-116) leaving San Diego with Marine Corps fighters on board.

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 7

Click here to view photo
(6/15/53) The attack carrier *Lake Champlain* (CVA-39), five days after she arrived in the Korean war zone.

Click here to view photo
(6/29/52) USS *Oriskany* (CVA-34) rounding Cape Horn on her way to the Korean war zone.

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The aircraft carrier *Oriskany* (CV-34) moored at a pier in Yokosuka, Japan during a break in combat operations.

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(9/17/52) USS *Kearsarge* (CVA-33).

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(5/23/51) Two F9F Panther jet planes jettison fuel preparing to land aboard USS *Princeton* (CV-37) in Korean waters.

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(3/16/53) The massing of men and planes make an impressive sight as a ceremony takes place aboard the Navy's aircraft carrier *Princeton* in Korean waters.

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(9/10/51) Two Naval Reserve pilots return their Corsair night-fighters to USS *Boxer* (CV-21) from a dawn "heckler" over rail lines in Korea. During the mission, the two planes bombed marshalling yards and freight cars.

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(8/24/50) Three U.S. Navy Essex Class aircraft carriers lie at anchor at a naval base in Japan.

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Rear Admiral James Henry Doyle, USN, Commander of Amphibious Force Far East (TF-90) from 25 Jun to 27 Sep 1950, and again from 11 Oct 1950 to 24 Jan 1951.

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(9/9/50) RADM. E. C. Ewens, Commander Task Force 77 and a UN delegate, discuss the Korean War aboard USS *Philippine Sea* (CV-47).

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(4/16/51) General Clifton B. Cates, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, holds a staff meeting with Lt. Gen. M. H. Silverthorn, Assistant Commandant (second from right); Lt. Col. Robert H. Thomas (left) aide-de-camp to the Commandant; and Col. J. H. Berry, military secretary.

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General Clifton B. Cates, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps presents Korean campaign ribbons to a group of Marines.

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Colonel Lewis B. Puller (left), commander of the spearhead regiment of Marines attacking Seoul, confers with Brigadier General E. A. Craig at a hill top command post overlooking the Korean capital.

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(9/9/50) RADM. E. C. Ewens, Commander Task Force 77, bids United Nations delegates goodbye as they leave USS *Philippine Sea* (CV-47) in Korean waters.

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(6/7/52) In ceremonies held in the rotunda of the Far East Naval Headquarters building in Tokyo, 4 June 1952, Vice Admiral Robert P. Briscoe, USN, (right) relieves Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, as Commander Naval Forces, Far East.

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Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, leaving a UN Base Camp for Tokyo on May 22nd.

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(3/25/52) Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, and Rear Admiral R. E. Libby, USN, (facing the lecturer on the left side of the table with his arms on the table) listen intently to a briefing on the techniques of combat photography.

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(6/7/52) In the headquarters of the Commander Naval Forces, Far East, Vice Admiral Won Yil Sohn, ROKN, Chief of Naval Operations, congratulates Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, after presenting him with the Tae Guk Silver Star, a high Korean military decoration.

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(12/19/52) Accompanied by Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN (left), Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, Vice Admiral Sohn Won Yil inspects the Marine Guard in his honor.

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(5/23/52) Admiral Joy strides from the conference tent at Panmunjom, ending his last meeting with Communist negotiators as the UN Command's Senior Delegate.

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(4/8/52) Vice Admiral Sohn Won Yil (left) visits with VADM. C. Turner Joy at the United Nations Forward Advance Camp, Munsan-ni, Korea.

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(5/10/52) VADM. C. Turner Joy gives a press briefing at Panmunjom.

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(5/13/52) VADM. C. Turner Joy, chief negotiator at the Military Armistice Conference in Panmunjom, Korea, meets with news correspondents after a meeting with Communist delegates. “I again regret to say that I cannot tell you anything,” said the Admiral, “we meet again tomorrow.”

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VADM. C. Turner Joy delivers his farewell address in the rotunda of the Far East Naval Headquarters building in Tokyo, 4 June 1952, during change-of-command ceremonies in which he relinquished his command of U.S. Naval Forces, Far East, to VADM. Robert P. Briscoe, USN.

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(5/23/52) With the words “I am going home” still reflected in his smile, VADM. C. Turner Joy, USN, waves farewell as he departs Panmunjom for Tokyo to resume his duties as COMNAVFE.

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(5/24/52) Just prior to his departure from Korea VADM. C. Turner Joy stows his flag in a suitcase at Munsan-ni, Korea, where he served for over 10 months as Chief UN Delegate.

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(5/23/52) VADM. C. Turner Joy, notes in hand, enters the conference tent at Panmunjom to confer with Communist delegates for the last time.

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(5/24/52) VADM. C. Turner Joy informs Mrs. Joy in Tokyo of his departure for the Japanese capital from the United Nations Base Camp at Munsan-ni, Korea.

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(10/23/50) VADM. C. Turner Joy is lifted from the deck of the destroyer *Collett.*

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(2/16/52) VADM. C. Turner Joy with UN Correspondent Ernest Hoberecht at Panmunjom, Korea.

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VADM. C. Turner Joy (foreground) heads for the conference building at Kaesong for the ninth day of the truce talks that would last another two years and eight days. Immediately behind are RADM. Arleigh Burke (left) and Maj. Gen. Henry I. Hodes.

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(5/23/52) At Panmunjom, Admiral Joy shakes hands with an army corporal as he prepares to depart the conference area for the last time.

U.S. Navy/Marine Photo Essay
Gallery 8

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(9/29/50) General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief, UN Command in Korea, leads the saying of the Lord's Prayer at ceremonies held at the Capitol Building, Seoul, Korea, to restore the capital of the Korean Republic to its President, Syngman Rhee.

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(6/29/50) Margaret Higgins of the New York *Herald Tribune* interviews U.S. General Douglas MacArthur, who has flown in from his Tokyo headquarters to appraise the situation in South Korea.

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(7/26/50) General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief, FEC (right), and Lt. Gen. Walton H. Walker, Commander, Ground Forces in Korea, arrive at the airfield in Korea, prior to General MacArthur's departure for Tokyo, Japan.

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(9/29/50) VADM. A. D. Struble, Commander 7th Fleet, and General MacArthur, United Nations Commander, visit the front on D-Day-plus-2 at Inchon.

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General of the Army Douglas MacArthur makes a jeep tour of port facilities just after the invasion at Inchon. With him are Maj. Gen. Oliver P. Smith, USMC, and VADM. A. D. Struble, USN.

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(4/19/51) On his return to the U.S. after a 14-year absence, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur addresses members of Congress in the Capitol. Behind him are Vice President Alben Barkley (left), and Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn (right).

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Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander-in-Chief Pacific and Pacific Fleet, and General Douglas MacArthur, Commander, Allied Forces, confer while awaiting arrival of the Joint Chief of Staff, 21 August 1950, in Tokyo, Japan.

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(8/21/50) General of the Army Douglas MacArthur salutes the colors upon his arrival aboard USS *Missouri*.

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(8/52) On 22 August 1952, a ceremony is held in Seoul, Korea to initiate a program for the clearing of bomb damage in that city. Seen here, on the platform, saluting as the Korean National Anthem is played are (left to right) the Acting Mayor of Seoul, Korean President Syngman Rhee, and General Van Fleet.

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Maj. Gen. Edward M. Almond, USA, ComGen, X Corps, and Lt. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC, ComGen, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, confer at Tokyo, Japan, while awaiting the arrival of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 21 August 1950.

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(9/17/52) Four top U.S. military officials stand at attention and salute during an Honor Guard paraded for General Lemuel C. Shepherd (left), Commandant of the Marine Corps, during his visit to the Far East. From left to right are Gen. Shepherd; Gen. Mark Clark, USA, Far East Commander; Gen. Oliver P. Weyland, USAF, Commander, Far East Air Force; and VADM Robert P. Briscoe, USN, Commander Naval Forces, Far East.

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(9/22/52) South Korean President Syngman Rhee offers congratulations to General Lemuel C. Shepherd, USMC, after presenting him with the South Korean Order of Military Merit with a gold star.

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Lt. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, USMC awards a Purple Heart to a seaman at the U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka.

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(7/3/51) Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Forrest P. Sherman visits USS *Princeton* (CVA-37) off the coast of Korea. With him are VADM. Harold H. Martin, Commander U.S. 7th Fleet, and RADM. George R. Henderson, Commander Carrier Division 5 and Task Force 77.

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(8/22/50) VADM C. Turner Joy greets Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Forrest P. Sherman and Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander in Chief, Pacific, and U.S. Pacific Fleet at the Pusan Air Strip in Korea.

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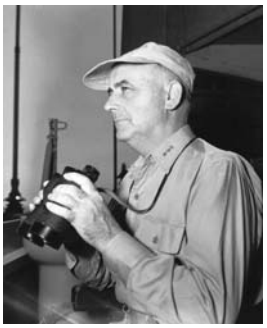
(8/20/50) VADM A. D. Struble and Maj. Gen. E. L. Almond, USA, at Tenth Corps Headquarters.



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(8/12/50) Informal portrait of VADM. A. D. Struble, USN, Commander 7th Fleet, on the bridge of USS *Rochester* (CA-124), flagship of the U.S. 7th Fleet.

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(9/4/51) Vice Admiral Arthur D. Struble, Commander of the Seventh Fleet from 6 May 1950 to 28 March 1951.

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(10/21/50) USS *Missouri* bombards Chong-ji, Korea, with her 16 inch guns, to cut the lines of communication between the northern and southern parts of Korea. Chong-ji is approximately 120 miles from the Russian base of Vladivostok and 39 miles from the Soviet border.

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(4/2/53) USS *New Jersey* (BB-62) operating in Korean waters.

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(11/53) USS *Manchester* (CL-89) on duty in the Far East, returning to combat operations off the Korean coast after a short rest period in Yokosuka, Japan.

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A starboard profile of the Australian *Tribal* class destroyer *Bataan*. HMAS. *Bataan* operated off Korea from June 1950-June 1951, and again from January-September 1952, steaming 98,000 miles.

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The Australian frigate HMAS. *Shoalhaven* steamed 11,000 miles during its Korean tour of duty (June-September 1950).

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(8/5/52) British light cruiser *Belfast*, flagship of the West Coast Blockade and Patrol Element off Korea.

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(3/1/50) HMS Jamaica (CL-86), a *Fiji* class cruiser, less than four months before the breakout of the Korean War.

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The British carrier *Triumph*, at anchor in a port in Malta.

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Battleship *Iowa* (BB-61) leads a column of four battleships. All four of these Iowa class battleships saw combat in Korea.

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Battleship *New Jersey* (BB-62) in the Sea of Japan after being damaged by enemy shell fire during a duel at Wonsan, Korea. USS *Philippine Sea* (CV-47) is in the background.

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Battleship *Missouri* (BB-63) fires at enemy targets in Wonsan Harbor.

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The 16-inch guns of battleship *Wisconsin* (BB-64) fire against enemy railroads off the east coast of North Korea.