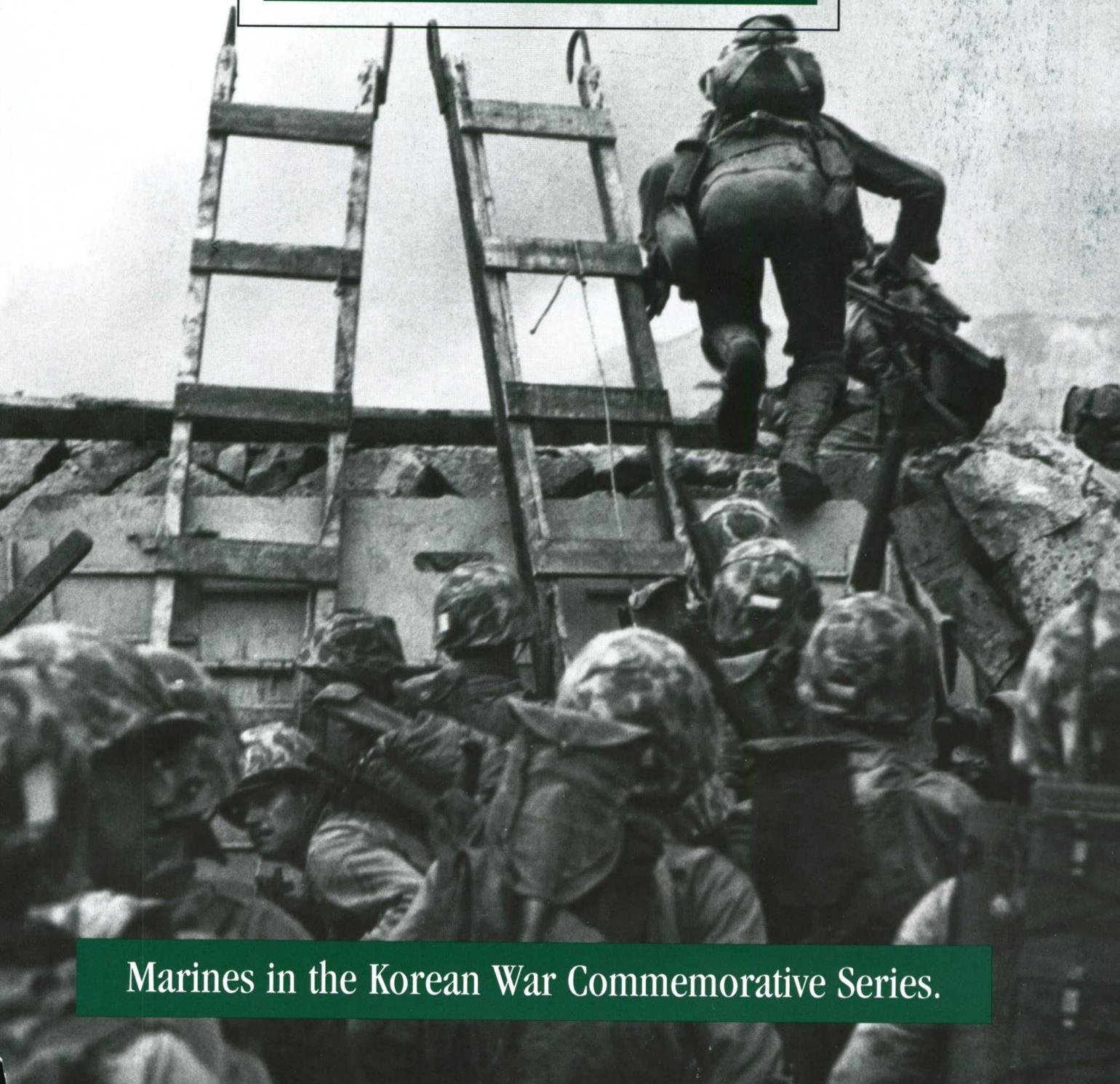


# OVER THE SEAWALL

## U.S. Marines at Inchon

*by Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons  
U.S. Marine Corps, Retired*



Marines in the Korean War Commemorative Series.



# OVER THE SEAWALL

## U.S. Marines at Inchon

by Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret)



ust three weeks away and there was still no approval from Washington for the Marines to land at Inchon on 15 September 1950. General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, determined to beat down the opposition to the landing, called a conference for late in the day, 23 August, at his headquarters in the Dai Ichi building in Tokyo.

### Planning

As Commander in Chief, Far East (CinCFE), MacArthur considered himself empowered to conduct military operations more-or-less as he saw fit. But for an operation of the magnitude of Inchon and the resources it would require he needed approval from the highest level.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), doubtful of the landing's chances of success, had sent out the Army Chief of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins, and the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Forrest P. Sherman, to review the situation directly with MacArthur. Now he would have to overcome their skeptical resistance. Collins was

the JCS executive agent for the Far East Command and nominally higher in the chain-of-command than MacArthur—but only nominally. In World War I MacArthur was already a brigadier general when Collins was barely a captain. Now MacArthur had five stars and Collins four.

On this afternoon, First Lieutenant Alexander M. Haig's task was to lay out the pads of paper, pencils, and water glasses on the table of the sixth floor conference room. This done, he took his post seated in a straight-backed chair just outside the door. Haig, then the junior aide-de-camp to MacArthur's chief of staff, was destined to become, many years later, the Secretary of State.

The Marine Corps would have no voice at the meeting. The Corps had neither membership nor representation on the JCS. Admiral Sherman, not a strong champion of Marine Corps interests, was the service chief most directly concerned with the amphibious phase of the still tentative operation.

### Opening Moves

Only two months before the meeting of MacArthur with Collins and Sherman, in the pre-dawn hours of 25 June, 25-year-old Lieutenant Haig, as duty officer at MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo, received a phone call from the American ambassador in Seoul, John J. Muccio, that large formations of North Korean infantry had crossed the 38th Parallel. Haig

informed his boss, Major General Edward M. "Ned" Almond, chief of staff of the Far East Command, who awakened MacArthur with the news. The United States was going to war.

Four days later, and a day after the fall of Seoul, MacArthur flew to Korea in the *Bataan*, to make a personal reconnaissance, taking with him Major General Almond. Korea stretched beneath them like a giant relief map. To the east of the Korean peninsula lay the Sea of Japan; to the west the Yellow Sea. The vulnerability of these two watery sides of the peninsula to a dominant naval power was not lost on a master strategist such as MacArthur. The *Bataan* landed at Suwon, 20 miles south of Seoul. MacArthur commandeered a jeep and headed north through, in his words, "the dreadful backwash of a defeated and dispersed army."

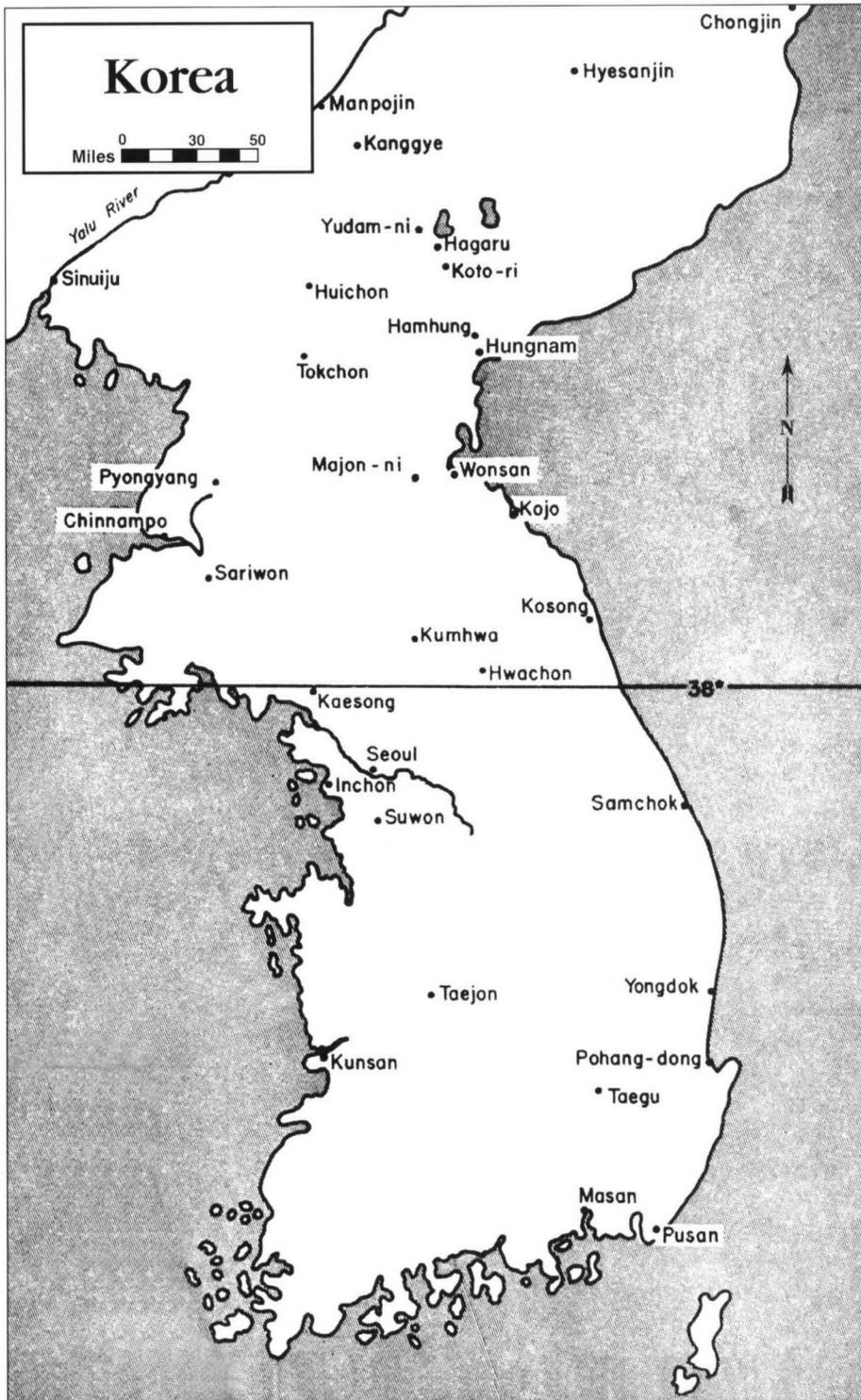
"Seoul was already in enemy hands," he wrote in his *Reminiscences* some years later. "The scene along the Han was enough to convince me that the defensive potential of South Korea had already been exhausted. The answer I had come to seek was there. I would throw occupation troops into this breach. I would rely upon strategic maneuver to overcome the great odds against me."

MacArthur returned to what he liked to call his "GHQ" in Tokyo, convinced that to regain the initiative the United States must use its amphibious capability and land behind the advancing North

---

ON THE COVER: *Using scaling ladders, Marines storm over the seawall at Inchon.* Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A3191

AT LEFT: *The mop-up at Inchon turned up a group of young North Koreans, left as harassing forces.* Photo courtesy of *Leatherneck Magazine*



combat-ready, to South Korea. His aim, he later said, was to trade space for time until a base could be developed at Pusan at the southern tip of the peninsula as a springboard for future operations.

Approval came from President Harry S. Truman for the imposition of a naval blockade and limited air operations. "The Air Force was under Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer, and the Navy under Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, both able and efficient veterans of the war," wrote MacArthur.

But Vice Admiral Joy, as Commander Naval Forces, Far East, commanded virtually nothing. Vice Admiral Arthur D. "Rip" Struble, commander of the Seventh Fleet, a naval officer of considerable amphibious experience, reported not to Joy but to Admiral Arthur W. Radford who was both Commander in Chief, Pacific, and Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet.

Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer commanded "FEAF" or Far East Air Forces. Subordinate to him were the Fifth Air Force in Japan, the Twentieth Air Force on Okinawa, and the Thirteenth Air Force in the Philippines.

### Cates Offers Marines

Back in Washington, D.C., during the first hectic days after the North Korean invasion, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Clifton B. Cates, was not invited to attend the high-level meetings being held in the Pentagon. After four days of waiting, Cates drove to the Pentagon and, in his words, "kind of forced my way in."

"We were fighting for our existence," said General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., who followed Cates as Commandant. "Sherman and the rest of these fellows wanted to keep us seagoing Marines, with a

Koreans. He put his staff to work on a broad operational plan: two U.S. divisions would be thrown into the battle to slow the onrush of the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). A third division would land behind the NKPA and in a flanking attack liberate Seoul, the lost capital.

### Unready Eighth Army

MacArthur had at his disposal in Japan the Eighth Army consisting of four divisions—the 7th, 24th, 25th, and the 1st Cavalry—all four at half-strength and under-trained. He began to move pieces of the 24th Division, rated at 65 percent

battalion landing team being the biggest unit we were supposed to have . . . . Everybody was against the Marine Corps at that time. Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson, always nagging, Truman hostile, and Cates carried that load all by himself and did it well.”

Cates saw Admiral Sherman and told him the Marines could immediately deploy to Korea a brigade consisting of a regimental combat team and an aircraft group.

“How soon can you have them ready?” Sherman asked dubiously.

“As quickly as the Navy gets the ships,” shot back Cates.

Sherman, overwhelmed perhaps by higher priorities, dallied two days before sending a back-channel message to Admiral Joy, asking him to suggest to MacArthur that he request a Marine air-ground brigade. MacArthur promptly made the request and on 3 July the JCS approved the deployment.

Cates did not wait for JCS approval. Formation of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade had already begun with troops stripped out of the half-strength 1st Marine Division. In four days’ time—on 6 July—the brigade began to load out at San Diego for the Far East.

Several months before the breakout of war, MacArthur had requested amphibious training for his occupation troops. Troop Training Unit, Amphibious Training Command, Pacific Fleet, had been formed in 1943 for just such a purpose. Colonel Edward H. Forney, with Mobile Training Team Able and accompanied by an Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) training team, arrived in April 1950. A regiment in each of MacArthur’s four divisions was to be amphibiously trained. Navy partner in the training would be Amphibious Group One (PhibGruOne) under Rear Admiral James H. Doyle.

A few days before the outbreak of the war Brigadier General William S. Fellers, commanding general of the Troop Training Unit, came out to Japan to inspect the progress being made by Forney and his team. Fellers and Forney were at a Fourth of July party being given by the American colony in Tokyo when an urgent message required their immediate presence at “GHQ.” They arrived at the Dai Ichi—a tall building that had escaped the World War II bombing because the Imperial Palace was immediately across the way—to find a planning conference in progress with Almond at the helm. They learned that MacArthur had advanced the concept of a landing at Inchon, to be called Operation Bluehearts and to be executed on 22 July by the 1st Cavalry Division—and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, if the latter could be gotten there in time. Next day Colonel Forney became the G-5 (Plans) of the 1st Cavalry, one of MacArthur’s favorite divisions.

### Shepherd Meets with MacArthur

Three days after the interrupted Fourth of July party, Lemuel Shepherd, just promoted to lieutenant general and installed as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, left Hawaii for Tokyo, accompanied by his operations officer, Colonel Victor H. Krulak. Shepherd had been urged to go to Tokyo by Admiral Radford, a good friend of the Marines, “to see MacArthur and find out what all this thing is about.”

Shepherd saw his mission as being first to ensure that the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was used as an integrated air-ground team and, second, to explore prospects for the use of additional

Marine Corps forces.

“Having been with the 4th Brigade in France, I had learned that a Marine unit in an Army division is not good for the Corps,” said Shepherd years later. Enroute to Tokyo he made up his mind that he was going to push for a Marine division to be sent to Korea.

General Shepherd met with Admiral Joy and General Almond on 9 July, and next day, accompanied by Colonel Krulak, saw MacArthur himself. He told them that the only hope for an early reversal of the disastrous situation was an amphibious assault against the enemy’s rear.

“Here I was,” said Shepherd later, “recommending that a Marine division be sent to Korea, and the Commandant didn’t know anything about what I was doing.”

MacArthur recalled to Shepherd the competence of the 1st Marine Division when it had been under his command during the Cape Gloucester operation at Christmas time in 1943. Shepherd had then been the assistant division commander. MacArthur went to his wall map, stabbed at the port of Inchon with the stem of his corn-cob pipe, and said: “If I only had the 1st Marine Division under my command again, I would land them here and cut off the North Korean armies from their logistic support and cause their withdrawal and annihilation.”

Shepherd answered that if MacArthur could get JCS approval for the assignment of the 1st Marine Division, he could have it ready by mid-September. MacArthur told Shepherd to draft for his release a message to the JCS asking for the division.

Bluehearts, which would have used the 1st Cavalry Division, was abruptly cancelled. Planning in Tokyo, under Brigadier General Edwin K. “Pinky” Wright, USA, and

his Joint Strategic Plans and Operations Group (JSPOG), shifted to an amphibious operation in September.

### Under the U.N. Flag

On that same busy 10 July, MacArthur's mantle of authority was embroidered with a new title—Commander in Chief, United Nations Command or “CinCUNC.” From then on operations in Korea and surrounding waters would be fought under the light-blue-and-white flag of the United Nations.

The sailing of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade from San Diego began on 12 July. Core of the ground element was the 5th Marines; the air element was Marine Aircraft Group 33. Filling the brigade had gutted both the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

General Cates was in San Diego to see the Marines off. His long cigarette holder was famous; not many Marines knew that he used it because gas in World War I had weakened his lungs. General Shepherd was also on the dock and it gave him the opportunity to discuss with Cates his promise to MacArthur of a full division. Could the 1st Marine Division be assembled and made ready in such a short time?

“I don't know,” said Cates dubiously; it would drain the Marine Corps completely.

“Clifton,” said Shepherd simply, “you can't let me down.”

### Visitors from Washington

In Tokyo, where it was already 13 July, MacArthur was meeting with visitors from Washington—Army General Collins and General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, chief of staff of the newly independent Air Force. Also present were Admiral

Radford, General Almond, and Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker. It had just been announced that Walker was shifting his flag from Japan to Korea, and the Eighth Army would become the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea, which yielded the acronym “EUSAK.” MacArthur explained his reasons for cancelling Bluehearts and said that he had not yet chosen a new target date or location for an amphibious strike, but favored Inchon.

As soon as the meeting was over, Collins and Walker flew to Korea, where Walker opened a field headquarters at Taegu for his Eighth Army. Collins spent only an hour on the ground and did not leave the airport before returning to Tokyo.

Next day, the 14th, he was briefed by General Almond and Admiral Doyle, who had commanded Amphibious Group One since January. Before that for two years Doyle had headed the Amphibious Training Command, Pacific Fleet. During World War II he served on the staff of Amphibious Force, South Pacific.

Collins questioned the feasibility of landing at Inchon. Doyle said that it would be difficult but could be done. Before leaving Tokyo, Collins assured MacArthur that he would endorse the sending of a full-strength Marine division.

Earlier, during the planning for Operation Bluehearts, Doyle had expressed reservations over the use of the 1st Cavalry Division because it was not amphibiously trained. His relations with Almond were strained. He thought Almond arrogant and dictatorial and a person who “often confused himself with his boss.”

Lieutenant Haig, Almond's aide and the keeper of his war diary, found his chief “volcanic” in personality, “brilliant” but “irascible,”

and, with all that, a “phenomenally gifted soldier.” Almond, like his idol, General George S. Patton, Jr., designed his own uniforms and wore a pistol on a leather belt adorned with a huge crested buckle. He did this, he said, so as to be easily recognized by his troops.

General Walker, a tenacious man who deserved his nickname “Bulldog” (although he was “Johnnie” Walker to his friends), continued the piecemeal buildup of the Eighth Army. All of the 24th Division was committed by 7 July. The 25th Division completed its move from Japan on 14 July.

### Tactical Air Control Problems

The 1st Cavalry Division was in process of loading out from Japan in Doyle's PhibGruOne when Bluehearts was cancelled in favor of an unopposed landing on 18 July at Pohang-dong, a port some 60 air miles northeast of Pusan. Plans developed for Bluehearts by both PhibGruOne and 1st Cavalry Division were used for the operation. For this non-hostile landing the Navy insisted on control of an air space 100 miles in diameter circling the landing site. This Navy requirement for control of air traffic over the objective area conflicted with Air Force doctrine which called for Air Force control of all tactical aircraft in the theater of operations.

Lieutenant General Earle E. “Pat” Partridge, whose Fifth Air Force Joint Operations Center was in Taegu side-by-side with Walker's Eighth Army headquarters, protested the Navy requirement that would have caused him to vacate the control of air over virtually all of the Pusan Perimeter. This began a doctrinal dispute involving the tactical control of air that would continue for the rest of the war.

## Major General Oliver P. Smith

Oliver Prince Smith did not fill the Marine Corps “warrior” image. He was deeply religious, did not drink, seldom raised his voice in anger, and almost never swore. Tall, slender, and white-haired, he looked like a college professor is supposed to look and seldom does. Some of his contemporaries thought him pedantic and a bit slow. He smoked a pipe in a meditative way, but when his mind was made up he could be as resolute as a rock. He always commanded respect and, with the passage of years, that respect became love and devotion on the part of those Marines who served under him in Korea. They came to know that he would never waste their lives needlessly.

As commanding general of the 1st Marine Division, Smith’s feud with the mercurial commander of X Corps, Major General Edward M. Almond, USA, would become the stuff of legends.

No one is ever known to have called him “Ollie.” To his family he was “Oliver.” To his contemporaries and eventually to the press, which at first tended to confuse him with the controversial Holland M. “Howlin’ Mad” Smith of World War II, he was always “O. P.” Smith. Some called him “the Professor” because of his studious ways and deep reading in military history.

Born in Menard, Texas, in 1893, he had by the time of America’s entry into the First World War worked his way through the University of California at Berkeley, Class of 1916. While a student at Berkeley he qualified for a commission in the Army Reserve which he exchanged, a week after America’s entry into the war on 6 April 1917, for the gold bars of a Marine Corps second lieutenant.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A8377



The war in Europe, where the Marines gained international fame, passed him by; he spent the war years in lonely exile with the garrison on Guam. Afterward, in the 1920s, he followed an unremarkable sequence of duty, much like that of most lieutenants and captains of the time: barracks duty at Mare Island, sea duty in the *Texas*, staff duty at Headquarters Marine Corps, and a tour with the Gendarmerie d’Haiti.

From June 1931 to June 1932, he attended the Field Officer’s Course at Fort Benning. Next came a year at Quantico, most of it spent as an instructor at the Company Officer’s Course. He was assigned in 1934 to a two-year course at the Ecole Supérieur la de Guerre in Paris, then considered the world’s premier school for rising young officers. Afterwards he returned to Quantico for more duty as an instructor.

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 found him at San Diego. As commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, he went to Iceland in the summer of 1941. He left the regiment after its return to the States, for duty once again at Headquarters in Washington. He went to the Pacific in January 1944 in time to command the 5th Marines during the Talasea phase of the Cape Gloucester operation. He was the assistant commander of the 1st Marine Division during Peleliu and for Okinawa was the Marine Deputy Chief of Staff of the Tenth Army.

After the war he was the commandant of Marine Corps Schools and base commander at Quantico until the spring of 1948 when he became the assistant commandant and chief of staff at Headquarters. In late July 1950, he received command of the 1st Marine Division, destined for Korea, and held that command until May 1951.

After Inchon and Seoul, a larger, more desperate fight at Chosin Reservoir was ahead of him. In early 1951, the 1st Marine Division was switched from Almond’s X Corps to Major General Bryant E. Moore’s IX Corps. Moore died of a heart attack on 24 February 1951 and, by seniority, O. P. Smith became the corps commander. Despite his experience and qualifications, he held that command only so long as it took the Army to rush a more senior general to Korea.

O. P. Smith’s myriad of medals included the Army Distinguished Service Cross and both the Army and the Navy Distinguished Service Cross for his Korean War Service.

On his return to the United States, he became the commanding general of the base at Camp Pendleton. Then in July 1953, with a promotion to lieutenant general, moved to the East Coast to the command of Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, with headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia. He retired on 1 September 1955 and for his many combat awards was promoted to four-star general. He died on Christmas Day 1977 at his home in Los Altos Hills, California, at age 81.

## Joint Chiefs Reluctant

Returning to Washington, Collins briefed his fellow chiefs on 15 July. He gave them the broad outlines of MacArthur's planned amphibious assault, but expressed his own doubts based on his experience in the South Pacific and at Normandy.

The JCS chairman, General of the Army Omar N. Bradley, thought it "the riskiest military proposal I ever heard of." In his opinion, MacArthur should be concentrating on the dismal immediate situation in South Korea rather than dreaming up "a blue sky scheme like Inchon." Bradley wrote later: "because Truman was relying on us to an extraordinary degree for military counsel, we determined to keep a close eye on the Inchon plan and, if we felt so compelled, finally cancel it."

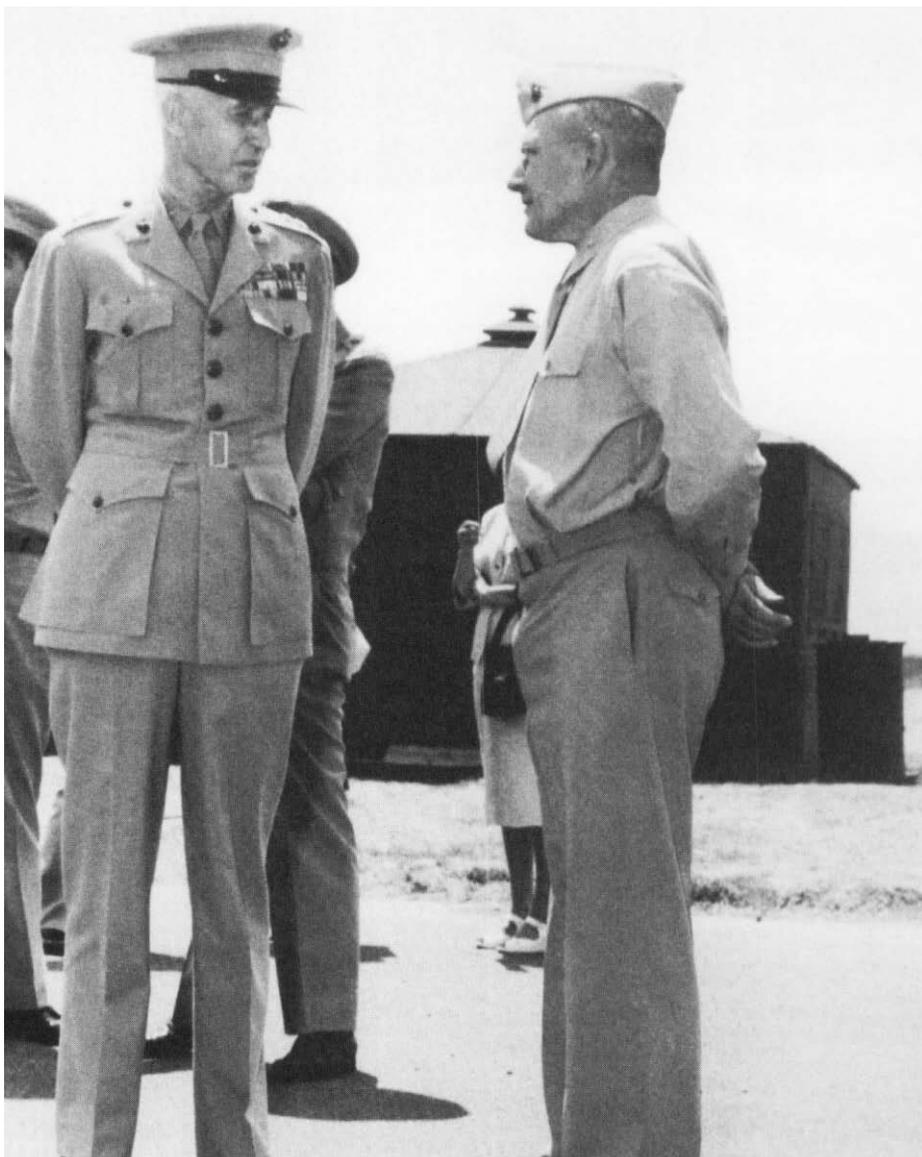
The JCS agreed that the 1st Marine Division should be brought up to strength, but stopped short of committing it to the Far East. On 20 July, the Joint Chiefs informed MacArthur that the 1st Marine Division could not be combat ready until December. MacArthur erupted: the 1st Marine Division was "absolutely vital" to the plan being developed, under the code-name Chromite, by General Wright's group. A draft, circulated at CinCFE headquarters on 23 July, offered three alternatives:

Plan 100-B: A landing at Inchon on the west coast.

Plan 100-C: A landing at Kunsan on the west coast.

Plan 100-D: A landing at Chunmunjin-up on the east coast.

MacArthur's mind was now fully set on Inchon. He informed Collins, in his capacity as executive



Gen Oliver P. Smith Collection, Marine Corps Research Center  
*MajGen Oliver P. Smith, left, assumed command of the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton on 26 July 1950. Col Homer L. Litzenberg, Jr., right, arrived on 16 August with orders to reactivate the 7th Marines and have it ready for sailing by 3 September.*

agent for the JCS, that lacking the Marine division, he had scheduled an amphibious assault at Inchon in mid-September to be executed by the 5th Marines and the 2d Infantry Division in conjunction with an attack northward by the Eighth Army. His message caused the chiefs to initiate a hurried teletype conference with MacArthur on 24 July. MacArthur prevailed and on the following day, 25 July, the chiefs finally approved MacArthur's repeated requests for the 1st Marine Division.

## A New CG

Late in the afternoon of 25 July, Major General Oliver P. Smith arrived from Washington and checked in at the Carlsbad Hotel in Carlsbad, California. He was to take command of the 1st Marine Division at nearby Camp Pendleton on the following day. He phoned Brigadier General Harry B. Liversedge, the base commander and acting division commander, to let him know that he had arrived. Liversedge said that

## Colonel Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller

The younger Marines in the 1st Marines were ecstatic when they learned their regiment was going to be commanded by the legendary "Chesty" Puller. Older officers and non-commissioned officers in the regiment were less enthusiastic. They remembered the long casualty list the 1st Marines had suffered at Peleliu while under Colonel Puller's command. His style was to lead from the front, and, when he went into Korea, he already had an unprecedented four Navy Crosses.

Born in 1898, Puller had grown up in Tidewater Virginia where the scars of the Civil War were still unhealed and where many Confederate veterans were still alive to tell a young boy how it was to go to war. Lewis (which is what his family always called him) went briefly to Virginia Military Institute but dropped out in August 1918 to enlist in the Marines. To his disappointment, the war ended before he could get to France. In June 1919, he was promoted to second lieutenant and then, 10 days later, with demobilization was placed on inactive duty. Before the month was out he had reenlisted in the Marines specifically to serve as a second lieutenant in the Gendarmerie d'Haiti. Most of the officers in the Gendarmerie were white Marines; the rank and file were black Haitians. Puller spent five years in Haiti fighting "Caco" rebels and making a reputation as a bush fighter.

He returned to the States in March 1924 and received his regular commission in the Marine Corps. During the next two years he did barracks duty in Norfolk, attended Basic School in Philadelphia, served in the 10th Marines at Quantico, and had an unsuccessful try at aviation at Pensacola. Barracks duty for two years at Pearl Harbor followed Pensacola. Then in 1928 he was assigned to the Guardia Nacional of Nicaragua. Here in 1930 he won his first Navy Cross. First Lieutenant Puller, his citation reads, "led his forces into five successive engagements against superior numbers of armed bandit forces."

He came home in July 1931 to the year-long Company Officers Course at Fort Benning. That taken, he returned to Nicaragua for more bandit fighting and a second Navy Cross, this time for taking his patrol of 40 Nicaraguans through a series of ambushes, in partnership with the almost equally legendary Gunnery Sergeant William A. "Iron Man" Lee.

Now a captain, Puller came back to the West Coast in January 1933, stayed a month, and then left to join the Legation Guard at Peiping. This included command of the fabled "Horse Marines." In September 1934, he left Peiping to become the commanding officer of the Marine detachment on board the *Augusta*, flagship of the Asiatic Fleet.

In June 1936, he came to Philadelphia to instruct at the Basic School. His performance as a tactics instructor



Gen Oliver P. Smith Collection

and on the parade ground left its mark on the lieutenants who would be the captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels in the world war that was coming.

In June 1939, he went back to China, returning to the *Augusta* to command its Marines once again. A year later he left the ship to join the 4th Marines in Shanghai. He returned to the United States in August 1941, four months before the war began, and was given command of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, at Camp Lejeune. He commanded (he would say "led") this battalion at Guadalcanal and won his third Navy Cross for his successful defense of a mile-long line on the night of 24 October 1942. The fourth Navy Cross came for overall performance, from 26 December 1943 to 19 January 1944, at Cape Gloucester as executive officer of the 7th Marines. In February 1944, he took command of the 1st Marines and led it in the terrible fight at Peleliu in September and October.

Afterwards, he came back to command the Infantry Training Regiment at Camp Lejeune. Next he was Director of the 8th Marine Corps Reserve District with headquarters in New Orleans, and then took command of the Marine Barracks at Pearl Harbor. From here he hammered Headquarters to be given command, once again, of his old regiment, the 1st Marines.

After Inchon, there was to be a fifth Navy Cross, earned at the Chosin Reservoir. In January 1951, he received a brigadier general's stars and assignment as the assistant division commander. In May, he came back to Camp Pendleton to command the newly activated 3d Marine Brigade which became the 3d Marine Division. He moved to the Troop Training Unit, Pacific, on Coronado in June 1952 and from there moved east, now with the two stars of a major general, to Camp Lejeune to take command of the 2d Marine Division in July 1954. His health began to fail and he was retired for disability on 1 November 1955. From then until his death on 11 October 1971 at age 73 he lived in the little town of Saluda in Tidewater Virginia.

he had just received a tip from Washington that the division was to be brought to war strength and sail to the Far East by mid-August. Both Liversedge and Smith knew that what was left of the division was nothing more than a shell.

Smith took command the next day, 26 July. He had served in the division during World War II, commanding the 5th Marines in its Talasea landing at New Britain and was the assistant division commander at Peleliu. Only 3,459 Marines remained in the division at Camp Pendleton, fewer men than in a single full-strength regiment.

When the Joint Chiefs asked General Cates how he planned to bring the 1st Marine Division up to war strength, he had ready a two-pronged plan. Plan A would provide three rifle companies and replacements to the brigade already deployed. Plan B would use Reserves to fill up the division. Essential to the filling out of the 1st Marine Division—and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing as well—was the mobilization of the Marine Corps Reserve. “Behind every Marine regular, figuratively speaking,” wrote official historians Lynn Montross and Captain Nicholas A. Canzona, “stood two reservists who were ready to step forward and fill the gaps in the ranks.”

The 33,527 Marines in the Organized Reserve in 1950 were scattered across the country in units that included 21 infantry battalions and 30 fighter squadrons. Virtually all the officers and non-commissioned officers had World War II experience, but the ranks had been filled out with youngsters, many of whom did not get to boot camp. Subsequent reserve training had included both weekly armory “drills” and summer active duty. Someone wryly decided they could be classified as “almost combat ready.”

Behind the Organized Reserve was the Volunteer Marine Corps Reserve—90,044 men and women, most of them veterans, but with no further training after their return to civilian life. President Truman, with the sanction of Congress, authorized the call-up of the Marine Corps Reserve on 19 July. An inspired public information officer coined the phrase, “Minute Men of 1950.”

On 26 July, the day following JCS approval of the 1st Marine Division’s deployment, a courier arrived at Camp Pendleton from Washington with instructions for Smith in his fleshing-out of the 1st Marine Division: ground elements of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade would re-combine with the division upon its arrival in the Far East; units of the half-strength 2d Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, would be ordered to Camp Pendleton and re-designated as 1st Marine Division units; all possible regulars would be stripped out of posts and stations and ordered to the division; and gaps in the ranks would be filled with individual Reserves considered to be at least minimally combat-ready.

### Eighth Army Withdraws to Pusan

In Korea, at the end of July, Walker ordered the Eighth Army to fall back behind the Naktong River, the new defensive line forming the so-called “Pusan Perimeter.” Both flanks of the Eighth Army were threatened. In light of this deteriorating situation, the Joint Chiefs asked MacArthur if he still planned an amphibious operation in September. An unperturbed MacArthur replied that “if the full Marine Division is provided, the chances to launch the movement in September would be excellent.”

Reinforcements for Walker’s

Eighth Army began arriving directly from the United States, including the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade which debarked at Pusan on 3 August.

In Tokyo, General Stratemeyer became agitated when he learned that the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, as an integrated air-ground team, intended to retain mission control of its aircraft. An uneasy compromise was reached by which the Marines were to operate their two squadrons of carrier-based Vought F4U Corsairs with their own controllers under the general coordination of Partridge’s Fifth Air Force.

### Reserve Comes to Active Duty

The first reservists to reach Pendleton—the 13th Infantry Company from Los Angeles, the 12th Amphibian Tractor Company of San Francisco, and the 3d Engineer Company from Phoenix—arrived on 31 July. Elements of the 2d Marine Division from Camp Lejeune began their train journey the same day. In that first week, 13,703 Marines joined the division.

On 4 August, the Commandant ordered the reactivation of the 1st Marines and 7th Marines. Both regiments had been part of the 1st Marine Division in all its World War II campaigns. The 1st Marines was activated that same day under command of the redoubtable Colonel Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, who, stationed at Pearl Harbor as commanding officer of the Marine Barracks, had pestered Headquarters Marine Corps and General Smith with demands that he be returned to the command of the regiment he had led at Peleliu. By 7 August, the strength of the 1st Marine Division stood at 17,162.

The experiences of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Ridge’s 1st

Battalion, 6th Marines, were typical of the buildup being done at a dead run. Ridge had just taken command of the battalion. A crack rifle and pistol shot, he had spent most of World War II in intelligence assignments in Latin America, but in late 1944 was

transferred to Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, in time for staff duty for Iwo Jima and Okinawa. As an observer at Okinawa he was twice wounded.

Ridge's battalion, barely returned to Camp Lejeune from six months deployment to the

Mediterranean, traveled by ancient troop train to Camp Pendleton where it became the 3d Battalion of the reactivated 1st Marines. In about 10 days, the two-element, half-strength battalion expanded into a three-element, full-strength battalion. The two rifle companies

## Major General Field Harris

**D**uring the course of the Korean War, Major General Field Harris would suffer a grievous personal loss. While he served as Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, his son, Lieutenant Colonel William F. Harris, was with the 1st Marine Division, as commanding officer of 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, at the Chosin Reservoir. The younger Harris' battalion was the rear guard for the breakout from Yudam-ni. Later, between Hagaru-ri and Koto-ri, Harris disappeared and was posted as missing in action. Later it was determined that he had been killed.

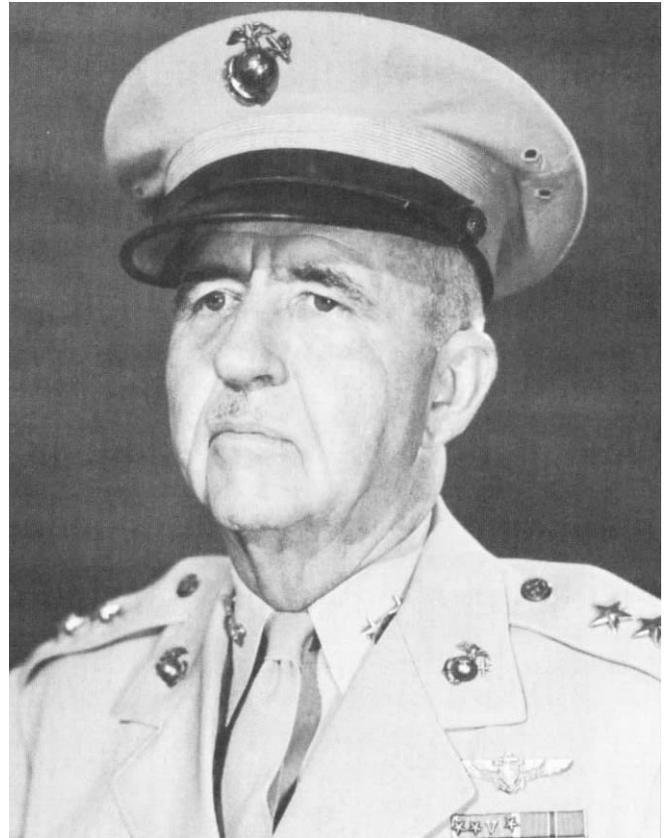
Field Harris—and he was almost always called that, “Field-Harris,” as though it were one word—belonged to the open cockpit and silk scarf era of Marine Corps aviation. Born in 1895 in Versailles, Kentucky, he received his wings at Pensacola in 1929. But before that he had 12 years seasoning in the Marine Corps.

He graduated from the Naval Academy in March 1917 just before America's entry into World War I. He spent that war at sea in the *Nevada* and ashore with the 3d Provisional Brigade at Guantanamo, Cuba.

In 1919 he went to Cavite in the Philippines. After three years there, he returned for three years in the office of the Judge Advocate General in Washington. While so assigned he graduated from the George Washington University School of Law. Then came another tour of sea duty, this time in the *Wyoming*, then a year as a student at Quantico, and flight training at Pensacola. His new gold wings took him to San Diego where he served in a squadron of the West Coast Expeditionary Force.

He attended the Air Corps Tactical School at Langley Field, Virginia, after which came shore duty in Haiti and sea duty in the carrier *Lexington*. In 1935, he joined the Aviation Section at Headquarters, followed by a year in the Senior Course at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. In August 1941, he was sent to Egypt from where, as assistant naval attache, he could study the Royal Air Force's support of Britain's Eighth Army in its desert operations.

After Egypt and United States entry into the war, he was sent to the South Pacific. In the Solomons, he served successively as Chief of Staff, Aircraft, Guadalanal; Commander, Aircraft, Northern Solomons; and commander of air for the Green Island operation. Each of these



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A310952

three steps up the chain of islands earned him a Legion of Merit. After World War II, he became Director of Marine Aviation in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (and received a fourth Legion of Merit). In 1948 he was given command of Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic. A year later he moved to El Toro, California, for command of Aircraft, Fleet Marine, Pacific, with concomitant command of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

His Korean War service was rewarded with both the Army's and the Navy's Distinguished Service Medal. On his return to the United States in the summer of 1951, he again became the commanding general of Air, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic. He retired in July 1953 with an advancement to lieutenant general because of his combat decorations, a practice which is no longer followed. He died in 1967 at age 72.

in the battalion each numbering about 100 men were doubled in size with a third rifle platoon added. A third rifle company was activated. The weapons company had no heavy machine gun platoon and only two sections in its antitank assault and 81mm mortar platoons. A heavy machine gun platoon was created and third sections were added to the antitank assault and 81mm mortar platoons. World War II vintage supplies and equipment came in from the mobilization stocks stashed away at the supply depot at Barstow, California—sufficient in quantity, poor in quality. The pressure of the unknown D-Day gave almost no time for unit shake-down and training.

Simultaneously with the ground unit buildup, Reserve fighter and ground control squadrons were arriving at El Toro, California, to fill out the skeleton 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. The wing commander, Major General Field Harris, Naval Academy 1917, and a naval aviator since 1929, had served in the South Pacific in World War II. More recently he had been Director of Aviation at Marine Corps Headquarters. He was one of those prescient senior Marines who foresaw a future for helicopters in amphibious operations.

### 7th Infantry Division and KATUSA

In parallel actions, MacArthur on 4 August ordered Walker to rebuild the Army's 7th Infantry Division—the last division remaining in Japan—to full strength by 15 September. The division had been reduced to less than half-strength by being repeatedly culled for fillers for the three divisions already deployed to Korea. Until MacArthur's directive, the division was not scheduled to be up to strength until 1 October and not



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A20115

*MajGen Field Harris and a portion of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing staff arrive at Barber's Point in Hawaii in early September enroute to the Far East. Leaving the Marine transport are, from left, Col Edward C. Dyer, Col Boeker C. Batterton, Col William G. Manley, and Gen Harris.*

ready for amphibious operations until 1951. Now, the division was to get 30 percent of all replacements arriving from the United States. Moreover, a week later, on 11 August, MacArthur directed Walker to send 8,000 South Korean recruits to fill out the division.

The first of 8,600 Korean replacements, straight out of the rice paddies of South Korea and off the streets of Pusan, began arriving by ship at Yokohama a few days later. This infusion of raw untrained manpower, called "KATUSA"—Korean Augmentation of the U.S. Army—arrived for the most part in baggy white pants, white jackets, and rubber shoes. In three weeks they had to be clothed, equipped, and made into soldiers, including the learning of rudimentary field sanitation as well

as rifle practice. The "buddy system" was employed—each Korean recruit was paired off with an American counterpart.

Major General David G. Barr, the 7th Infantry Division's commander, had been chief of staff of several commands in Europe during World War II. After the war he had headed the Army Advisory Mission in Nanking, China. He now seemed a bit old and slow, but he knew Chinese and the Chinese army.

### 1st Marine Division Loads Out

Loading out of the 1st Marine Division from San Diego began on 8 August. That same day, General Fellers, back from Japan, told Smith that the division would be employed in Korea between 15