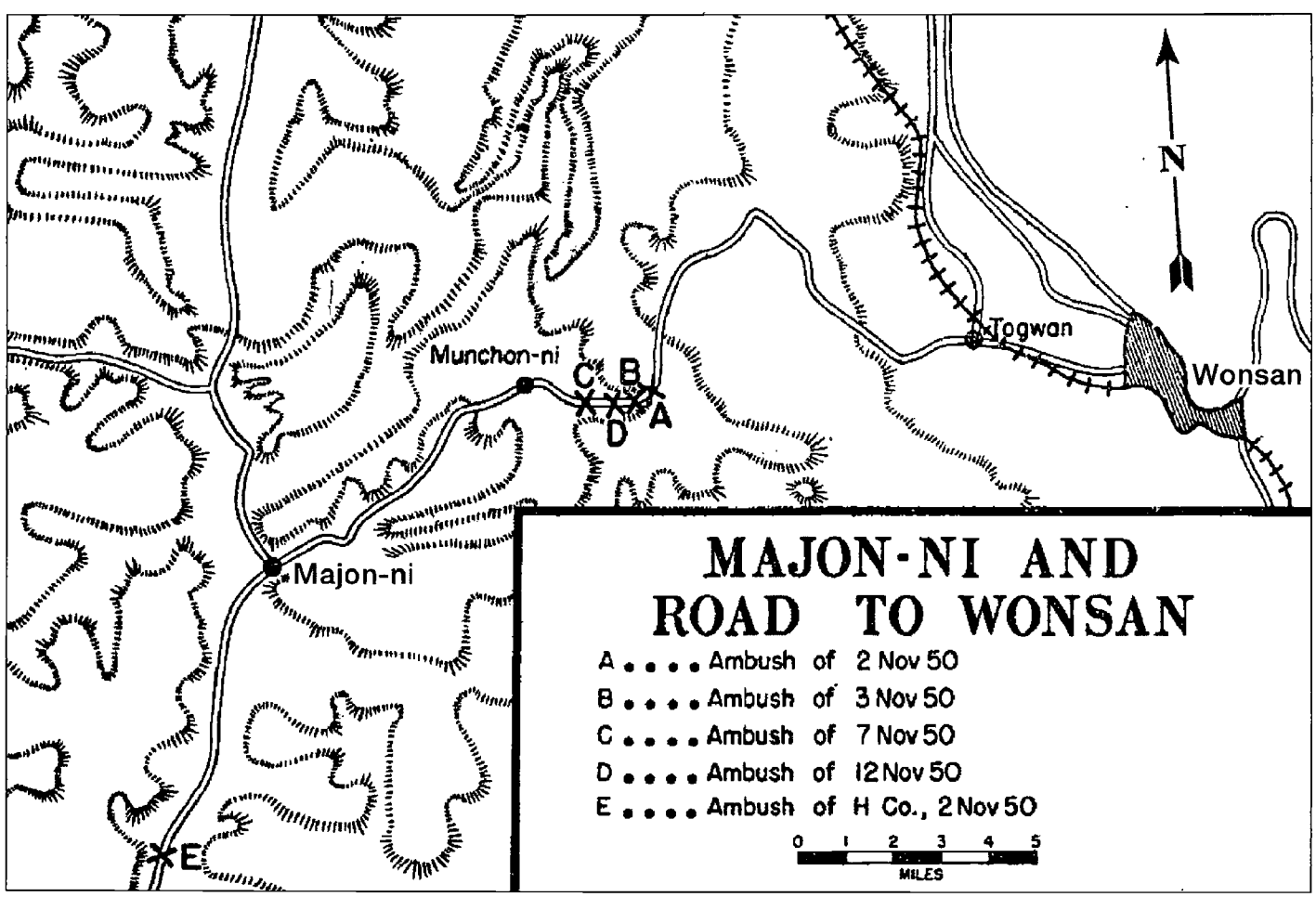
Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, the Majon-ni mission was a difficult defensive line that had to be covered with a thin perimeter, thus providing 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, with good practice for their similar challenge ahead at Hagaru-ri, the crossroads mountain village situated at the southeastern edge of the Chosin Reservoir. "Majon-ni was a dress rehearsal for what was going to come up for us at Hagaru-ri," he said. For his part, General Robert H. Barrow considered Majon-ni more a precursor for Khe Sanh in 1968, a remote plateau in the mountains "at the end of a long, tenuous supply route in no-man's land."

Elements of the *15th NKPA Division* opposed Ridge's battalion in the mountains around Majon-ni. While more disorganized and much less proficient than the *10th Regiment* that had stung Hawkins' 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, so painfully at Kojo, these North Koreans were sufficiently trained fighters to threaten Ridge's perimeter each night and readily interdict the Marine convoys trundling carefully through Ambush Alley.

When Ridge went a week without resupply convoys being able to get through to Majon-ni, he requested an air drop of ammunition, gasoline, and rations. The 1st Air Delivery Platoon packaged 21 tons of these critical supplies into 152 parachutes. These were dropped over the Marine perimeter with uncommon accuracy by Air Force C-47s.

With ambushes occurring more frequently, Puller assigned Captain Barrow's Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, to escort a 34-vehicle convoy from Wonsan to Majon-ni at mid-afternoon on 4 November. Barrow was uncomfortable with both the late start and the slow progress. The North Koreans struck the column with heavy fire late in the afternoon. "They picked a good spot," said Barrow. He called for air strikes through a patchwork network and tried to work his infantry up the steep slopes towards the ambushers. "It soon became apparent that we were not going to be successful . . . and the bad thing was nightfall was approaching." Stymied, and embarrassed by the failure, Barrow ordered the huge 6x6s and Jeeps with trailers to turn around, a harrowing experience under automatic weapons fire. One vehicle went over the side. The Marines formed "a bucket-brigade" to retrieve the injured men.

Back at Wonsan, Captain Barrow dreaded having to report



National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A4492

Battery H, 11th Marines, runs its guns forward and prepares to go to work in support of the 7th Marines as the regimental combat team moves north from Hamhung into the mountains of North Korea.

his lack of success to Chesty Puller. He found Puller in a school classroom, appropriately seated at the teacher's desk. "Colonel, I have failed you," he said. "No you didn't, old man," Puller growled, not unkindly. "Have a seat." Puller offered Barrow a drink of bourbon, then asked him what he needed to get the convoy through the next day. "More daylight and a forward air controller," Barrow replied.

Barrow departed Wonsan early on the 5th, inspired by an innovative tactic he had devised during the night. The North Koreans, he realized, could hear the trucks laboring up the pass long before they hove into view. He would therefore detach a reinforced platoon to precede the convoy on foot by several thousand yards—comforting for the convoy, although spooky for Second Lieutenant Donald R. Jones' point platoon.

Private First Class Morgan Brainard was a member of the second fire team in Jones' dismounted advance patrol. After four bends in the road he looked back and saw the far-distant trucks begin to move. "We were then so far ahead, that I couldn't hear their engines, only our labored breathing," he said. "It was a lonely, eerie feeling, forty-two of us plodding up a bleak mountain road by ourselves."

"It worked!" said Barrow. Jones' point team caught the North Koreans cooking rice along the road, totally unaware and non-tactical. "We literally shot our way forward," said Brainard. More than 50 of the off-duty ambushers died in the surprise attack. "We just laid them out," Barrow recalled with obvious pride, adding, "sometimes the simplest solutions are the most successful."

Barrow delivered his convoy to Majon-ni, stayed to help 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, defend the perimeter against a large-scale night attack, then returned to Wonsan the next day, the emptied trucks now laden with more than 600 NKPA prisoners captured by Ridge's battalion. Yet Barrow's success did not end North Korean interdiction of the Marine convoys. They had learned their own lessons from their surprise defeat on 5 November and would fight

smarter in two additional ambushes the following week.

On 10 November, the 3d Korean Marine Corps Battalion reinforced 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, at Majon-ni. The Korean Marines joined their American counterparts in a brief but heartfelt celebration of the 175th Birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps. Ridge's bakers outdid themselves with the resources at hand—an uneven yet ambitiously large cake, smeared with C-Ration jam—but what the hell!

The North Koreans struck the Marine perimeter once more in force the night of 11-12 November, then faded back into the mountains. On the 14th, Lieutenant Colonel Ridge turned over defense of the village to an Army battalion from the newly arrived 3d Infantry Division and led his men back to Wonsan, pleased that 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, had acquitted itself well on such an isolated mission. The battalion sustained 65 casualties defending Majon-ni; another 90 Marines became casualties in the series of convoy fights along Ambush Alley.

The Majon-ni mission ended three straight months of significant fighting between the Marines and main line elements of the North Korean Peoples' Army. Admirably supported by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, the Marines had fought well from the start, expanded effortlessly from a small brigade to a full-strength division, executed one of the most difficult amphibious landings in history, and —with the help of their allies and Army elements of X Corps—recaptured an enormous capital city. The resurgence of the Marines' standing within the national security community in Washington was downright dramatic.

But that phase of the Korean War had ended. A new, starkly different, and more troublesome phase had begun. The deceptive promise of "Home by Christmas" seemed abruptly swept away by a bone-chilling wind out of the Taebaek Mountains, out of Manchuria, a harbinger of an early winter—and perhaps something more ominous. By the time General Smith moved the division command post from Wonsan to Hungnam on 4 November, he had been receiving reports of Red Chinese troops south of the Yalu for 10 days. A patrol from 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, visited the headquarters of the 17th ROK Infantry near Sudong-ni on 31 October and confirmed the presence of prisoners of war from the *124th Division*, Chinese Communist Forces.

Colonel Homer Litzenberg, whose 7th Marines would lead the way into the Taebaek Mountains, warned his troops about the likelihood of a Third World War. "We can expect to meet Chinese Communist troops," he told them, "and it is important that we win the first battle. The results of that action will reverberate around the world, and we want to make sure that the outcome has an adverse effect in Moscow as well as Peiping."

The 7th Marines, wearing and carrying cold weather equipment, press north into the Taebaek Mountains in pursuit of North Korean forces. A burden now, they would come to depend on this gear in the coming month.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A4524

About the Author

Colonel Joseph H. Alexander, USMC (Ret), served 29 years on active duty as an assault amphibian officer, including two tours in Vietnam and service as Chief of Staff, 3d Marine Division. He is a distinguished graduate of the Naval War College and holds degrees in history and national security from North Carolina, Jacksonville, and Georgetown Universities.

Colonel Alexander wrote the History and Museum Division's World War II 50th anniversary commemorative pamphlets on Tarawa, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. His books include *A Fellowship of Valor: The Battle History of the U.S. Marines*; *Storm Landings: Epic Amphibious Battles of the Central Pacific*; *Utmost Savagery: The Three Days of Tarawa*; *Edson's Raiders: The 1st Marine Raider Battalion in WW II*; and (with Lieutenant Colonel Merrill L. Bartlett) *Sea Soldiers in the Cold War*. As chief military historian for Lou Reda Productions he has appeared in 15 documentaries for The History Channel and the Arts & Entertainment Network, including a four-part mini-series on the Korean War, "Fire and Ice."

Sources

Primary sources included the 1st Marine Division Special Action Reports for 29 August-7 October 1950, the war diaries of several ground and aviation units, and Gen Oliver P. Smith's official letters and memoir concerning the Seoul/Wonsan campaigns. Of the official history series, *U.S. Marine Operations in Korea*, the volumes by Lynn Montross and Nicholas A. Canzona (II: *The Inchon-Seoul Operation* [Washington, D.C., Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1955] and III: *The Chosin Reservoir Campaign* [Washing-ton, D.C., Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1957]), provide well-researched coverage of the recapture of Seoul and the Wonsan, Kojo, and Majon-ni operations. Among the Marine Corps Oral History Collection, I found most useful the interviews with Gen Robert H. Barrow, Col Francis I. Fenton, Jr., Maj Gen Raymond L. Murray, and LtCol Francis F. Parry. The interview with Adm John S. Thach, USN (Ret), in the U.S. Naval Institute's Oral History Collection, was consulted. I also benefited from direct interviews with MajGen Norman J. Anderson, Gen Robert H. Barrow, former SSgt Larry V. Brom, MGySgt Orville Jones, LtGen Robert P. Keller, LtGen Philip D. Shutler, and BGen Edwin H. Simmons. Contemporary quotations by PFC Morgan Brainard and Lt Joseph R. Owen are from their autobiographic books, Brainard's *Then They Called for the Marines* (formerly *Men in Low Cut Shoes* [Todd & Honeywell, 1986]) and Owen's *Colder Than Hell: A Marine Rifle Company at Chosin Reservoir* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996).

Two official monographs proved helpful: LtCol Gary W. Parker and Maj Frank M. Batha, *A History of Marine Observation Squadron Six* (Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1982), and Curtis A. Utz, *Assault from the Sea: The Amphibious Landing at Inchon* (Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1994), which also includes the Seoul campaign.

Robert D. Heinl's stirring *Victory at High Tide: The Inchon-Seoul Campaign* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1968) leads the list of recommended books. I also suggest Bevin Alexander, *Korea: The First War We Lost* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1986); Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1961); Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea* (New York: *Times* Books, 1987); David Douglas Duncan's superb photo essay, *This is War! A Photo-Narrative in Three Parts* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951); George F. Hofmann and Donn A. Starry, *Camp Colt to Desert Storm: The History of U.S. Armored Forces* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1999); J. Robert Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 3d ed. (Boston, Little Brown & Co., 1992); and Rod Paschall, *Witness to War: Korea* (New York: Perigree Books, 1995). Special thanks to LtCol Jon T. Hoffman, USMCR, for sharing advance copies of the Seoul/Wonsan chapters of his forthcoming biography of LtGen Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller.

I recommend these four vintage magazine essays: Nicholas A. Canzona, "Dog Company's Charge," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* (Nov56); Ernest H. Giusti and Kenneth W. Condit, "Marine Air Over Inchon-Seoul," *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 1952; Lynn Montross, "The Capture of Seoul: Battle of the Barricades," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 1951; and Norman R. Stanford, "Road Junction," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 1951. For a more recent account, see Al Hemingway, "Marines' Battle for Seoul," *Military History*, August 1996.

The author acknowledges Mary Craddock Hoffman who designed the map of the overall Inchon-Seoul area, and Col David Douglas Duncan, USMCR (Ret), for allowing the use of his historical photographs of Seoul. Photographs by Frank Noel are used with permission of the Associated Press/Wide World Photos.

FROZEN CHOSIN
U.S. Marines at the Changjin Reservoir

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

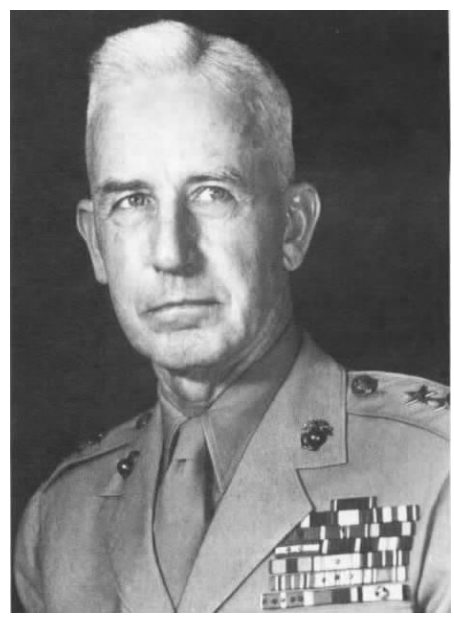
The race to the Yalu was on. General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's strategic triumph at Inchon and the subsequent breakout of the U.S. Eighth Army from the Pusan Perimeter and the recapture of Seoul had changed the direction of the war. Only the finishing touches needed to be done to complete the destruction of the North Korean People's Army. Moving up the east coast was the independent X Corps, commanded by Major General Edward M. Almond, USA. The 1st Marine Division, under Major General Oliver P. Smith, was part of X Corps and had been so since the 15 September 1950 landing at Inchon.

After Seoul the 1st Marine Division had reloaded into its amphibious ships and had swung around the Korean peninsula to land at Wonsan on the east coast. The landing on 26 October 1950 met no opposition; the port had been taken from the land side by the resurgent South Korean army. The date was General Smith's 57th birthday, but he let it pass unnoticed. Two days later he ordered Colonel Homer L. Litzenberg, Jr., 47, to move his 7th Marine Regimental Combat Team north from Wonsan to Hamhung. Smith was then to prepare for an advance to the Manchurian border, 135 miles distant. And so began one of the Marine Corps' greatest battles—or, as the Corps would call it, the "Chosin Reservoir Campaign." The Marines called it the "Chosin" Reservoir because that is what their Japanese-based maps called it. The South Koreans, nationalistic sensibilities disturbed, preferred—and, indeed, would come to insist—that it be called the "Changjin" Reservoir.

General Smith, commander of the Marines—a quiet man and inveterate pipe-smoker (his favorite brand of tobacco was Sir Walter Raleigh)—was not the sort of personality to attract a nickname. His contemporaries sometimes referred to him as "the Professor" but, for the most part, to distinguish him from two more senior and better known General Smiths in the World War II Marine Corps—Holland M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith of famous temper and mild-mannered Julian C. Smith of Tarawa—he was known by his initials "O. P."

Across the Taebaek (Nangnim) Mountains, the Eighth Army, under Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker, was advancing up the west coast of the Korean peninsula. Walker, a short, stubby man, was "Johnnie" to his friends, "Bulldog" to the press. In World War II he had commanded XX Corps in

AT LEFT: *In this poignant photograph by the peerless Marine and* Life *photographer, David Douglas Duncan, the dead ride in trucks, legs bound together with pack straps.* Photo by David Douglas Duncan

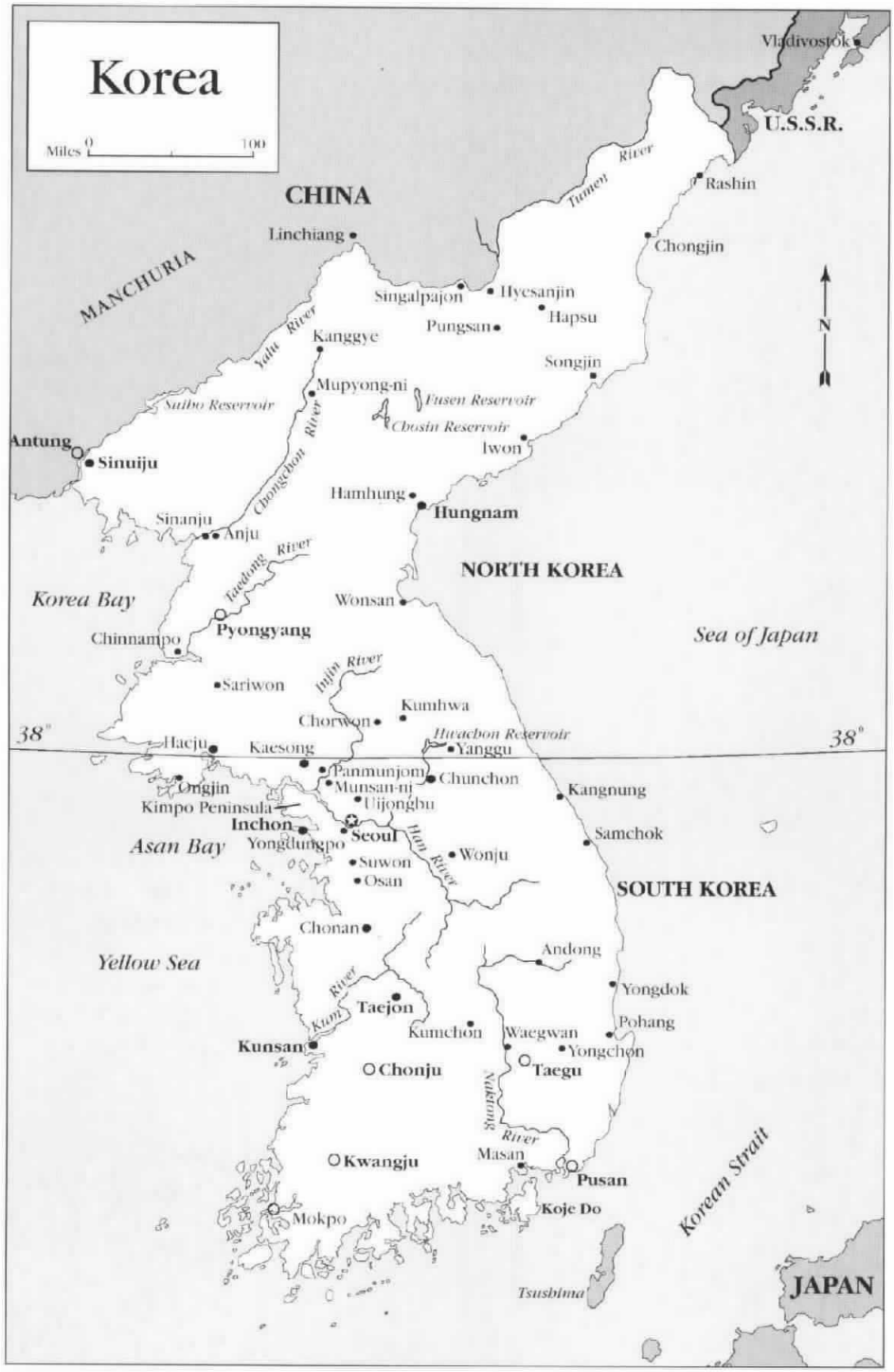


Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A88898

MajGen Oliver P. "O.P." Smith commanded the 1st Marine Division throughout the Chosin Reservoir campaign. A studious man, his quiet demeanor belied his extensive combat experience. His seemingly cautious style of leadership brought him into frequent conflict with MajGen Edward M. Almond, USA, the impetuous commanding general of X Corps.

General George S. Patton's Third Army and had been a Patton favorite. But these credentials held little weight with General Douglas MacArthur. He had come close to relieving Walker in August during the worst of the situation in the Pusan Perimeter. Relations between Almond and Walker were cool at best.

MacArthur had given Almond command of X Corps for the Inchon landing while he continued, at least in name, as MacArthur's chief of staff at Far East Command. Almond, an ener-



getic, ambitious, and abrasive man, still nominally wore both hats although his X Corps command post in Korea was a long distance from MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo.

"General Almond in 1950 and 1951 in Korea had several nicknames," wrote Roy E. Appleman in his *Escaping the Trap: The U.S. Army X Corps in Northeast Korea*. "Generally, he was known to his friends and close associates as Ned. Other names were 'Ned, the Anointed,' which meant he was a favorite of General MacArthur's, and 'Ned, the Dread,' which referred to his power, his brusque manner, and sometimes arbitrary actions."

Many persons, both then and later, thought that X Corps should have now been subordinated to the Eighth Army. But on the 28th of October, "O. P." Smith was less concerned with these higher-level command considerations than he was with events closer to his headquarters at Wonsan. The 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, sent south of Wonsan to the coastal town of Kojo-ri, at the direction of X Corps, to protect a Republic of Korea supply dump had been roughly handled by a surprisingly strong North Korean attack. Smith thought that the battalion commander "was in a funk and it would be wise for Puller to go down and take charge." Colonel Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, the regimental commander of the 1st Marines, left late that afternoon by rail with the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, "to clear up the situation."

On the following day, Smith was annoyed by an order from Almond that removed the 1st Korean Marine Corps (KMC) Regiment from his operational control. The two commanders conferred on Monday, 30 October. Almond agreed to the return of one KMC battalion in order to expedite the move of the 5th and 7th Marines to Hamhung. After meeting with Almond, Smith flew by helicopter down to Kojo-ri and found that Puller indeed had the situation well in hand.

Tensions and differences between Almond and O. P. Smith were no secret. Almond had first met the Marine commander on Smith's arrival in Japan on 22 August 1950. As Almond still asserted a quarter-century later: "I got the impression initially (and it was fortified constantly later) that General Smith always had excuses for not performing at the required time the tasks he was requested to do."

With the 1st Marine Division

Department of Defense Photo (USN) 421392

Six weeks after the successful assault of Inchon, the 1st Marine Division made a delayed but unopposed landing at Wonsan on 26 October 1950. Heavy mining of the sea approaches with Soviet-made mines caused the delay.

After landing at Wonsan, the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, was sent south to the coastal town of Kojo-ri. Here it was savaged by an unexpectedly strong North Korean attack. MajGen Smith sent Col Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller south with the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, to "take charge."

Photo by Cpl W T. Wolfe, Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A4323

assigned as part of X Corps, Almond was Smith's operational commander. Smith's administrative commander continued to be Lieutenant General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., commanding general of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, with headquarters in Hawaii. While not in the operational chain-of-command, Shepherd was responsible for the personnel and logistical support of the 1st Marine Division. This gave Shepherd, an old war-horse, an excuse for frequent visits to the battlefield. Fifty-four-year-old Shepherd and 57-year-old Almond got along well, perhaps because they were both Virginians and both graduates of close-knit Virginia Military Institute—Almond, Class of 1915 and Shepherd, Class of 1917. "I liked him," said Shepherd of

LtGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., left, arrives at Wonsan Airfield on 31 October for one of his frequent visits and is greeted by MajGen Edward M. Almond. The two generals got along very well, perhaps because they were both Virginia Military Institute graduates. Both are wearing cuffed Army combat boots, a footgear favored by all those who could obtain them.

Photo by Cpl Jack Nash, National Archives
Photo (USA) 111-SC351739

Photo by Cpl Jack Nash, National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC351740

Using a map spread out on the hood of a jeep, MajGen Edward M. Almond briefs LtGen Lemuel C. Shepherd on his arrival at Wonsan on 31 October. At the extreme left is MajGen William J. Wallace, Director of Aviation at Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps, who accompanied Shepherd. MajGen Oliver P. Smith stands behind Shepherd and Almond. MajGen Field Harris is on the extreme right.

Almond at VMI, "but I really can't say he was one of my closer friends." Shepherd had had reason to expect command of X Corps for the Inchon landing, but MacArthur had given command to his chief of staff, Almond. Shepherd exhibited no visible grudge and Almond, in turn, always made Shepherd welcome on his visits and he often stayed with Almond in his mess. Years later, Shepherd, who considered Almond an excellent corps commander, said of him: "He was energetic, forceful, brave, and in many ways did a good job under most difficult conditions."

Concerning Almond's relations with Smith, Shepherd said: "He and O. P. just didn't get along, from the very first. They're two entirely different personalities. . . . O. P. [was] a cautious individual, a fine staff officer who considered every contingency before taking action. On the other hand Almond was aggressive and anxious for the X Corps to push ahead faster than Smith thought his division should. Smith wisely took every precaution to protect his flanks during his division's advance into North Korea, which slowed him down considerably. I'm sure Almond got into Smith's hair—just like I'm sure that I did too."

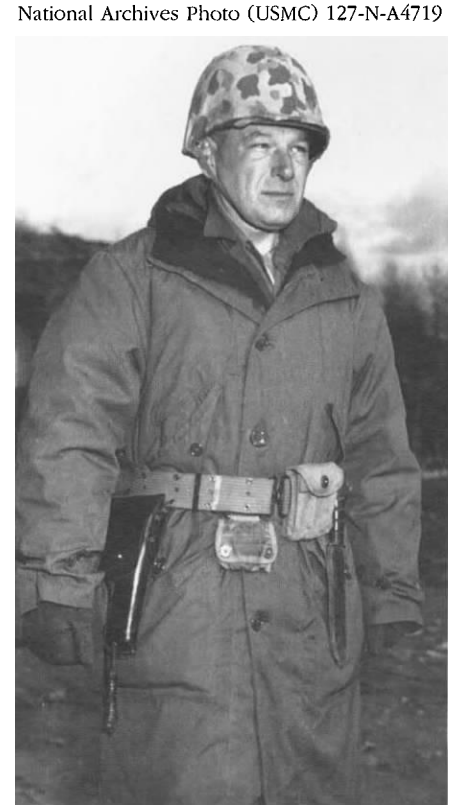
As a glance at a map will confirm, North Korea is shaped like a funnel, with a narrow neck—roughly a line from Wonsan west to Pyongyang—and a very wide mouth, the boundary with Red China and a bit with the Soviet Union on the north, formed by the Yalu and Tumen Rivers. Because of this geographic conformation, any force moving from the north to south had the advantage of a converging action. Conversely, forces moving from south to north must diverge. As Walker and Almond advanced to the north, the gap between Eighth Army and X Corps would grow wider and wider. This may have concerned Walker, but it does not seem to have bothered Almond—nor their common commander, General Douglas MacArthur, many miles away in Tokyo in what he liked to call his "GHQ."

General Shepherd arrived at Wonsan for one of his periodic visits on Tuesday, 31 October. Next morning Shepherd flew down to Kojo-ri to visit Puller and on his return to Wonsan he and Smith flew to Hamhung to see Litzenberg. That night Smith entered in his log:

> Litzenberg is concerned over the situation. He has moved up behind the 26th

Col Homer L. Litzenberg, Jr., commanding officer of the 7th Marines, was known to his troops as "Litz the Blitz," more for the alliteration than his command style. At the outbreak of the war, Litzenberg was in command of the 6th Marines at Camp Lejeune. In August 1950, the 7th Marines was hurriedly re-activated at Camp Pendleton using cadres drawn from the 6th Marines.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A4719



ROK Regiment and will relieve them tomorrow. Two Chinese regiments have been identified to the front. The ROK regiment is very glad to be relieved by the Marines. The ROKs apparently have no stomach for fighting Chinese.

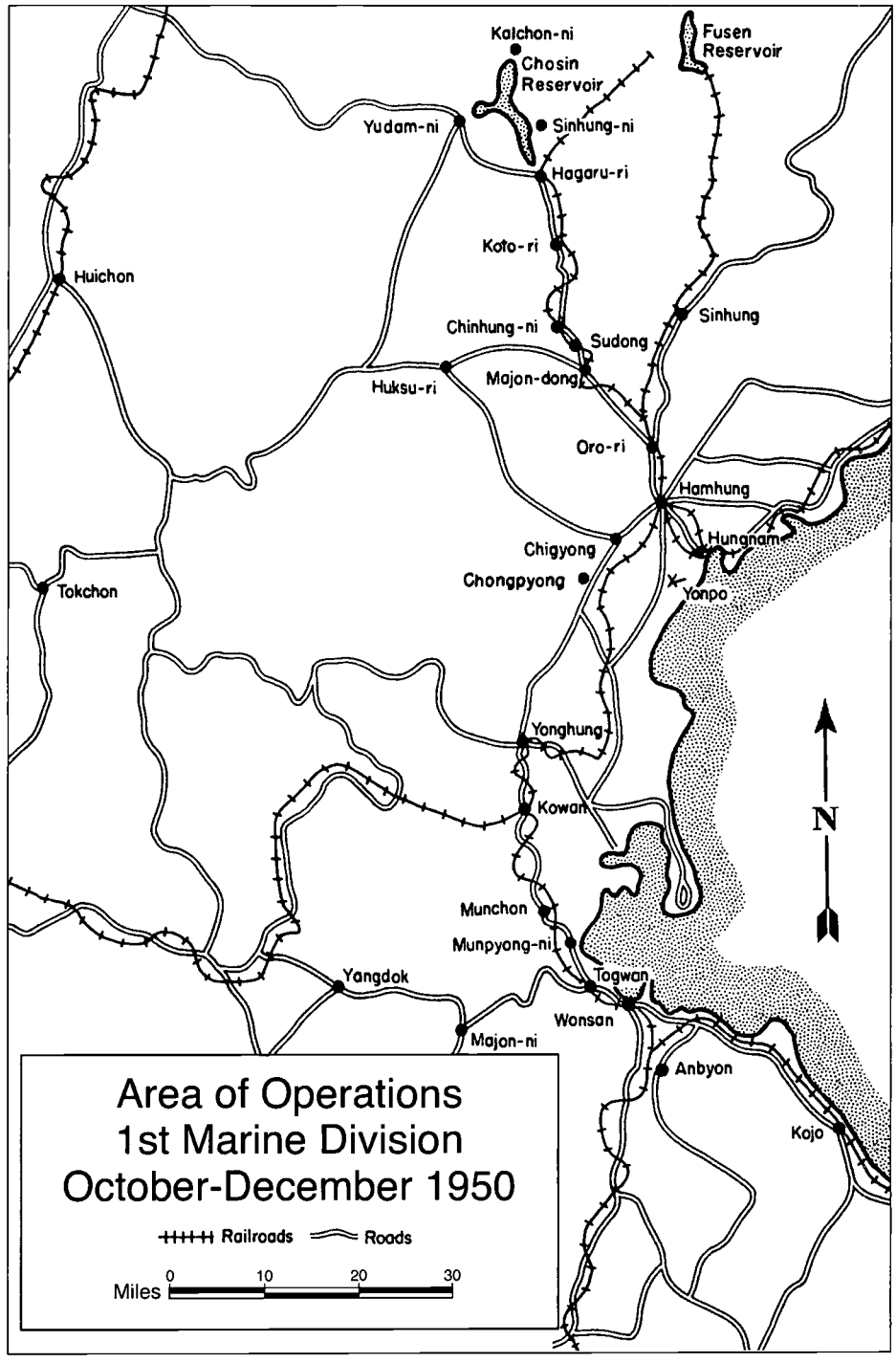
China Enters the War

Most Chinese historians now assert, and most Western historians are now ready to believe, that China entered the Korean War reluctantly.

In 1948, Kim Il Sung, then 37, had emerged under the patronage of the Soviet occupation as the leader of the so-called Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its capital in Pyongyang. In the West he remained a shadowy figure. Reputedly he had been a successful guerrilla fighter against the Japanese. He had returned to North Korea at World War II's end as a hero.

With the civil war against the Chinese Nationalists at a successful close, Mao in late 1949 and early 1950 released four divisions made up of soldiers of Korean origin to return to Korea. These Kim, under Soviet tutelage, reorganized into mirror images of Soviet rifle divisions in equipment and training. Early on Kim Il Sung learned how to play Mao Tse-tung against Stalin. For more than a year, Kim Il Sung zigzagged back and forth between Moscow and Peiping (not yet known in the West as "Beijing") seeking Stalin's and then Mao's support for an overt invasion of the South.

Both Stalin and Mao were at first skeptical of Kim's ambitions. Stalin cautioned Kim that he should cross the 38th Parallel only in a counteroffensive to a South Korea invasion of the north. Mao advised Kim to be prepared for protracted guerrilla warfare and not to attempt to reunify Korea by force.



For Mao, Kim's ambitious plans were a distraction. He was much more interested in completing his victory against the Chinese Nationalists by "liberating" Xingjiang, Tibet, and, most importantly, Taiwan. But in the spring of 1950 Stalin, playing his own game, gave Kim a qualified promise of Soviet support with the proviso that the North Korean leader consult with Mao. Accordingly, Kim went again to Peiping in mid-May 1950, put on a bold front and told Mao that Stalin had agreed with his plan to invade South Korea. A cautious Mao asked the Soviet ambassador to confirm Kim's assertion. A sly Stalin replied that while he approved Kim's plans, the deci-

Marine Corps Historical Center Photo Collection

Peng Dehuai, left, commander of the Chinese Communist Forces meets with Kim Il Sung, premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Peng later was China's Minister of National Defense but because of his criticism of the Great Leap Forward he was dismissed. During the Cultural Revolution he was arrested, imprisoned, tortured, and died in 1974 from a lack of medical care. He was posthumously rehabilitated as a "great revolutionary fighter" and loyal party member.

sion to invade South Korea was a decision to be made by China and North Korea. Until then Mao's position had been that Taiwan's liberation must have priority over Korea's unification. Reluctantly, Mao reversed these priorities but cautioned Kim on the strong possibility of intervention by the United States on the side of South Korea. Mao had almost no regular troops in northeast China. He told Kim that he would move troops into Manchuria, poised to cross into Korea, but that they would not enter the war unless American troops crossed the 38th Parallel.

The concentration of Chinese forces along the Yalu did not really begin until mid-July 1950 with the formation of the *Northeast China Border Defense Force*, about 260,000 troops. By mid-August Mao was certain that the United Nations forces would land at Inchon. On 23 August, the same day that MacArthur was wresting final approval for Inchon at a conference in Tokyo, Mao was meeting with his political and military leaders in Peiping. They were ordered to complete all preparations by the *Northeast China Border Defense Force* for war. The *Ninth Army Group*, which had been poised near Shanghai for the invasion of Taiwan (still known to the Western world as "Formosa"), was one of the major units ordered to move north.

The Inchon landing gave urgency to Chinese preparations to enter the war. Two days after the landing on 15 September 1950, a liaison party was sent to Pyongyang. Meanwhile, Kim Il Sung had asked Stalin for help, including putting pressure on China to send troops. Stalin considered the most acceptable assistance by Chinese armed forces would be in the form of "people's volunteers." In a telegram to Mao on 1 October, Stalin advised: "The Chinese soldiers may be considered as volunteers and of course will be commanded by the Chinese." Mao responded the next day that this was his intention.

For many years Western historians supposed that Lin Piao, a legendary Chinese Communist leader, commanded Chinese forces in Korea. They were wrong. At a 4 October conference in Peiping, Lin Piao argued strongly against sending troops into Korea to fight the Americans and refused to lead the intervention, using the subterfuge of poor health. Lin went off to Moscow for medical treatment and Mao named Peng Dehuai, a tough old revolutionary, to take his place. Peng, born in Hunan province of peasant stock, had emerged as a senior commander in Mao Tse-tung's famed Long March in 1934-1935. Peng arrived in Peiping too late for the 4 October meeting but met the next day with Mao who directed him to be ready to enter Korea by 15 October. On 8 October, Mao officially ordered the creation of the *Chinese People's Volunteers*, which would be the expeditionary element of the *Northeast China Border Defense Force*, with Peng as both military commander and political commissar.

That same day, 8 October, Mao sent his adroit vice-chairman and foreign minister, Zhou Enlai, to the Soviet Union to discuss with Stalin the provision of air assistance and military equipment. Zhou met with Stalin at his Black Sea resort. Stalin was noncommittal and said that he was not yet ready to provide air support. In Manchuria, Peng Dehuai was furious when he learned this. He stormed back to Peiping to meet again with Mao.

Meanwhile Kim Il Sung was pressing for immediate Chinese help.

In early October, Zhou Enlai informed the Indian ambassador in Peiping, Kavalam M. Panikkar, that if the United Nations forces crossed the 38th Parallel, China would send troops to defend North Korea. This warning reached Washington through diplomatic channels in New Delhi and Lon-don. Substantiating reports came through Moscow and Stockholm. The warnings were forwarded to MacArthur's GHQ in Tokyo.

On 15 October, the famous Wake Island meeting of President Harry S. Truman with General MacArthur took place. Truman's later blunt, but inadequate, explanation for the conference was "I wanted to have a personal talk with the General." A wary MacArthur perceived the meeting as a presidential ambush primarily designed to reinforce the Democratic Party's chances of success in the upcoming congressional elections. According to MacArthur, the possibility of Chinese intervention came up almost casually. He stated in his *Reminiscences* that the general consensus was that China had no intention of intervening. Truman would later say in his *Memoirs* that the threatened intervention in Korea was a prime reason for the meeting. He wanted MacArthur's "firsthand information and judgment."

What Truman took away from Wake Island was that the war in Korea was won and that the Chinese Communists would not attack. Asked about the chances of Chinese intervention, MacArthur, according to Truman, replied that there was very little chance that the Chinese would come in. At the most they might be able to get fifty or sixty thousand men into Korea, but since they had no air force, "if the Chinese tried to get down to Pyongyang, there would be the greatest slaughter."

MacArthur remembered the conversation quite differently. He would later say that it was a "prevarication" that he had predicted, "that under no circumstances would Chinese Communists enter the war." He characterized his Wake Island view on the possibility of Chinese intervention as "speculative." His own local intelligence, filtered through to him by his longtime G-2, Major General Charles A. Willoughby, USA, told him that large numbers of Chinese troops were massed across the Yalu, but his estimate was that America's virtually unopposed air power would make large-scale intervention impossible.

Four nights after the Wake Island meeting, on 19 October, the Chinese in massive numbers began crossing the Yalu.

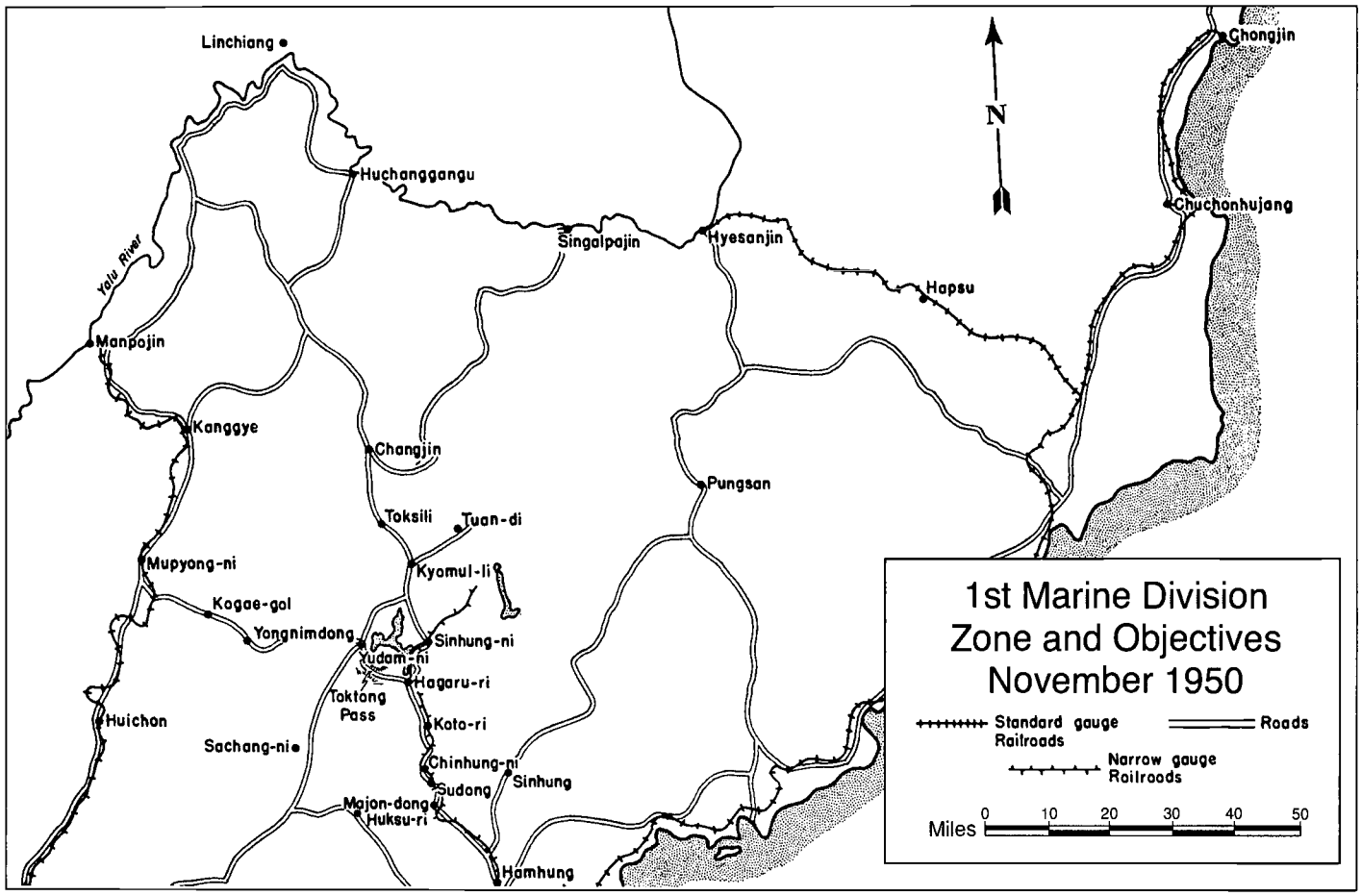
General Almond's Ambitions

The entry of Chinese troops in force into North Korea was not picked up by United Nations intelligence, neither visually by aerial reconnaissance nor audibly by intercepts of radio signals. In northeast Korea, Almond continued his advance with great confidence. Almond's over-riding ambition was to beat his rival, General Walker, to the Yalu. His X Corps included two strong U.S. divisions—the 1st Marine and the 7th Infantry—and two Republic of Korea or "ROK" divisions—the Capital and 3d—and there were more troops on the way. With the expected arrival of the U.S. 3d Infantry Division the total would come up to 102,000, about two-thirds as many troops as Walker had in his Eighth Army.

The two ROK divisions, organized into the ROK I Corps, could

From left to right: MajGen David G. Barr, Commanding General, 7th Infantry Division; MajGen Edward M. Almond, Commanding General, X Corps; and Col Herbert B. Powell, Commanding Officer, 17th Infantry. After Barr's division made an unopposed landing at Iwon on 29 October, Almond pushed Barr to get to the Yalu. Powell's regiment was the spearhead for the advance.

Photo by Cpl Alex Klein, National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC351957



best be described as light infantry. They had no tanks and their only artillery were obsolescent 75mm howitzers. Almond's optimistic assessment of the ROK corps' fighting capabilities was "that they were a good deal better than the people they were chasing, the disorganized, disabled North Korean force."

"I realized," said Almond years later, "that we were scattered all over the landscape, but the general deployment was controlled by the terrain of the area in which the [X] corps was to operate." Almond should also have realized that there were strings tied to his employment of the 1st Marine Division and its companion 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Shepherd, in Hawaii, was watching the use of the Marines very closely and so was the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Clifton B. Cates, in Washington.

Army Major General David G. "Dave" Barr's 7th Division had loaded out from Pusan on 19 October as a follow-on to the 1st Marine Division at Wonsan. Barr had been the chief of staff of several commands in Europe during World War II. After the war he had headed the Army Advisory Mission in Nanking. At the war's beginning his 7th Division had been stripped to provide fillers for the 24th and 25th Divisions, the first divisions to be deployed to Korea. The 7th Division, before following the Marines ashore at Inchon, had been hurriedly brought to war strength with untrained South Korean recruits—the so-called KATUSA or "Korean Augmentees to the United States Army."

Now, when the Marine landing at Wonsan was delayed, Barr's destination was changed to Iwon, 75 miles northeast of Hungnam. Iwon was still theoretically in "enemy" territory, but it had good beaches and was known to be free of mines. Barr reloaded the 17th Regimental Combat Team under Colonel Herbert B. Powell into seven LSTs (tank landing ships) to be used in an amphibious assault in the event that the beaches were defended. They were not. As at Wonsan, the South Koreans had already taken the port from the land side. Powell's RCT-17 landed unopposed on 29 October and plunged ahead in a dash for Hyesanjin on the Yalu River. By the end of the month Powell's lead battalion was in a bitter four-day fight with the beaten, but still stubborn, North Koreans at Pungsan. In the days that followed, the remainder of the 7th Division came ashore. The 31st Infantry began landing on 3 November with the mission of moving in on the left flank of the 17th Infantry. The 32d Infantry followed on 4 November

and went into bivouac northeast of Hungnam. On 8 November, the 31st Infantry ran into Chinese troops on the slopes of Paek-san, a 7,700-foot peak. In what was the 7th Division's first contact with the Chinese, the regiment reported at least 50 enemy killed.

Almond considered his control over the ROK I Corps to be no different than that he had over the 1st Marine Division and the 7th Infantry Division. Not all would agree, then or now, that his command of the ROK units was that complete. Their more binding orders came from President Syngman Rhee. While the landings at Wonsan and Iwon were still in prospect, the ROK Capital Division had marched steadily up the coast road to Iwon. The ROK 3d Division, meanwhile, had moved northwest from Hamhung toward the Chosin Reservoir.

On the Eighth Army front, the Chinese, whose presence in Korea had been doggedly denied at GHQ Tokyo, had by late October suddenly surfaced in formidable numbers. By the end of the month, the Chinese had defeated the ROK II Corps on the right flank of the Eighth Army to the point of disintegration, exposing the next unit to the left, the U.S. I Corps. General Walker ordered a general withdrawal to the Chungchon River. The Chinese did not pursue but broke off their offensive as suddenly as it began.

Separating the right flank of Eighth Army from X Corps was the Taebaek mountain range, the spine of the Korean peninsula and supposedly impassable to any significant number of troops. East of the Taebaek Mountains things seemed to continue to go well for General Almond and his X Corps. Almond did not appear to be perturbed by General Walker's problems.

Smith's Commanders and Staff

Because of the widely dispersed missions assigned his 1st Marine Division, General Smith had divided his command into regimental combat teams built around his three infantry regiments. RCT-5, under Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. Murray, was assigned a zone behind Litzenberg's RCT-7. RCT-1, commanded by the legendary "Chesty" Puller, already the holder of four Navy Crosses, would remain for the time being in the vicinity of Wonsan fighting the remnants of one or more broken North Korean divisions struggling to get north.

All three regimental commanders had been successful battalion commanders in World War II. Moreover, Puller had commanded the 1st Marines at Peleliu. Now in this new war, Murray, 37, had brought the 5th Marines to Korea in a pell-mell rush to play a fire-brigade role in the defense of the Pusan Perimeter. Puller, 52, had arrived from Camp Pendleton with the 1st Marines in time for the Inchon landing. Litzenberg had formed the 7th Marines at Camp Pendleton, California, in a matter of days and had gotten to Korea in time to join in the battle for Seoul. Litzenberg was called "Litz the Blitz" by some, but this was more an alliteration—and maybe a little derisive at that—rather than a description of his command style, which tended to be cautious and buttoned-up. Because of his closely cropped prematurely white hair, some of his irreverent young lieutenants, and perhaps a few of his captains and majors often referred him to, as the "Great White Father."

Murray, the junior regimental commander, was simply known as "Ray." Among Marines, who like to argue over such things, Murray's 5th Marines, with the highest percentage of regulars and the longest time in the fight, would probably have rated highest in combat effectiveness. The 1st Marines, with Chesty Puller as its commander, most likely would have rated second. The 7th Marines, last to arrive and with the highest percentage of reserves, still had to prove itself and would have come in third.

Smith had a strong division staff: some members were already serving with the division when he took command and some that he had subsequently asked for. At the outbreak of the war Colonel Alpha L. Bowser, Jr., 40, had just been assigned as Force Inspector, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. General Smith asked General Shepherd for his services as G-3 of the division. Shepherd assented and Bowser had become Smith's operational right-hand man. Bowser, Naval Academy 1932, had an enviable reputation in the Corps as a Quantico instructor, staff officer, expert in naval gunfire, and artillery battalion commander at Iwo Jima. He said later: "One of the major problems of the entire operation to the north of Wonsan was our open flank to the west. We never established contact with the right flank of the Eighth Army, and we had a great void out there which I at one time estimated to be somewhere in the neighborhood of 85 to 100 miles."

In a 1971 interview by D. Clayton James, noted historian and biographer of MacArthur, Bowser gave his considered opinion of Almond's leadership:

> General Almond was probably one of the most aggressive corps commanders I have ever seen in action. He was aggressive almost to a fault in my estimation. From

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A5895

For his brilliant staff work as division G-3, Col Alpha L. Bowser would later receive a Legion of Merit from MajGen Smith. Standing to Bowser's right is Col Bankson T. Holcomb, Jr., the division G-2, who received a similar decoration. These awards were made in January 1951.

> the standpoint of his own personal comfort and safety, he never gave it a thought. He was up at the front a great deal. He was what we referred to as a "hard charger."

However, Bowser went on to say:

> I questioned his judgment on many occasions. . . . I think that General Almond pictured this [campaign] in his mind's eye as a sweeping victory that was in his grasp. But he gambled and he lost. . . . A rather vain man in many ways. Ambitious. Could be a very warm personality as a personal friend. If he had one glaring fault, I would say it was inconsistency.

Bowser was not the only star player on Smith's team. Virtually all of the senior members of Smith's general and special staff were combat-tested veterans of considerable reputation.

Brigadier General Edward A. Craig, Smith's assistant division commander, now 54, had been commissioned in 1917, the same year as Shepherd and Smith. During the World War I years, while Smith was in garrison on Guam and Shepherd was winning laurels in France, Craig was fighting a kind of "cowboys and Indians" bush war against bandits in Haiti and Santo Domingo. In World War II he commanded the 9th Marines, first in training on Guadalcanal and then in combat on Bougain-ville and Guam—for the last he had a Navy Cross. He left the division in the summer of 1950 to command the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade in its adventures in the Pusan Perimeter, but rejoined the parent division in time for the Inchon landing. Like Smith, Craig was tall, slim, and prematurely white-haired. Smith, perhaps re-calling his own troubled period as the division's assistant division commander at Peleliu and being virtually ignored by the division commander, Major General William H. Rupertus, used Craig's services wisely and well, particularly as a roaming extension of his own eyes and ears. But Craig would be at home on emergency leave at a critical time in the campaign.

Smith's chief of staff, Colonel Gregon A. Williams, 54, had joined the division at Camp Pendleton in July. Before that he had been chief of staff of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. A short, erect man, Williams had the reputation of being a "mean SOB." He had had a remarkable—but not unique for an officer of his vintage—career. He had enlisted in San Diego at the outbreak of World War I, but did not get to France, serving, in due time, in Santo Domingo, China, Haiti, and

Col Gregon A. Williams, shown here as a brigadier general, was Smith's chief of staff. Seldom seen in the field by the troops, Williams ran the division staff and headquarters with an iron hand. Like many senior Marine officers, he had had considerable service in China, both before and during World War II.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A42833

Nicaragua. As a sergeant he had been in the Dominican *Guardia Nacional* as a local lieutenant. A young Dominican lieutenant, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, who would be the country's long-time dictator, became Williams' life-long friend. (The writer recalls that at the 1959 New Years reception at the presidential palace, in what was then Ciudad Trujillo, the single ornament on the grand piano in the ballroom was a silver-framed photograph of Colonel Williams.) Service in Nicaragua brought him a Navy Cross. At the beginning of the Pacific War, as an assistant naval attaché in Shang-hai, he was taken into custody by the Japanese and held as a prisoner until August 1942 when he was repatriated because of his diplomatic status. Undaunted, he returned to China to the new Nationalist capital in Chungking where he became involved in the support of guerrilla operations. In the summer of 1944 he was sent to the Pacific to take command of the 6th Marines, then involved in mopping-up on Saipan. He was a consummate chief of staff al-though not much loved by those who had to work for him. He got along famously with contemporaries such as Craig, but he terrified junior officers. Bowser, after some rough spells, said that, "He and I came to a perfect relationship." According to Bowser, Williams "took no guff" from Almond or Almond's chief of staff. Williams stayed close to the command post. Murray recalled seeing him only five or six times during their respective tours in Korea and then only at the division headquarters.

Much more visible to the command than Williams—and much better liked—was the deputy chief of staff, Colonel Edward W. Snedeker, 47. By training a communications officer, Snedeker had been Craig's chief of staff during the fighting by the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade in the Pusan Perimeter. Snedeker, Naval Academy 1926, had distinguished himself in World War II with a Silver Star from Guadalcanal and a Navy Cross from Okinawa where he commanded the 7th Marines. Smith's personal relationship with Snedeker was much closer than it was with Williams.

The G-1 (Personnel), Lieutenant Colonel Harvey S. Walseth, 39, Naval Academy 1935, had served in China before World War II and was a tank officer at Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima.

The G-2 (Intelligence), Colonel Bankson T. Holcomb, Jr., 42, movie-star handsome with his thin, clipped mustache and something of a bon vivant, was an old China hand. The cousin of Thomas Holcomb, who was the Commandant of the Marine Corps during World War II and the first Marine to reach the grade of four-star general, Bankson T. Holcomb, Jr., had graduated from high school in Peiping in 1925 and served two years as an enlisted man before going to the Naval Academy, Class of 1931. He returned to China in 1934 as an assistant to the naval attaché and Chinese language student, followed by two years as a Japanese language student in Tokyo. His speaking and reading ability in both Chinese and Japanese was rated as "excellent." He was at Pearl Harbor as an intelligence officer in December 1941 when the Japanese struck. In 1943 he returned to China once again, this time to operate out of the Nationalist capital of Chungking with Chinese guerrillas.

The G-4 (Logistics) Colonel

In January 1951, Col Edward W. Snedeker would receive a second Legion of Merit from MajGen Smith for his outstanding performance of duty as the division's deputy chief of staff. Earlier, in the Pusan Perimeter, he had been chief of staff of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A5897

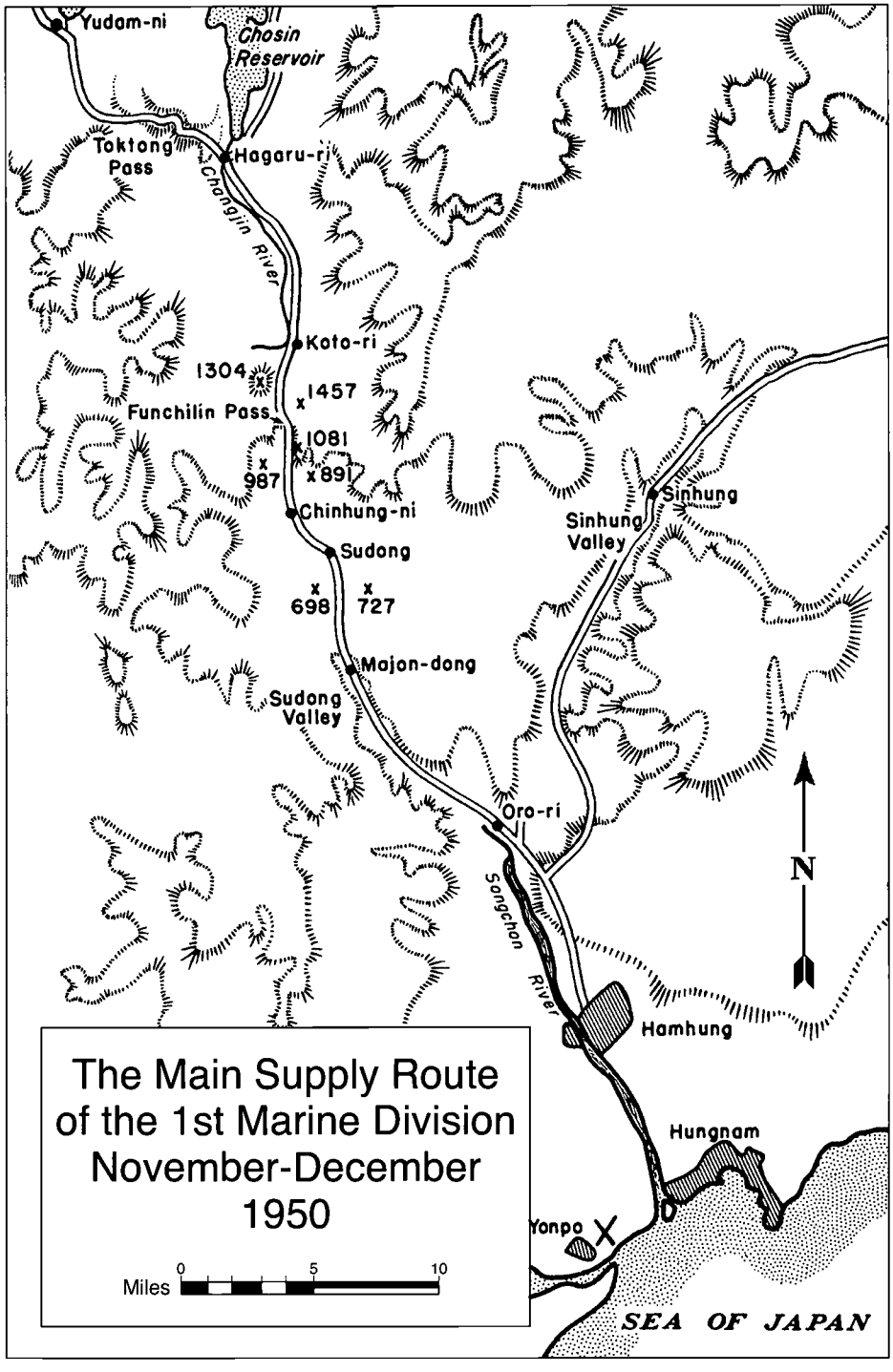
Francis M. McAlister, 45 and Naval Academy 1927, had fought as an engineer at Bougainville, Guam, and Okinawa. Like most Marine officers of his generation, he had served in Nicaragua and China.

Walseth, Holcomb, Bowser, and McAlister were the four pillars of the division's general staff. Bowser, the operations officer, and McAlister, the logistics chief, had a particularly close working partnership.

The much larger special staff ranged in grade from second lieutenant to colonel, from Second Lieutenant John M. Patrick, the historical officer, to Colonel James H. Brower, the division artillery officer. Most of the special staff were double-hatted; they also commanded the unit composed of their specialty. Brower commanded the division's artillery regiment, the 11th Marines, with three organic battalions of 105mm howitzers, a battalion of 155mm howitzers, and a battery of 4.5-inch

Col James H. Brower was the division artillery officer and commanding officer of the 11th Marines. He fell ill at Hagaru-ri and was replaced in command by his executive officer, LtCol Carl A. Youngdale.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A4696



multiple rockets. Brower, 42, was a Virginia Military Institute graduate, Class of 1931, who trained as an artilleryman at Fort Sill. During World War II he served as a staff officer with amphibious forces in the invasions of Sicily and Italy, but arrived in the Pacific in time for Okinawa.

Forty-four-year old Lieutenant Colonel John H. Partridge, as the commander of the 1st Engineer Battalion, was the division engineer. His engineers would work prodigies during the campaign. Partridge, Naval Academy 1936, had been with the 4th Marine Division at Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima.

Smith and his staff, and his subordinate commanders and their respective staffs, worked their way through new sets of maps, analyzing the terrain and divining lines

Distances in Road Miles

Hungnam to Hamhung	8
Hamhung to Oro-ri	8
Oro-ri to Majon-dong	14
Majon-dong to Sudong	7
Sudong to Chinhung-ni	6
Chinhung-ni to Koto-ri	10
Koto-ri to Hagaru-ri	11
Hagaru-ri to Yudam-ni	14
TOTAL	78

of communication. Hamhung and Hungnam, then and now, are often confused. Hungnam is the port; it lies on the north side of the Songchon River where it empties into the Japanese Sea. Yonpo, with its airfield, which would prove critical, is on the south side of the estuary. Hamhung is the inland rail and highway nexus, straddling the main rail line from Wonsan north. A narrow-gauge (2' 6") line also started at Hamhung to Chinhung-ni. From there it climbed by cable car, now inoperative, to a plateau in the shadow of the Taebek Mountains. A road paralleled the narrow-gauge line. This would be the main supply route or "MSR" for the Marines' advance. The dirt-and-gravel road stretched 78 miles from Hamhung to Yudam-ni, which, as yet, was just a name on a map. "In only a few weeks," says the Corps' official history, "it would be known to thousands of Marines as the MSR, as if there never had been another."

RCT-7—with the 1st Motor Transport Battalion and Division Reconnaissance Company attached—received a partial issue of cold weather clothing before making the move north by truck and rail during the last three days of October.

Major Henry J. Woessner, 30, Naval Academy 1941, and operations officer of the 7th Marines, was at X Corps command post in Wonsan on 30 October when General Almond, standing before the Corps situation map, briefed General Barr on the upcoming operation. Barr's division was to push north to Hyesanjin on the Yalu. The 1st Marine Division was to reach the border by way of Chinhung-ni, Koto-ri, and Hagaru-ri. After describing this twin-pronged thrust to the Yalu, Almond again turned to the situation map. "When we have cleared all this out," he said with a broad sweep of his hand, "the ROKs will take over, and we will pull our divisions out of Korea."

Before leaving the command post, Woessner talked to an Army liaison officer who had just returned from the ROK 26th Regiment up near Sudong. The Army officer told him that the ROKs had collided with a Chinese force and had been driven back. Colonel Edward H. Forney, Almond's Marine Corps deputy chief of staff, arranged for Woessner to fly over the objective area in an Air Force North American T-6 Texan. Woessner saw no enemy on the flight to and over Hagaru-ri, but the rugged nature of the terrain impressed him.

Woessner, on his return that afternoon to the 7th Marines command post, made his report to Colonel Litzenberg who in turn called in his officers and noncommissioned officers and told them that they might soon be fighting the first battle of World War III. "We can expect to meet Chinese Communist troops," he said, "and it is important that we win the first battle."

Tuesday, 31 October

RCT-7 was scheduled to relieve the ROK 26th Regiment, 3d Division, in the vicinity of Sudong on 2 November. Litzenberg on 31 October cautiously sent out reconnaissance patrols from Hamhung to explore the route northward. One of the patrols from the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines—Captain Myron E. Wilcox, Jr., two lieutenants, three jeeps, and a fire team—reached the command post of the 26th Regiment near Sudong. Wilcox reported to Litzenberg that while there they had seen a Chinese prisoner. The South Koreans told Wilcox and his patrol that they had taken 16 Chinese prisoners and had identified them as belonging to the *124th Chinese Communist Force (CCF) Division.* The prisoners said they had crossed the Yalu in mid-October.

Further interrogation of the 16 prisoners had yielded that they were members of the *370th Regiment* of the *124th CCF Division,* which along with the *125th* and *126th Divisions*, made up the *42d CCF Army.* Roughly speaking, a Chinese army was the equivalent of a U.S. corps. On arriving from the Yalu, the *124th* had deployed in the center to defend the Chosin Reservoir, the *126th* had moved east to the vicinity of the Fusen Reservoir, and the *125th* to the western flank on the

Photo by Cpl Alex Klein, National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC351718

Marines on 31 October saw for themselves the first Chinese prisoners taken by ROK I Corps. These prisoners, identified as belonging to the 124th CCF Division, *are wearing padded winter uniforms that offered little or no protection for the feet and hands, and the weather was about to turn cold.*

right of the *124th Division.*

Continuing the northward movement of his division from Wonsan, Smith ordered Murray to advance a battalion of the 5th Marines to Chigyong, eight miles southwest of Hamhung. Murray sent his 1st Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel George R. Newton. Newton, 35, Naval Academy 1938, had been a company commander in the Embassy Guard at Peiping in 1941 and spent World War II as a prisoner of war. Now, as a battalion commander, he had done well at Pusan and Inchon. One of Newton's companies was detached to relieve a company of the 7th Marines that was guarding Yonpo Airfield, five miles southwest of Hungnam.

Wednesday, 1 November

As yet the Marines had encountered no enemy anywhere along the MSR from Wonsan north to Hamhung; but Litzenberg was certain that he soon would be facing Chinese adversaries. On the following day, 1 November, he sent a stronger patrol from the attached division Reconnaissance Company to reconnoiter the Huksu-ri area about 45 miles northwest of Hungnam. This patrol, mounted in 21 jeeps and under First Lieutenant Ralph B. Crossman, after running into a small North Korean guerrilla force about three miles short of its objective, dug in for the night.

Meanwhile, the Marines began hearing rumors that the Eighth Army's 1st Cavalry Division—which they had last seen when the 1st Cavalry passed through the Marine lines north of Seoul headed for the successful capture of Pyongyang, the North Korean capital—was in serious trouble. If division headquarters had more

A 3.5-inch rocket section with Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, holds a position outside Hamhung on 31 October. The next day the 7th Marines would begin its march northward to relieve the 26th ROK Regiment near Sudong-ni.

Photo by Cpl Peter W. McDonald, National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A5129

Photo by Cpl Peter W. McDonald, Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A4525

The 7th Marines began its motor march north from Hungnam on 1 November. A cautious Col Homer Litzenberg ordered LtCol Raymond G. Davis, commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, to reconnoiter to his front. Davis' Marines moved forward on foot. A crackle of small arms fire caused the column to halt momentarily. A full issue of cold-weather clothing has not yet been received. Only one Marine is wearing a parka.

definitive information, it did not filter down to the troops. Some 60 miles to the Marines' west in the Eighth Army zone of action, the Chinese had roughly handled the 8th U.S. Cavalry Regiment and the ROK 6th Division during the last days of October, but this had little or no effect on Almond's plans. Litzenberg's orders to advance remained unchanged. His first objective was to be Koto-ri.

During the day on 1 November, the 7th Marines made a motor march from Hungnam to an assembly area behind the ROK 26th Regiment, midway between Oro-ri and Majon-dong, without incident. Nevertheless, a cautious Litzenberg ordered Lieutenant Colonel Raymond G. Davis, 35, Georgia Tech 1938, to make a reconnaissance-in-force to South Korean positions north of Majon-dong with his 1st Battalion, 7th Marines. In World War II, Davis had commanded a heavy weapons company at Guadalcanal and an infantry battalion at Peleliu. The latter battle brought him a Navy Cross.

Late in the afternoon the regimental combat team curled up into a tight perimeter for the night. As part of RCT-7, Litzenberg had Major Francis F. "Fox" Parry's 3d Battalion, 11th Marines; the division Reconnaissance Company under Lieutenant Crossman; Company D, 1st Engineer Battalion, Captain Byron C, Turner; Company E, 1st Medical Battalion, under Lieutenant Commander Charles K. Holloway; detachments from the division's Signal Battalion, Service Battalion, and Military Police Company; and most of the 1st Motor Transport Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Olin L. Beall.

Thursday, 2 November

The ROK 26th Regiment, awaiting relief, had withdrawn to a position about four miles south of Sudong. Early on the morning of 2 November, the South Koreans were probed by a CCF combat patrol estimated to be about two platoons in strength. Later that morning, Davis' 1st Battalion led the way out of the 7th Marines' perimeter toward the ROK lines at Majon-dong. Major Webb D. "Buzz" Sawyer, 32, followed with the 2d Battalion. A graduate of the University of Toledo, Sawyer had been commissioned in 1941. During World War II, as a captain and major he served with the 4th Marine Division at Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima. Afterward, as an instructor at Quantico, he was known as an expert in the reduction of fortified positions.

Corsairs from Marine fighter squadron VMF-312 flew cover for what was essentially a parade northward. The passage of lines with the ROKs was over by 1030. The point, Company A, under Captain David W. Banks, took some scattered long-range fire and suffered a few casualties. Resistance thickened.

Major "Fox" Parry, 32, commanding the 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, was a Naval Academy graduate, Class of 1941. He had been the executive officer of an artillery battalion during Okinawa and immediately before Korea he had taken the yearlong Advanced Artillery Course at Fort Sill. At noon Battery I of Parry's artillery battalion fired the first of 26 fire missions covering the advance that would be shot during the day.

VMF-312, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel J. Frank Cole, flew 12 close air support missions and, as the light failed, night-fighter squadron VMF(N)-513, under Major J. Hunter Reinburg, delivered a few more.

Both Cole and Reinburg were experienced squadron commanders. Cole, 35, had entered the