

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

Late January and early February 1951 were devoted to maintenance, training, and movement back to Korea. General Harris opened his command post at Itami and MAG-33 completed its temporary move to Bofu during the third week of January. The only Marine combat sorties during the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing stand-down from 16 to 23 January were conducted by VMF-212 on board the *Bataan*. When the land-based Corsair squadrons returned to action, most sorties were flown in

support of Eighth Army units conducting Operations Thunderbolt and Roundup in western Korea. This was because the 1st Marine Division needed few air strikes during the “guerrilla hunt” at Pohang, but on 26 January MAG-12 aircraft flying from K-9 (Pusan East) did manage to conduct close air support strikes for the division for the first time since the Chosin campaign.

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

The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing flew most of its sorties in support of Eighth Army units during Operation Killer, but Operation Ripper found the Marine air-ground team once more in action as wing aircraft cleared the way for the 1st Marine Division’s rapid advance from Hoengsong to

Hongchon. Responding to intense criticism from ground commanders, General Partridge reluctantly granted General Harris at least 40 sorties per day in support of the gravel-crunching Marine infantry. In the way of organizational changes, VMF-312 became the carrier squadron when it replaced VMF-212 on board the *Bataan*, VMR-152 established a five-plane forward echelon at Itami, and an additional Marine Air Control Squadron (MACG-2) was sent to Korea. The efficient performance of Lieutenant Colonel John F. Kinney’s refurbished Panther jets of VMF-311 for armed reconnaissance and close air support was a pleasant surprise after their inauspicious introduction to combat.

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

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

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and brought MAG-33 to Korea in August 1950.

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

One reason for pulling the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing away from the 1st Marine Division was that the Fifth Air Force instituted an all-out effort to halt enemy traffic south with a deep interdiction campaign codenamed Operation Strangle. The goals of the campaign were to cut enemy supply routes, which were channelized by the mountainous terrain, and to destroy supply columns halted by swollen streams. Bomb damage assessments credited the wing with the destruction of more than 300 enemy troops, more than 200 trucks, about 80 boxcars, and 6



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

locomotives. The price of this success was, however, high; the Marines lost a plane a day during the first week. Much to the dismay of ground and aviation Marines alike, close air support became a secondary mission. This change in priority abruptly cut the number of sorties allocated to ground units almost in half. In addition, cumbersome joint operations center request procedures often delayed air strikes for excessively long periods of time. Generals Puller and Thomas successively complained directly to the Fifth Air Force commander, and Lieutenant General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, took the issue up with the theater commander, all to no avail. The controversial joint operations center control and allocation procedures remained in force. The official Marine Corps history describes the questionable success of the Operation Strangle deep interdiction campaign: "There can be little doubt [Operation Strangle] added enormously to the Communists' logistical problem. It is equally certain that . . . their combat units were never at a decisive handicap for

lack of ammunition and other supplies [so] air interdiction alone was not enough to knock a determined adversary out of the war."

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

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



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

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

Combat and Service Support

The 11th Marines was the 1st Marine Division artillery regiment.

Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Carl A. Youngdale and then Colonel Joseph L. Winecoff, the regiment mustered 54 M2A1 105mm towed howitzers (18 each in the 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions) while the 4th Battalion had 18 M2 155mm towed howitzers. The 105mm units were most often used for direct support with one artillery battalion assigned to fire exclusively for a particular rifle regiment, and the 155mm were most often in general support so they could use their longer range and heavier firepower to the best advantage. This

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

1stMarDiv Historical Diary Photo Supplement, Apr51



was not always true, because the U.S. Marines provided artillery support for the 1st KMC Regiment as well as its organic units, and when all four rifle regiments were on the main line of resistance every artillery battalion had to be used for direct support. The nature of the fighting in Korea dictated that additional firepower was needed so the 11th Marines had Battery C, 1st 4.5-inch Rocket Battalion, permanently attached. Marine units were often supported by U.S. Army artillery as well. It was common for the corps commander to furnish at least one self-propelled howitzer battalion and a battery of 8-inch heavy guns to the 1st Marine Division for additional firepower. Army artillery units working with the 11th Marines at various times included the 17th Field Artillery, the 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion, the 96th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, and the 987th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. Offensive artillery missions included supporting maneuver units, neutralizing enemy fire, and isolating the battlefield. On defense, artillery fire was used effectively against CCF mass infantry assaults. Forward



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

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

tion”) fire became a bone of contention between the Eighth Army and the Marines.

The 1st Tank Battalion, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Harry T. Milne, also provided excellent combat support. The battalion was divided into four companies (A, B, C, and D) each with 17 medium tanks. These companies were usually placed in direct support of a specific rifle regiment. It was not uncommon for five-vehicle tank platoons to accompany combat patrols. When the regiment they supported was in reserve, the tankers tried to use that time for maintenance and rest. The super-accurate 90mm guns of the M-26 Pershing tanks were particularly well suited for long range “bunker busting” and were occasionally used to supplement artillery fires (much to the chagrin of the tankers who felt this practice was a deplorable misuse of their

point target guns). Tanks were also sometimes pressed into service as armored ambulances. In addition to the modern M-26 Pershing main battle tanks, there were also a dozen or so World War II-vintage M-4A3 Sherman bulldozer tanks with 105mm short-barrel guns and front-mounted plows used for mine clearing, hasty engineering, and tank recovery as well as fire support. Although Korea’s mountainous terrain was generally unsuited for armor operations, frequent use was made of separate axis attacks whereby the road-bound tanks in the valleys supported infantry units as they worked their way along ridgelines. During the CCF Spring Offensive tanks were used to protect lines of communication and river crossings or cover nearby flatlands with their machine guns and main guns.

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

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

Logistics—the acquisition and distribution of the means to wage war—encompassed the supply, maintenance, medical, transportation, and administrative services necessary to support combat operations. Although the efforts of the men who furnish the beans, bullets, and bandages are often overlooked, logistics are no less important than tactics in determining the outcome of a battle because—according to an old military adage—“logistics set operational limits.” This was particularly true in Korea where Marine logisticians faced a wide array of challenges. Most short-term problems were the result of Korea’s poorly developed infrastructure, rugged terrain, inhospitable weather, the rapidly changing tactical situation (which saw the entire 1st Marine Division go from offense to defense within a matter of hours on several occasions), and the wide physical separation of Marine air and ground elements. Unfortunately, some nagging problems also stemmed from doctrinal shortcomings. In 1951, U.S. joint operations did not feature the smooth multi-Service integration common among today’s branches of the Armed Forces. The Marine air-ground task force concept was not developed, hence, there was no single Marine component commander in Korea so the Marine air and ground combat elements had no common superior below the theater commander. For the most part Marine

ground and aviation units remained separate logistical entities operating without central direction because no equivalent of Vietnam’s Force Logistics Command or modern force service support groups emerged in Korea. Luckily, Lieutenant General Lemuel Shepherd, the commanding general of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, was an energetic leader who took an active role. His forceful suggestions and direct intervention unclogged many bottlenecks and kept the personnel and supply pipelines flowing smoothly.

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

Logistical support in Korea was a massive multi-Service operation; it was a complicated logistical maze, one not easily traversed by the uninitiated, that existed because Marine units had to draw upon the resources of all four Services as well as indigenous labor. At the lowest level the

Marines relied upon their own robust organic service and support units. The 1st Combat Service Group functioned as an intermediate clearing house and established liaison with the other Services. The Marines drew upon Eighth Army for theater-level support and further relied upon Navy and Marine service support from Pacific Command. The Marines also obtained support from the Republic of Korea.

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

Saving Lives

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

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

Most medical personnel assigned to the 1st Marine Division in Korea came from the 1st Medical Battalion, which was successively commanded by Navy Commanders Howard A. Johnson and Clifford A. Stevenson. That parent unit was divided into a Headquarters and Service Company and five medical

companies—two hospital companies and three collecting and clearing companies. Headquarters and Service Company (Commander William S. Francis and Lieutenant Commander Gustare T. Anderson, successively) provided administrative and support personnel and functions. Hospital Companies A (Commanders Buron E. Bassham, Philip L. Nova, and James A. Addison, respectively) and B (Lieutenant Commanders James A. Kaufman) were staffed and equipped to operate one 200-bed hospital each. The three collecting and clearing companies were: Company C (Commanders Harold A. Streit and Lewis E. Rector), Company D (Lieutenant Commanders Gustare T. Anderson and Daniel M. Pino), and Company E (Lieutenant Commanders Charles K. Holloway and John H. Cheffey). Generally speaking, Company C worked in direct support of the 5th Marines, Company D in support of the 1st Marines, and Company E in support of the 7th Marines during the spring of 1951.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

The Military Sea Transportation Service, Military Air Transportation Service, and Naval Air Transport



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

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

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

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

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

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

The poor roads, inadequate railroad system, and fluid nature of the fighting made resupply of forward units a never-ending headache. Trains, trucks, and airplanes carried in-country supplies from rear areas to forward supply points. From there, however, it was division's job to get those supplies to its troops in the field. Unfortunately, there was no rail line north of Wonju, and there were often too few trucks to move the supplies that did arrive in a timely manner. The closing of forward supply points and ammuni-

tion storage areas during the CCF Spring Offensive also created problems. The closures created temporary ammunition shortages and stopped the flow of "A" and "B" rations so the troops had to rely upon less tasty and less filling "C" and "K" field rations. The only solution to this problem was to air-drop supplies and ammunition. Poor flying weather and limited airfield facilities made air transportation an iffy proposition, and airdrops were inefficient in terms of equipment, manpower, and loss rates, but there was simply no other choice. The multi-Service Combat Cargo Command accomplished airdrops. Marine transport planes joined those of the Air Force and the Navy to deliver supplies all across the front. The most unique air delivery was a single size 16 EEE combat shoe dropped over the 1st Marines headquarters from an OY light observation aircraft. This jocular package was addressed to Colonel Wilburt S. "Big Foot" Brown and included a

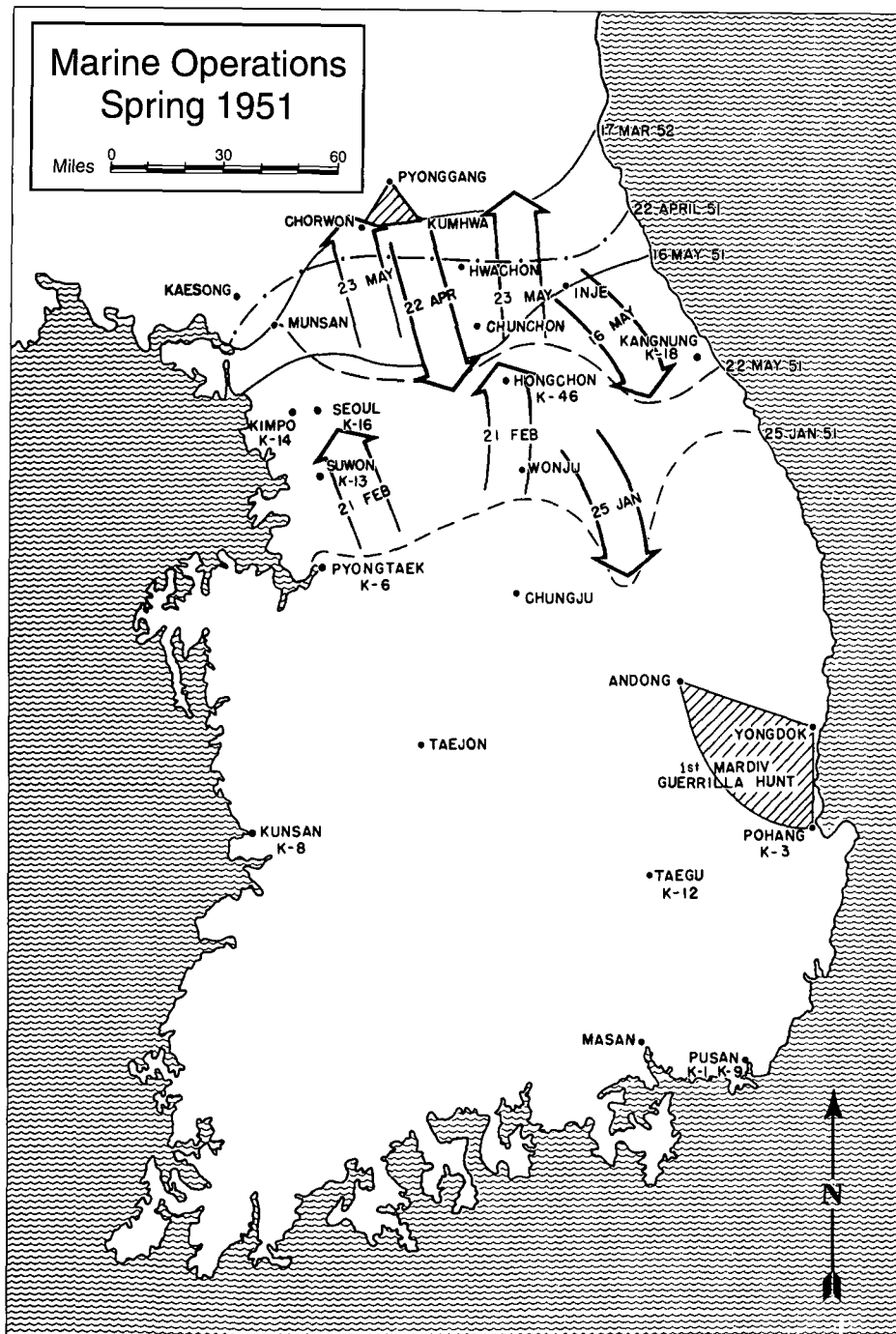
note that the pilot did not have sufficient space in his small plane to carry two such gigantic "Boondockers" at the same time. This joke, however, must have tried Brown's patience because pilots in Nicaragua had first used it three decades earlier.

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

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

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Transportation Corps comprised “cargodore” companies consisting of about 200 “Chiggy Bear” porters. The Korean government provided almost 300 laborers to the 1st Marine Division. Yoboes were used for roadwork and manual labor by combat and service support units. The Chiggy Bears were parceled out to each rifle regiment where they labored under the supervision of a senior Marine noncommissioned officer or junior lieutenant. Organized as a unit under a headman and a straw boss, these never-ending columns of porters, called “Mule Trains” after a popular song of the day, kept frontline Marines supplied under the most trying circumstances. There are no specific figures as to how many of these loyal workers were killed or wounded in action, but those numbers were undoubtedly high. Although sacrifices of the Chiggy Bears may have gone unrecorded, their tireless efforts were certainly not unappreciated by the cold, thirsty, hungry Marines at the front.

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

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

Food, clothing, ammunition, and other necessities slowly made their way forward to regimental and battalion supply dumps in trucks, jeeps, and weapons carriers, but then most often had to be hand carried to the front lines. This was a labor-intensive process that

few combat units could spare men for. The South Korean government, at the request of Eighth Army, organized a pair of quasi-military organizations—the Korean Service Corps and the Korean Transportation Corps—to fill this need. Members of the Korean National Guard and volunteers from refugee camps manned these organizations. The Korean Service Corps included “Yoboe” construction gangs, and the

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

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

The 1st Marine Division received two replacement drafts in December 1950, but was still short almost 3,000 men on New Year's Day. The initial personnel deficit was partially alleviated by the return to duty of 945 men, most of whom had been frostbite evacuations, and the arrival of 700 veteran Marines pulled from posts and stations in the Far East. Two replacement drafts were also formed at Camp Pendleton. The



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

largest part of these drafts consisted of recalled reservists, but there were also some veteran regular Marines included. Freshly minted Marines from the recruit depots and “shiny-bar” second lieutenants just arrived from officer training filled out replacement rosters. Two hundred and thirty men with critical military occupational specialties were flown directly to the combat zone. The 4th Replacement Draft sailed for Korea on board the fast transport USNS *General William O. Darby* (AP 127) and was due in mid-January. The just-forming 5th Replacement Draft was assigned to the USS *General J. C. Breckinridge* (AP 176) and was slated to arrive in mid-February. Replacement drafts containing about 1,700 men each continued arriving on a monthly basis from then on. This personnel replacement system was adequate, but it was not perfect. The adoption of a combat rotation system primarily

based upon time served meant that the most experienced Marines were constantly leaving Korea and their places taken by inexperienced replacements. The introduction of new men, as individuals rather than units, created cohesion problems in small units. Personnel shortages after major engagements remained a nagging problem throughout the spring of 1951.

Extraordinary Heroism

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

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

Luckily, the military lessons of the day were not forgotten. The Marines in Korea fought well, but they were not employed in accord with their envisioned inter-Service role. They, even more than their antecedents in World War I, became an integral part of a United States field army fighting far from the sea for an extended period. Instead of acting as a semi-independent combined arms team, as

had been the case in 1950, in the spring of 1951 the 1st Marine Division was stripped of its direct air support and became just one more Eighth Army ground maneuver unit. Thus, contrary to the wishes of Marine commanders, the 1st Marine Division was used as a "second land army." The forced separation of the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and the lack of an in-theater Marine commander prompted the later creation of permanent Marine air-ground task forces.

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

The period January to May 1951 was one of transition and tumult

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

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

About the Author

Lieutenant Colonel Ronald J. Brown, USMCR (Ret), is a freelance writer and scoring director for Measurement Incorporated, an educational testing firm. The author of two monographs in the Persian Gulf series and two official unit histories, he was also a contributing author for the best-selling book *The Marines*, and has been a frequent contributor to professional journals. He is working on a second Korean commemorative pamphlet on Marine helicopter operations. Lieutenant Colonel Brown served as an active duty infantry officer from 1968 to 1971 and saw combat in

Vietnam. He joined MTU DC-7 at its inception in 1976 and served continuously with that unit until his retirement. He went to Korea during Exercise Team Spirit-84. Six years later he was activated during the Persian Gulf War and was assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force. After Operation Desert Storm, he became the Marine component historian for Combined Task Force Provide Comfort in northern Iraq. Lieutenant Colonel Brown, then commanding MTU DC-7, retired in 1996. In civilian life, Ronald Brown was a high school history teacher for three decades and is a nominee for the Michigan High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame.

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DRIVE NORTH

U.S. Marines at the Punchbowl

by Colonel Allan R. Millett, USMCR (Ret)



The rumble of American field artillery through the morning mists in the valley of the Soyang River gave a sense of urgency to the change-of-command ceremony inside the headquarters tent of the 1st Marine Division. Four days of hard fighting in the withdrawal from the Hwachon Reservoir had brought the division safely to the river on 25 April 1951. The trek away from the Chinese 39th and 40th Armies had not yet, however, brought the division to the No Name Line, the final defensive position 15 miles south of the river designated by Lieutenant General James A. Van Fleet, commanding the U.S. Eighth Army. In a simple rite that included only the reading of the change-of-command orders and the passing of the division colors, Major General Gerald C. Thomas relieved Major General Oliver P. "O. P." Smith and took command of a division locked in a battle to stop the Chinese Fifth Offensive.

The ceremony dramatized the uncertainty of the Marines in the second year of the Korean War. Understandably, General Smith did

AT LEFT: Marines quickly demolish enemy bunkers with grenades and planted charges before moving north.

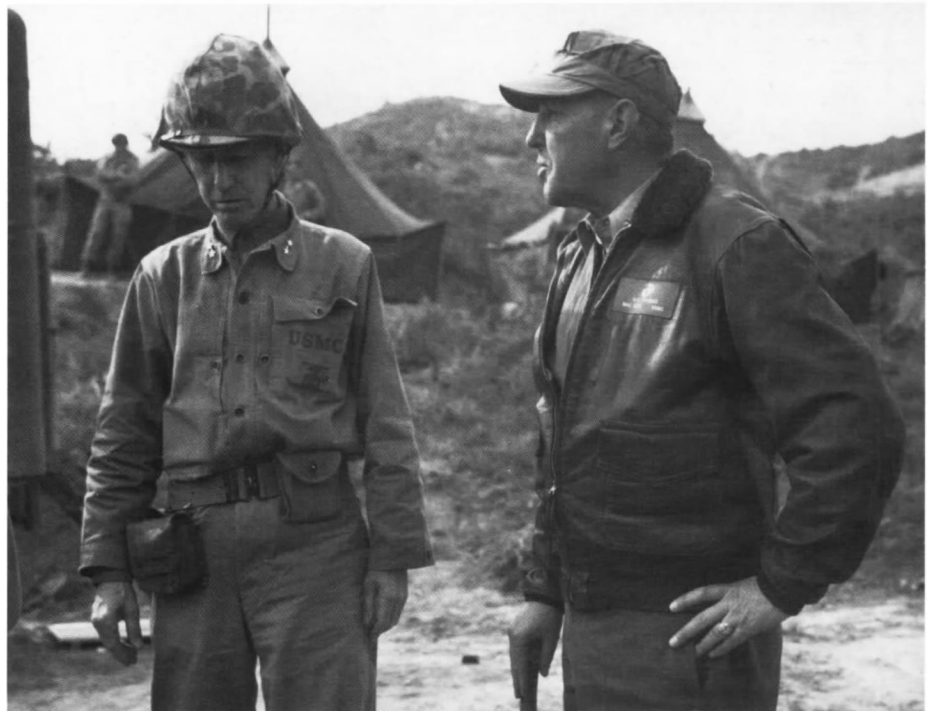
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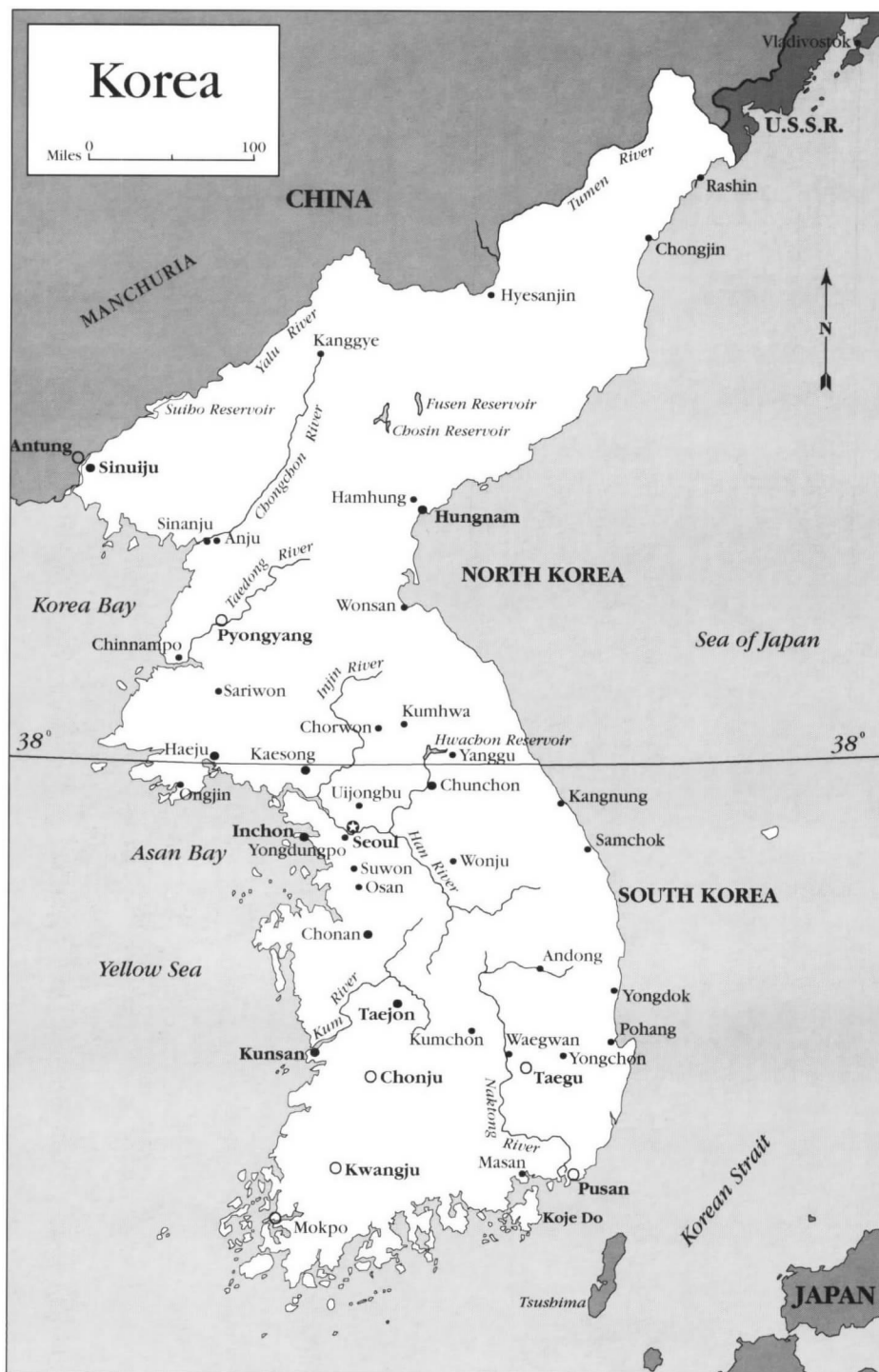
not want to turn over command in the middle of a battle. On the other hand, General Van Fleet wanted Thomas to take command of the division as soon as possible, something Thomas had not planned to do since his formal orders from the Commandant, General Clifton B. Cates, designated 1 May 1951 as turn-over day. Thomas had planned to spend the intervening week on a familiarization tour of Korea and the major elements of the Eighth Army. He had thought his call on Van Fleet the day before had been simply a courtesy visit, but instead he found himself caught in a delicate matter of command relations.

General Thomas arrived in Korea to face an entirely new war. The October 1950 dream of unifying Korea under the sponsorship of the United Nations (U.N.) had swirled away with the Chinese winter intervention. The war still hung in the balance as the United Nations Command attempted to drive the Communist invaders out of the Republic of Korea (ROK) for the second time in less than a year. The U.S. Eighth Army and its Korean counterpart, the *Hanguk Gun* (South Korean Armed Forces) had rallied in January and February 1951, under the forceful leadership of Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, USA. United Nations

MajGen Gerald C. Thomas, right, meets with MajGen Oliver P. Smith prior to the spartan change-of-command ceremony witnessed by a handful of participants drawn from the 1st Marine Division's staff.

Gen Oliver P. Smith Collection, Marine Corps Research Center





Command had then driven back the Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) and the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). The allies had advanced well north of the 38th Parallel in central and eastern Korea. Goaded by Mao Zedong, General Peng Dehuai ordered his joint expeditionary force of 693,000 Chinese and North Korean soldiers to mount one more grand

offensive. Eleven Chinese armies and two North Korean corps (40 divisions) would smash south just west of Hwachon Reservoir in the sectors held by the U.S. I and IX Corps. At a minimum the Communist forces, about half of Peng's total army, would drive United Nations forces below the 38th Parallel. The maximum objective would be to threaten the Han River

valley and the corridors to Seoul while at the same time recapturing the territory south of the Soyang River, which opened an alternative corridor south to Hongchon.

When General Thomas called on General Van Fleet on 24 April, the Eighth Army commander, a combative 59-year-old Floridian with a World War II record of successful command from regiment to corps in Europe, felt confident that his forces had blunted the four-day-old Communist offensive. However, he had an organizational problem, which was that the 1st Marine Division should be shifted back to X Corps and redeployed to the No Name Line under the command of Lieutenant General Edward M. Almond, USA, the division's corps commander throughout 1950. The relationship between O. P. Smith and Almond, however, had become so venomous that Ridgway assigned the Marine division to IX Corps in January 1951 and promised Smith that he would not have to cope with Almond, whose style and substance of command angered Smith and his staff. Van Fleet had honored Ridgway's commitment, but the operational situation dictated that the Almond-Smith feud could not take precedence.

Van Fleet explained the plan to shift the 1st Marine Division back to X Corps to Thomas without going into the Almond-Smith problem. Van Fleet did not give Thomas a direct order to proceed immediately to the 1st Marine Division headquarters near Chunchon. Thomas believed, however, that Van Fleet had sound reasons to want a change of command now, so he caught a light plane furnished by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and flew to the primitive airstrip that served the division. Escorted by the new assistant division commander, Brigadier

General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, Thomas went directly to Smith’s van and told him of Van Fleet’s request and future plans. Smith refused to relinquish command. Without mounting an argument, Thomas left the van and went to the operations center to confer with Colonel Edward W. Snedeker,

the chief of staff, and Colonel Alpha L. Bowser, the G-3, both of whom sympathized with Thomas but thought Smith should remain in command. Thomas thought the division was well positioned to refuse the open left flank of X Corps, but he also felt the tension in the command post.

Thomas decided that the issue of command could not be postponed—and now at least Smith knew he faced the prospect of again serving under Almond. Thomas returned to Smith’s van within the hour and stated simply: “O. P., the table of organization calls for only one major general in

Major General Gerald C. Thomas

Gerald Carthrae Thomas spent a lifetime dealing with challenging command relationships and operational problems inside and outside the Marine Corps. Born on 29 October 1894 on a farm near Slater, a western Missouri railroad town, Thomas grew up as a working boy in a working family. He was also a good student and versatile high school athlete. Living in Bloomington, Illinois, he attended Illinois Wesleyan University (1915-1917) before enlisting in the Marine Corps in May 1917 to fight the Germans. Thomas, age 22, mustered in at five feet, nine inches and 160 pounds, strong of wind and limb from athletics and labor. Dark hair and heavy eyebrows set off his piercing blue eyes and strong jaw. He would need every bit of his emotional balance and physical stamina—lifelong traits—for the Marine Corps placed him in the Germans’ sights for most of 1918. As a sergeant and lieutenant in the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, Thomas learned about war at Belleau Wood, Soissons, and the Meuse-Argonne. When the Silver Star and Purple Heart medals were authorized in 1932, Captain Thomas, professional officer of Marines, pinned on one award for gallantry and another for being gassed.

In the interwar years, Thomas had already fought against Haitian guerrillas, served a second tour in Haiti as a staff officer, and commanded a Marine detachment on a Navy gunboat in the Caribbean and Central America. He also lost one wife to disease, married again (Lottie Capers Johnson of Charleston, South Carolina) and started a family of two sons and two daughters. The Marine Corps recognized his potential value in wartime by sending him to five different Army schools (including the prestigious U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth) and assigning him twice as an instructor in Marine Corps schools.

Between 1940 and 1950, Thomas proved that the Marine Corps had not wasted a minute or a dollar on his professional education. In a decade that saw him advance in rank from major to major general, Thomas prepared the Fleet Marine Force for war as an instructor at Quantico, military observer abroad, and a staff officer in the 1st Marine Division as the division conducted its last pre-Pearl Harbor amphibious exercises. When the



National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A132593

division deployed to the South Pacific, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas went to war as Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift’s operations officer (G-3), an assignment that made him one of the architects of victory on Guadalcanal. A trusted intimate of Vandegrift’s,

Thomas served as the general's chief of staff during the final months of the Guadalcanal campaign and then played the same role in the I Marine Amphibious Corps' landing on Bougainville. He returned to Washington with Vandegrift when the general became Commandant in 1944. As a brigadier general, his second "spot" promotion in a row, Thomas fought the battles of demobilization and postwar defense reorganization, 1944-1947, as the Director of Plans and Policies on the Headquarters staff and played a critical role in winning legislative protection for the Fleet Marine Force in the National Security Act, 1947. He then spent two years as commanding general, Fleet Marine Force, Western Pacific, a brigade-sized force that garrisoned the Shantung peninsula and the city of Tsingtao until the Chinese Communist military victories in North China in 1948 made the American enclave irrelevant. Thomas successfully withdrew his force without incident in February 1949 and returned to educational and developmental billets at Marine Corps Base, Quantico.

Thomas' rich and exciting career had not, however, been without professional risks and cost. His aggressive personality, the force with which he defended his convictions, and his unwillingness to tolerate leadership lapses that endangered Marines had made him anathema to some of his peers, two of whom stopped his first promotion to major general. Others thought him too demanding a colleague. In 1951 only two opinions counted, those of Commandant Clifton B. Cates and Lieutenant General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, and Cates' likely successor as Commandant. Although neither Cates nor Shepherd were part of Vandegrift's "Guadalcanal gang," they knew Thomas well and rec-

ognized his special qualifications to go to Korea. In addition to his recent service as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Western Pacific, Thomas had done a pre-war China tour in the Peiping legation guard. And despite his dogged defense of the Marine Corps in the Battle of the Potomac, 1945-1947, he got along well with the U.S. Army. As head of research and development, Thomas also understood the 1st Division's importance as test bed for future techniques like vertical envelopment.

After his successful command of the 1st Marine Division in Korea, April 1951-February 1952, Thomas returned to Headquarters Marine Corps as a lieutenant general and Assistant Commandant/Chief of Staff for General Shepherd. For the next two years, Thomas focused on reorganizing the Headquarters staff on functional general staff lines, on improving Marine Corps relations and representation within the Department of the Navy, and planning the postwar Fleet Marine Force of three divisions and three aircraft wings, a force more than twice as large as the Fleet Marine Force in June 1950.

For his "twilight cruise" Thomas became Commandant, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico (1954-1955), his favorite post and role as officer-instructor. Upon retirement he remained in government service as the first executive director, Net Evaluation Committee, National Security Council staff from 1956 to 1958. He then entered private business in real estate and insurance in the Washington, D.C. area. He regularly attended 1st Marine Division Association functions and events related to Marine Corps history; his four sons and sons-in-laws all served as Marines, two retiring as colonels. General Thomas died on 7 April 1984 at the age of 89.

a division. Either you turn over to me, or I'm going to leave." Smith did not respond, and Thomas again left the van. After several minutes of more tension, Smith emerged from his van and told Thomas that the change-of-command ceremony would be held at 0800 the next morning. The 1st Marine Division had a new commanding general as it entered a new era in its service in Korea.

The New Division

Although the last veterans of the campaigns of 1950 did not leave Korea until the autumn of 1951, the 1st Marine Division had started a process of transformation in April

1951 that did not depend solely on Communist bullets. Headquarters Marine Corps now sent out replacement drafts not just to fill holes in the ranks from casualties, but also to allow the surviving veterans of longest service to return to new assignments in the United States or for release from active duty. The 9th Replacement Draft reached Korea in early June, bringing 2,608 Marine officers and enlisted men to the division and 55 officers and 334 men to the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. New naval personnel for both Marine organizations totaled six officers and 66 sailors, mostly medical personnel. The incoming Marines had a departing counterpart, the 3d

Rotation Draft, composed of 62 Marine officers, 1,196 enlisted men, and 73 sailors; the draft included 103 convalescing wounded. The 10th Replacement Draft arrived late in June, adding 74 more officers and 1,946 men to the division and 12 officers and 335 men to the aircraft wing. One naval officer and 107 sailors joined the division and wing.

Nevertheless, Thomas thought that the manpower planners had cut their estimates too close and requested that subsequent drafts be increased by a 1,000 officers and men. Despite the personnel demands of forming the new 3d Marine Brigade at Camp Pendleton, Fleet Marine Force,



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A156022

The command team of the 1st Marine Division stands outside a briefing tent at the division headquarters. Pictured from left are BGen William J. Whaling, assistant division commander, MajGen Gerald C. Thomas, division commander, and Col Victor H. Krulak, division chief of staff.

Pacific, honored Thomas' request. The 11th Replacement Draft (14 July 1951) brought 3,436 Marines and 230 naval personnel to the division and 344 Marines to the aircraft wing, accompanied by 22 sailors. Nevertheless, the division remained short of majors, company grade artillery officers, and officers and enlisted men in almost every technical specialization, especially communications and logistics.

General Thomas had no complaint about the quality of the Marines he had inherited from O. P. Smith or those sent to him by Lieutenant General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. The senior officers and company commanders were proven World War II veterans, and the lieutenants were an elite of Naval Academy graduates, NROTC graduates, and officer candidate school products that more than matched the com-

pany grade officers of World War II. The enlisted Marines were a solid mix of career noncommissioned officers and eager enlistees. Thomas recognized that the division he now commanded was "in splendid shape" and prepared to fight and win in terrain and weather "never designed for polite warfare." He wrote retired Major General Merritt A. Edson that the 1st Marine Division was "the best damn division that ever wore an American uniform."

Thomas went ahead with plans, coordinated with Shepherd, to form his own team as the division staff and to appoint new regimental commanders. Thomas arranged for Brigadier General William J. Whaling, an old friend who had been Thomas' alter ego on Guadalcanal, to become the assistant division commander on 20 May. Whaling became his eyes and ears on tactical issues with his superb knowledge of men,

weapons, and fieldcraft. Colonel Snedeker remained chief of staff until he gave way on 23 May to Colonel Francis M. McAlister, whose command of the 1st Marines was cut short by wounds on the 18th. Since he had come to Korea in 1950 as the division G-4, McAlister rotated home, to be replaced temporarily by Colonel Richard G. Weede, who had taken Colonel Bowser's place as G-3 on 8 May. Shepherd and Thomas had someone else in mind for the division chief of staff's post, Colonel Victor H. Krulak, the G-3 of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, and a trusted colleague of both generals through World War II and the postwar years. Krulak became division chief of staff on 29 June with a special charge to begin experiments with the Marine Corps' one operational helicopter squadron.

The rest of the division staff brought enough character and expertise to their jobs to please Thomas. The G-1, Colonel Wesley M. Platt, had spent World War II as a Japanese prisoner of war; his leadership among the prisoners had won him the admiration of his peers and great influence on the staff. Thomas' two G-2s, Lieutenant Colonels Joseph P. Sayers and James H. Tinsley, did a workmanlike job. Like Weede, Colonel Bruce T. Hemphill, and Lieutenant Colonel Gordon D. Gayle served as Thomas' G-3s under the close and critical scrutiny of Colonels Krulak and Weede, who also served as division chief of staff. Colonels Frank P. Hager and Custis Burton, Jr., performed the thankless task of G-4 until they rotated to the command of the 5th and 11th Marines, respectively, although Burton later returned as chief of staff in February 1952 to replace Weede.

The commanders of the infantry regiments were all tested veterans

of the Fleet Marine Force, and their styles varied more than their competence. After Francis McAlister fell in a precision Chinese mortar barrage on his command group, Thomas assigned his regiment to the legendary Colonel Wilburt S. "Big Foot" Brown, an artillery officer sent out to command the 11th Marines. The irrepressible "Big Foot" Brown (whose homeric 14F sized-feet required special supply arrangements, including the airdrop of field brogans into the wilds of Nicaragua) took command only to issue an order to withdraw. As the 1st Marines trooped by his jeep on the way south to the No Name Line, the files of men broke into chicken-like cackles, showing that their "red leg" colonel looked "yellow" to them. Colonel Brown soon showed that their judgment was a short round by a mile. When the veteran of World War I, Nicaragua, and World War II sur-

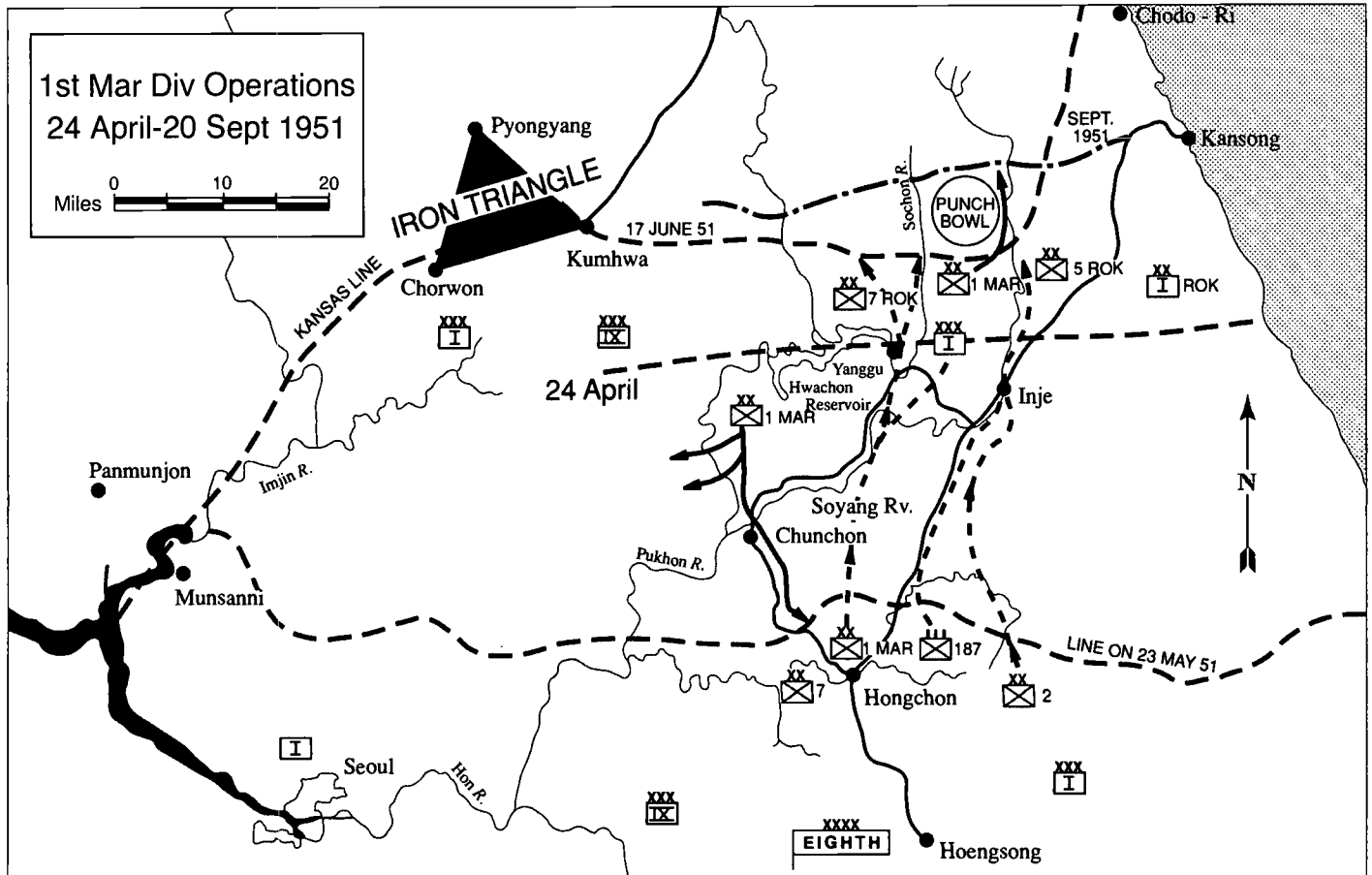
rendered command to another World War I veteran, Colonel Thomas A. Wornham, Brown had won the affection of the 1st Marines, "Chesty Puller's Own," a very tough bunch of Marines to impress.

The other two infantry regiments went to colonels of high ability. Colonel Richard W. Hayward brought intelligence and personal elegance (too much some of his troops thought) to the 5th Marines, succeeded by Weede on 7 August whose energy and force exceeded Hayward's. Almond liked them both, a dubious recommendation. Weede then turned over command to Frank Hager on 19 November. The 7th Marines bid farewell to Colonel Homer L. Litzenberg, Jr., on 15 April and welcomed Colonel Herman Nickerson, Jr., no stranger to the Korean War since he had been in the combat zone since the Inchon

landing as the senior Marine liaison officer from Fleet Marine Force, Pacific to Far East Command and Eighth Army. No less professional than the other regimental commanders, Nickerson brought a driving, no-nonsense command style to the 7th Marines that made the regiment, in Thomas' opinion, the best in the division. Nickerson appreciated the contributions of his two executive officers, the incomparable Lieutenant Colonel Raymond G. Davis, Jr., and Lieutenant Colonel John J. Wermuth. Promoted to colonel, Wermuth assumed regimental command on 20 September when Nickerson's extended overseas tour ended.

The high level of competence at the regimental level did not drop off in the division's separate battalions. With an officer corps created by service in six divisions in the Pacific War, the Marine Corps

Courtesy of the Naval Institute Press



Clarence Jackson Davis: Every Marine

In the soft spring of his senior year (June 1950) at Hillsboro High School, Nashville, Tennessee, Clarence Jackson Davis, called "Jack" by his family and friends, discovered several reasons to join the Marine Corps Reserve. Going to war was not one of them. Jack Davis planned instead to go to Vanderbilt University, where his older brother Vince was already a sophomore and a keen midshipman in the Naval ROTC unit. Jack admired Vince, but he did not fancy himself a naval aviator like his older brother. On the other hand, the local Marine Corps Reserve infantry company had some openings, and he and some high school football and baseball teammates liked the idea—advanced by some sweet-talking Marine sergeants—of keeping their baseball team together under the sponsorship of the Marine Corps. Marine training seemed little more than another athletic challenge; the recruiters mentioned that weekly drill often included a basketball game. The new recruits had no active duty requirement and the two weeks summer training sounded like a Boy Scout camp with guns. Besides, the recruiters insisted, participating in reserve training made a young man draft-proof from the U.S. Army.

Jack also saw his enlistment as a potential way to help pay for his college education and, if all went well, become a Marine officer. More farsighted than many of his friends and counseled continuously by Vince, Jack had already talked with the Marine major on the Vanderbilt NROTC staff, who advised him that enlisted service would strengthen his chances for selection for the next summer's Platoon Leaders Class. Serving as an enlisted officer-candidate in the Marine Corps Reserve seemed a less-demanding way of helping pay for his education than attempting to win a football grant-in-aid playing for the hapless Commodores. The Davis brothers calculated that their military commitments would allow them to attend school without facing a demanding working schedule, a financial relief they could stretch by living at home to study and avoiding the temptations of campus social life.

Jack enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve at the age of 17 in March 1950. If not quite a youthful lark, his decision did not seem very momentous, but a combination of good planning, reasonable sense, and anticipated adventure. He would try the life of a Marine, and he would be paid to camp out and play sports for the Marine Corps. His life after high school, however, "did not work out as planned." One night in June 1950, after graduation, Jack watched a newsreel at a local movie theater and learned about some distant war in Korea. His first reaction: "I was thrilled I was not there."

Lieutenant General Clifton B. Cates, Commandant of the Marine Corps and a fellow Tennessean, made sure that Jack Davis learned the true meaning of being a vol-



unteer Marine from the Volunteer State. After the Fourth of July the ground units of the Marine Corps Reserve received a warning order that they would soon be mobilized, and on 20 July the Commandant made it official: Marine reservists in ground units would be called to active duty "for the duration." Certainly most (if not all) of them would go to Korea as part of the 1st Marine Division. After the confusion of in-processing, medical examinations, and additional issues of 782 gear, the Nashville Marines of Company C, 14th Battalion, Marine Corps Reserve, marched off to war from their reserve center at Shelby Park down Broad Street until they reached the 11th Street railroad siding off old Union Depot. Curious spectators watched the young men march off, their parade dominated by the blaring of high school bands at the front and rear of the column. With M-1s and dressed in green utilities the Marines did not look like their predecessors of the 11th Tennessee Volunteer Infantry, Confederate States of America, but the spirit of those young Nashvillians, equally perplexed and determined in 1861, stiffened the backs of their 1950 successors.

Whatever his expectations, Private Clarence Jackson Davis, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, did not go off to war untrained—as did his Confederate ancestors and goodly part of the U.S. Eighth Army in 1950. At Camp Pendleton, his "station of initial assignment," Jack's Company C received the triage of personnel mobilization: true veterans of active duty were culled out for immediate assignment to the Fleet Marine Force, probably directly to the 1st Marine Division; Marine reservists whose drills and summer camp more or less approximated boot camp went on to eight more weeks of pre-deployment field training and physical conditioning; and the untrained true "boots" like Jack Davis went south to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, to begin their life as real Marines.

The temporary mission of the Marine Corps Recruit