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## THE KOREAN WAR BATTLE REPORT



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## Operation Killer

*By Lynn Montross  
Marine Corps Gazette  
February, 1952*

A testimonial from the enemy is always gratifying, even though it be given grudgingly. And after ending a month's antiguerrilla operation on 15 February 1951, the 1st Mar Div captured a North Korean courier two days later with a communication paying a reluctant tribute to the Leathernecks.

The intercepted message had been sent by the Chief of Staff of the II Corps of the North Korean People's Army. It was intended for MajGen Lee Ban Nam, CG of the NK 10th Div—the guerrilla force which the Marines had been hunting in the Pohang/Andong area—and the G2 translation read in part as follows:

"Get all of your troops out of the enemy encirclement and withdraw to the north of Pyongchang without delay. In case it is impossible to get your troops out of the trap, you may stay in the rear of the enemy and attack their rear positions."

But this possibility could not have gleamed very brightly, for the message ended on a dubious note, "Do your best to get out of the enemy line."

Unhappily for North Korean purposes, there was not much left of the NK 10th Div to be salvaged. About 60 per cent of the original 6,000 to 8,000 troops had been destroyed, according to a Marine estimate. During the process the 1st Mar Div had chopped the remnants into small groups driven into hiding by day and flight by night. So hardpressed was the enemy that a dozen minor roadblocks were the main achievements of a month's guerrilla

operations behind the United Nations lines.

The wreck of the NK 10th Div retained some nuisance value, of course, as long as the half-starved survivors were skulking in remote mountain areas. But the enemy had few other capabilities left to him, and it was believed that an understrength ROK division could handle the situation after relieving the Marines.

On 16 February, in accordance with Eighth Army orders, the 1st Mar Div began its move to the Chunju sector in the center of the UN line. At this time the division was made a part of IX Corps, commanded by MajGen Bryant E. Moore.

The Chungju move was a turning point for the Marines in more ways than one. In such past operations as Inchon/Seoul and the Reservoir, the division had been the best trained and most experienced major unit of X Corps. Naturally it had taken part as the landing force of amphibious assaults and spearhead of offensives. Even in the Pohang guerrilla chase, the division had been in effect a self-sufficient little army, carrying out its own special mission.

All this was changed now. Henceforth the 1st Mar Div would be a unit of one of the largest and most cosmopolitan armies in which Leathernecks have ever served. The United Nations establishment of February included units from 12 countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

Most of these contingents ranging from company to battalion strength,

consisted of picked men who gave a good account of themselves in action. It might also have been noted that the Eighth U. S. Army itself had undergone a transformation since the late summer of 1950, when the Marines had the fireman's role in the Pusan perimeter.

At the outset the Communist aggression in Korea found the democratic world unprepared. The first U. S. Army troops were sent straight from occupation duty in Japan to the firing line. Many of these men were soft physically and lacking in combat training. No soldiers of American history, in fact, ever drew a much more rugged assignment than the Army outfits thrown into action piecemeal during the early weeks.

Even during the two great Eighth Army withdrawals, there was little room for censure at the platoon level. A well-known military critic, making a firsthand survey of the U. S. 2d Inf Div retreat of November 1950, found "countless examples of extraordinary initiative and high individual courage . . . but none of utter dereliction or miscreancy."

Of 16 infantry company actions examined in detail during this survey, only a single platoon appeared to have yielded ground for any cause less serious than exhaustion of ammunition. And in the exceptional case, only 11 men were left unhurt in a routed platoon which brought off its own wounded.

Barely five weeks after the November retreat, the Eighth Army was hit by another CCF counteroffensive launched on the last night of 1950. Again the attackers smashed through a sector held by weary and thinned ROK divisions, so that the other major units had

to withdraw to avoid envelopment.

Inchon and Seoul were abandoned to the enemy by UN forces which had fallen back about 200 miles from 1 December to 10 January. Such a record would not seem to offer stimulating food for morale, yet the Eighth was by no means a beaten or disheartened army. It was, on the contrary, a confident and aggressive army made up of combat-wise troops who had met the test of adversity.

The proof came when the new commander, LtGen Matthew B. Ridgway, began a rapidfire series of Eighth Army offensives only a few days after the retreat ended. At this time the UN Forces held a line extending from the vicinity of Ansong on the west coast through Chechin and Marungni to the east coast. The Eighth Army was disposed with I Corps on the left, IX Corps in the left center, X Corps in the right center and on the right the battleworn ROK Army.

The first offensive operation began on 15 January. An I Corps task force, spearheaded by a U. S. infantry regiment, drove nearly to Suwon without meeting serious opposition.

This reconnaissance in force ended on the 17th. Five days later a IX Corps task force, probing northward in that sector, also encountered few enemy troops. The Eighth Army command lost no time at exploiting the CCF reluctance to engage. A new operation began on 25 January as another reconnaissance in force, but this time I and IX Corps employed a division each. The advance was in multiple columns "for the purpose of seeking out the enemy and inflicting the greatest possible damage."

Suwon and its airport were captured the next day. The pace was slow and methodical, with all units keeping close lateral contact and mopping up pockets of resistance before proceeding. More and more troops were committed until the operation could no longer be called a reconnaissance in force. It had turned into a fullscale offensive for the purpose of gaining and holding ground as well as destroying enemy forces.

Each day until the end of the month saw limited gains made and an estimated several thousand enemy killed. Thus on 1 February the UN front lines ran from the vicinity of Ansan on the west coast through Kumpojang and Wonju before dipping in a southeasterly direction to the east coast.

Not only was the advance continued in the I and IX Corps sectors, but a new limited offensive was planned for 5 February in the zones of the U. S. X Corps and III ROK Corps. This meant that the entire Eighth Army would be committed along a 70 mile front, with the I, IX and X Corps in line from west to east. Still farther to the east were the three understrength corps of the ROK Army. The 1st Mar Div was in Eighth Army reserve along with the Philippine 10th RCT and the Belgian and Canadian battalions.

By this time the Leathernecks had pinned down the largest body of Communist troops to infiltrate into UN rear areas after the January retreat. During the operation the 1st Mar Div managed to train 3,387 replacements who arrived in January and the first week of February to relieve the hundreds of veterans selected for departure in accordance with rotation policies. These new men were given combat instruction by being sent on self-sufficient patrols which

ranged far into remote mountain areas to track down groups of NK guerrillas.

So much progress was shown during the first two weeks of the Pohang/Andong guerrilla hunt that CC Eighth Army inquired when the Marines could conclude the operation. MajGen Oliver P. Smith, CG 1st Mar Div, replied on 5 February that he could be ready whenever a relieving force was assigned the responsibility for the area.

The question of a new sector for the division had already been discussed late in January, when Gen Ridgeway asked Gen Smith to confer with him at Suwon. The Eighth Army commander had considered using the 1st Mar Div north of Wonju on the central front or along the east coast in place of I ROK Corps. Gen Smith was asked to submit recommendations, and after consulting with his staff he replied on 2 February that various factors favored the employment of the Marines on the east coast.

Most of these factors derived from the capabilities of the division as the single major unit of Eighth Army which was fully trained and equipped for amphibious warfare. If such an operation were to be desired at some future date, the Marines could mount out from the east coast with a minimum of logistical friction. With their organic ANGLICO (Shore Fire Control Parties and Tactical Air Control Parties), they had the organization and knowhow for making the most of naval gunfire and carrier air support. Finally, they could be supplied from the sea, and their Shore Party specialists would be able to develop port facilities for the support of the division.

After receiving Gen Smith's message, CG Eighth Army directed his staff to plan for employing the 1st Mar Div

on the east coast. Nearly two weeks later, however, he summoned the Marine general to Taegu on 12 February to discuss the possibility of using the division on the central front.

The date is significant. For it was within the last 24 hours that the enemy had reacted to Eighth Army pressure with a largescale counterattack which threatened to wipe out UN gains on the central front.

This was the first serious block thrown at the UN forces rolling steadily northward as one limited offensive followed another. In the X Corps sector, it is true, the new drive of 5 February had found hard going after the early spurts. But I and IX Corps continued to advance, and on the 10th resistance seemed to collapse west and south of Seoul. The U. S. 25th Inf Div, pushing ahead 11,000 yards that day, secured the port of Inchon and Kimpo Airfield. Months of rebuilding would be required, however, before the airbase could be made operational or the destroyed harbor facilities even partially restored.

On the morning of the 11th Seoul was within sight of UN forces occupying the south bank of the Han. But that subzero night dated the violent counter-attack launched by elements of the CCF 40th and 66th Corps and NK V Corps in the Hoengsong area of the U. S. IX Corps front. The enemy effort followed a familiar pattern. Two ROK divisions were overwhelmed by the first CCF blows, and their retreat made it necessary for other UN units to withdraw. As a consequence Hoengsong had to be abandoned on the 12th to the Communists hammering out a salient in the direction of Wonju.

Reports of UN reverses were coming in that day as Gen Ridgway conferred

with Gen Smith about the next mission of the 1st Mar Div. The Eighth Army commander recognized the advantages of committing the division to the east coast, where it would be in readiness for amphibious operations. But he considered the Seoul/Yoju corridor the logical avenue of a major CCF offensive, and he wished to have the Marines, as "the most powerful division in Korea," relieve the 24th Inf Div in the Yoju area of the X Corps sector.

Gen Smith, upon his return from the conference, put the logistical problems up to his staff. But there was to be no Yoju mission. Further UN losses of ground occurred south of Hoengsong the next day, and Eighth Army plans were changed again. On 13 February the 1st Mar Div received a warning order to be prepared to move on 48 hours' notice either up the east coast or to Chungju. The latter seemed the more likely destination, since it was a road junction of the corridor on the central front which CCF forces might use for a great offensive.

Chungju it was. An Eighth Army operation order of the 15th directed the 1st Mar Div to occupy positions in that area, prepared either to defend or to conduct further operations under operational control of IX Corps. The 2d ROK Div relieved the Marines, and the move by road and rail to Chungju commenced.

A shortage of organic transport added to the complications. Although the 1st Mar Div had taken pride in bringing its equipment out from the Reservoir, the reward of virtue was a collection of old and worn vehicles. As a further irony, other outfits which had lost their trucks were able to requisition new ones.

While the Marines were making their move, the CCF counteroffensive continued full blast along the central front. Units of the U. S. 2d Inf Div, surrounded in the Chip'yong area, put up a stout three-day fight until an armored column cut through to the rescue.

The UN forces were not guided by any unrealistic concept of holding ground to the last ditch. They sold it dearly, however, by defending favorable terrain or even counter-attacking with the support of napalm air strikes. Nevertheless, the enemy had penetrated east of Wonju by the 17th, and another CCF column drove within seven miles of Chechon. These advances seemed to be for the purpose of relieving UN pressure on the Seoul area, but Eighth Army staff officers did not discount the possibility of an all-out CCF offensive on the central front to divide UN forces and sever vital supply lines.



As it proved, personnel losses and depleted supplies gradually brought the CCF attack to a standstill after it had driven a bulge into the central front. Gen Moore reported to Gen Ridgway on the 18th that one of his regiments had probed forward without meeting opposition. This intelligence was passed on to X Corps, farther east, and patrols in that sector also found evidences of a CCF withdrawal.

Gen Ridgway made a practice of giving the enemy no time for rest and recuperation. That very evening, therefore, he planned Operation Killer, the fourth successive attack to be launched by Eighth Army units since their January retreat. (Map 1)

This new limited objective offensive, like its forerunners, was designed to inflict maximum damage rather than to gain ground. Nevertheless, Gen Ridgway had determined to recover full possession of the hill mass north of Chungju. It was for this purpose, he informed Gen Moore on 15 February, that the 1st Mar Div had been employed.

"The force which holds Chungju," said Gen Ridgway, "has the situation in hand."

The overall scheme of maneuver called for the 1st Mar Div, as spearhead of the IX Corps advance, to relieve the 2d Inf Div and attack in a northeasterly direction through the Wonju basin from a line of departure north of Wonju. The object was to cut off enemy forces which had penetrated south and east of Hoengsong, and to recover control of the roads running eastward by seizing the high ground just south of the town.

Wednesday, 21 February, was set as D-day. The northwest flank of the 1st Mar Div was to be protected by the 1st

Cav Div and 27th British Brig, including the Australian and Canadian battalions. And in the X Corps zone, on the east flank of the Marines, the 7th Inf Div was to make a simultaneous northerly advance up the Yongwol/Pyongchang road.

All these movements, in Leatherneck parlance, were to be coordinated in a tightly "buttoned up" offensive, with the forces keeping close lateral contact and maintaining the integrity of units. Patrol observation and reconnaissance were to be stressed, and even lack of opposition would not justify a unit in advancing ahead of schedule or bypassing hidden pockets of resistance.

The terrain of the Wonju Basin did not favor the attack. Rock heights, abounding in precipices, glowered down upon a region of narrow valleys and swift streams. The river Som, largest of all, ran from northeast to southwest through a defile cutting across the western part of the division area. Bordering this twisting stream was the main road, the Wonju/Hoengsong "highway," a poor dirt trail even by Korean mountain standards. The only other road, crossing the eastern part of the area, was a narrow track scarcely fit for vehicular traffic. It was believed that the enemy would make a strong stand at Hoengsong because of its value as the hub of roads in all four directions. The town served the enemy as a supply center; and a CCF division, the 196th of the 66th Corps, was reported to be dug in along the ridge to the south.

Gen Ridgway was on hand for the jumpoff of the 1st Mar Div at 0800 on 21 February. On several previous occasions he had reiterated his basic directive to the Eighth Army. "We are fighting a numerically superior enemy," he

was quoted as saying at a highlevel conference of 16 February. "We must make up for it by good footwork, by maximum use of movement, combined with firepower."

These words might have been used to describe previous Marine operations in Korea. Although the Leathernecks were better known for their amphibious capabilities, they had demonstrated at Naktong Ridge, Seoul, and the Reservoir an unusual mastery of small unit operations, both offensive and defensive. The terrain in Korea and the techniques employed by the enemy made it primarily a small unit war. At any time a battalion, a company, a platoon, or even a fireteam might be compelled to become temporarily self-sufficient; and in these fights for survival, Marine maneuver and firepower paid big tactical dividends.

Operation Killer dated the first occasion in Korea when the 1st Mar Div took part as a unit of a large army making an advance in line on a wide front. But Marine doctrine did not stress self-sufficiency at the expense of coordination; and the "buttoned up" attack had been no novelty in 1st Mar Div actions. Thus the division scheme of maneuver of 21 February envisioned an advance by two regiments in line, keeping close contact with each other and with the Army units on either side. (Map 2)





RCT1, on the left of RCT5, passed through elements of the 2d Inf Div and 187th Airborne RCT and attacked from a Wonju line of departure toward the high ground east of Hoengsong. Little opposition was encountered by RCT1, with the 1st Bn leading, in an advance of four miles along the Wonju/Hoengsong road. The forward battalion dug in at dusk on high ground about three miles from the objective, and the 2d Bn moved up on the right. The night was uneventful except for the dispersing of two small enemy groups in the 1/1 area with mortar and artillery fire. RCT5 had meanwhile pushed its 1st Bn abreast of this position without contacting any enemy.

The same formation was used the next morning when that regiment again moved forward without meeting any resistance. It was a different story in the zone of RCT1, where the 1st Bn was stopped by heavy automatic and small arms fire from Hill 166, the western knob of a ridge overlooking the Wonju/Hoengsong road. The men tied in for the night with the 2d Bn in readiness for a joint assault. And in the morning, after a brisk artillery preparation, the two battalions launched a frontal attack. By 0900 the 2d Bn had gained a foothold on the center and right of the ridge which permitted observation on Hill 166, the objective of the 1st Bn. Two effective air strikes were called on the position, which the 1st Bn secured at 1015.

That afternoon both battalions jumped off to attack the next ridge line. They met a stubborn resistance from CCF troops defending log bunkers with mortar, automatic, and small arms fire. The fight was hot and heavy for a few minutes, but elements of the 2d Bn decided it by seizing a portion of the

ridge just to the left of the enemy bunkers. From this point they swept down the ridgeline, overran the CCF mortar positions, and put the enemy remnants to flight. That night RCT1 dug in on the high ground overlooking Hoengsong from the south. RCT5 pulled up abreast on the right to occupy three hills south of the town on the road leading east. The next morning that regiment met its first resistance when the 1st Bn stormed Hill 212 as the 2d Bn secured the high ground on the right flank. Meanwhile, in the zone of RCT1, Marine tanks led a 1/1 combat patrol into Hoengsong itself.

Although the enemy had abandoned the demolished town, the two battalions of RCT1 came under CCF mortar and artillery fire from the ridge to the north. Both CPs were shelled until counterbattery work by the 2d Bn of the 11th Marines silenced the enemy.

Thus the first phase of the Marine participation in Operation Killer ended with the assault regiments organizing their positions on the Corps objective and sending out patrols. RCT7, in division reserve since D-day, had been patrolling the Wonju area and receiving the daily airdrops of supplies which were necessary to relieve a critical gasoline shortage.

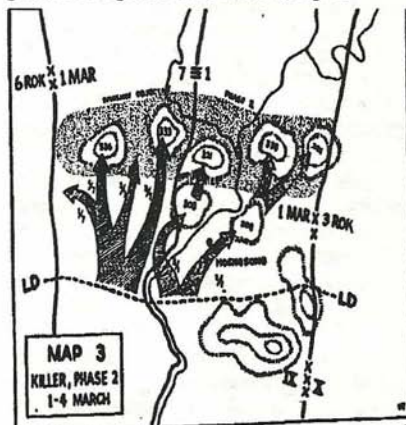
From the beginning the logistical situation had given more trouble than the enemy. Heavy traffic had almost literally broken the back of the MSR, so that immediate and extensive repairs were required. Violent rains compounded the problem by turning rear area roads into quagmires and streams into torrents. Marine engineers being needed for bridging in the forward areas, Division requested that IX Corps engineers be assigned to the maintenance of the MSR.

It was also urged that indigenous labor be employed to assist in moving supplies. Otherwise the first phase of Operation Killer had ended satisfactorily. Eighth Army units on either side of the 1st Mar Div had made gains, and the Marine capture of Hoengsong on the 24th nearly wiped out the salient left by the recent CCF counteroffensive. That same day brought bad news, however, with the announcement of Gen Moore's death from a heart attack after an accident in which his helicopter crashed into the Han River.

Gen Smith was appointed to temporary command of IX Corps, and BrigGen Lewis B. Puller, his ADC, assumed command of the 1st Mar Div. When announcing this decision, CG Eighth Army said, "General Smith is to be taken into their hearts in IX Corps, and, by definite action, made to feel that he belongs there."

The next few days were devoted to planning and preparations to resume the attack on an enemy reported to be withdrawing northward. This intelligence led to Eighth Army changes in corps and division boundaries with a view to shifting the direction of attack from northeast to north. In the zone of the 1st Mar Div these amendments meant that RCT5 on the right would be pinched out by the 3d ROK Div of X Corps. On the left, the zone was extended by bringing RCT7 into line alongside RCT1 as RCT5 dropped back into reserve. (Map 1) The 1st Mar Div was directed by IX Corps order to continue the advance on 1 March and secure the high east/west ridge about one and a half miles north of Hoengsong. The town occupied a valley at the confluence of two rain-swollen streams, so that a triangular area of low, flat ground lay between the abrupt hills on

all sides. From the high ground of their first objective line, the Leathernecks could look across this soggy plain which stretched past Hoengsong to the ridge which must be taken in the second phase of Operation Killer. (Map 3)



Marine air support was on a new basis. In February the units of MAW1 had returned to Korea, after a reconditioning period in Japan dating back to the Hungnam evacuation. Upon their return to combat, the various squadrons came under direct Air Force control. This meant that Marine air would no longer be at the call of Marine ground troops according to Marine precepts. Instead, it would be directed by the Fifth Air Force through a central agency for the support of other Eighth Army units as well as the 1st Mar Div.

On 1 March there were six squadrons of MAW1 in Korea. MAG12 was represented by VMF312 and VMF(N)513, both based at Pusan. MAG33 consisted of VMF214 and VMF323 (Pusan), VMF312 (carrier based), and VMF311 (Pohang).

The 1st Mar Div scheme of maneuver for the new attack was conditioned

by the terrain. For the ridge north of Hoengsong was separated by a bisecting road and stream into three distinct masses. The boundary between the two assault regiments passed through the central mass, so that RCT7 had Hills 536 and 333 as objectives, and RCT1 had Hills 321, 335, and 201.

It was apparent that RCT7 had the harder task, since its zone contained the more rugged terrain in greater depth. It would be necessary for this regiment to take its first objectives, moreover, before RCT1 could advance on the right without being held up by flanking fires from those heights.

Thus on 1 March, with the resumption of Operation Killer, the 1st Mar Div had probably the most difficult assignment in the Eighth Army. In the zone of I Corps the enemy grip south of the Han had been broken, and patrols found no signs that Seoul was being held in force. Enemy withdrawals were also indicated in the sector of X Corps, so that the UN front now stretched in a relatively straight and unbroken line from Inchon through Punwonni and Hoengsong to the east coast in the vicinity of Samchok.

Again the 1st MAR Div was breaking ground for a new Eighth Army advance as the 2d and 3d Bns of RCT7 attacked to seize the first hills west of Hoengsong. Little opposition was met at first from an enemy resisting briefly on each ridge before falling back to the next one. Both battalions pushed ahead about 1,000 yards before the 2d encountered heavy automatic and mortar fire. The CCF forces held an elaborate system of log bunkers along reverse slopes, but by nightfall the battalion had slugged its way to the forward slopes of the objective. Gains of about 1,500 yards were made in the zone of

3/7, where the enemy also put up a fierce resistance in prepared positions.

The day's encounters were a foretaste of those to come in the zone of RCT7, where the terrain was too rugged in places for vehicles. Supporting arms never played a more important part. Marine tanks found lucrative targets among CCF strongpoints, Marine artillery fired 54 missions on 24 target areas; and Marine air flew 30 sorties.

On 2 March the other Marine assault regiment had its turn. Although the boundary lines had not been changed, the regimental commanders agreed upon a maneuver in which 3/1 was to cross over into the 3/7 zone for a combined assault on the high ground along the west bank of the river Som. Gains in this quarter would permit RCT1 to move across the Hoengsong plain against the hills in its zone.

Both battalions jumped off at 0800 and met astonishingly little opposition from an enemy who appeared to be using tactics of withdrawing at night to defend new ridge lines. Thus the two battalions secured their objective by 0945 and finished mopping up at 1220. The 3d Bn of RCT1 returned to its own zone for an assault on Hill 303, which fell to George Co at 1315 after another light resistance, though it took until 1600 to destroy CCF remnants dug in on the reverse slope.

The securing of the high ground west of Hoengsong enabled the 2d Bn of RCT1 to cross the river behind tanks. After an intense rocket and artillery preparation, the column drove through the town and advanced northeast to seize Hill 208. The two assault battalions of RCT7 were meanwhile advancing from a half to three-fourths of a mile in their zone.

On 3 March the assault troops of RCT1 took their IX Corps objectives against light to moderate resistance. The enemy made a determined stand on 2d Bn objectives, Hills 201 and 335, but an air strike was called to evict the defenders while the 3d Bn advanced north to take Hill 321. Late that afternoon both battalions had reached the mopping up stage when the 23d ROK Regt reported that one of its companies had been driven back, exposing the right flank of RCT1. Able Co of the 1st Bn was brought up to hold Hill 335 while the 2d Bn moved over to protect the regimental right flank.

It was in the zone of RCT7 that the enemy showed an almost suicidal resistance. The 1st Bn was summoned from reserve to attack Hill 536 and cover the regimental left flank while the 3d Bn continued its advance toward hill 333. The 2d Bn, in the center, had the mission of assisting the other two with supporting fires.

Not only were the two hills natural fortresses, but both bristled with log bunkers and camouflaged mortar emplacements. It was a day of hard slugging for RCT7, which lost most of the 14 killed and 104 wounded reported by the 1st Mar Div. By nightfall the 3d Bn had reached the ridge just south of Hill 333, but the 1st Bn met stiffer resistance and dug in about one and one quarter miles short of Hill 536.

A tactical anticlimax is seldom disappointing to the assault troops, and the two battalions of RCT7 which jumped off the next morning were pleasantly surprised to meet little initial resistance. Most of the Chinese had apparently withdrawn under cover of darkness, and the rest offered only delaying actions before abandoning Hills

333 and 536 in their retreat northward.

This was the final chapter of Operation Killer. It did not mean, however, that the fighting had ended on the central front. As usual, Gen Ridgway and his staff had been planning a new offensive before the old one ended. Late in February it was decided to keep the enemy off balance by continuing the advance of IX and X Corps toward the 38th parallel. Another object was to outflank the Seoul area from the east, and the new plan would be known as Operation Ripper.

The Seoul corridor and the central corridor by way of Hoengsong, Wonju, and Chungju were still considered the most probable routes for an all-out CCF offensive. By securing the hills north of Hoengsong, therefore, the Leathernecks of Operation Killer had placed the Eighth Army in much better position either for defense or the resumption of the offensive.

Marine losses had not been heavy in view of this outcome. The total of 393 battle casualties included 48 killed, 345 wounded, and two men missing in action. The enemy, it was estimated by division G2, had 1,868 casualties: 1,255 killed, 570 wounded, and 43 taken as prisoners.

ON 5 MARCH, the day after Operation Killer ended, MajGen William H. Hoge, U. S. Army, arrived to take command of X Corps. Gen Smith, released from his temporary duty, resumed the command of the 1st Mar Div just as orders were received for Operation Ripper to begin on 7 March. Again the central front was to be the scene of the main line-bucking effort, and again the Marines were to carry the ball.

**LETTERS FROM KOREA**  
***The Conclusion***

Lieut. Miller, our executive officer, left for home the other day. He received an emergency leave, really a transfer, to go home because his little son had a fractured skull, requiring an operation.

I have never met another officer like Lt. Miller, the quintessential Marine in my book. He has made my time over here much easier than it might have been. I don't recall that he ever turned down any of my suggestions and if it hadn't been for his rank, I could never have accomplished many of the things I did. Several times when I was on duty at night and dead tired after working all day, he stayed in the office and did my work so I could get a few hours' sleep.

The rains have increased lately and I think it's gradually getting colder, but maybe I'm just imagining that.

***Hongchon area, Korea***  
***August 24, 1951***

Most of the men went to a special services show up at Tank Battalion this afternoon, but I stayed here to finish a book and write a letter or two.

This morning was a happy occasion for a few men and a sad one for others. Seven of the 33 men who participated in the Inchon landing were selected to go home in a week or so. They draw names from a hat. Most of the men whose names were drawn were so excited they could hardly write their names on the change-of-address cards. I certainly feel sorry for the unlucky ones. They had been more or less prom-

ised that they would be out of here by September 15, but that doesn't seem likely now.

I'm waiting for more information about the next two reserve drafts. One leaves tomorrow, but the next two are the ones that interest me. Bill will probably leave on the next one because it covers the period up to September 15, when he was called in, but I should make the next one, which covers the period up to October 4. If he leaves in the first part of September, then I think I may take leave of Korea by the end of the month.

Yesterday we heard that the peace talks had collapsed completely, but today it appears that it was only another temporary breakdown.

The division will soon be on the move again. We are to return to our former positions but still remain in reserve. We have everything arranged so neatly here that I'm a little reluctant to move, but the move will occupy some of our time and we will escape from these monotonous inspections.

One of the interpreters for our Korean laborers came in yesterday with a problem. The company barber had received word from a friend who had just returned from Hongchon that his (the barber's) mother's grave had been disturbed by the recent heavy rains and the body had been exposed to the elements. The barber was requesting a short leave in order to travel to Hongchon and rebury the body. According to Korean custom, he is the only one qualified to perform the deed. It took me some time to get the story straight and, since the captain was absent, I got in touch with the battalion adjutant and then went down to explain the unique situation and the leave was

granted.

The interpreter, everyone calls him Cliff, went on to tell me about his recent two-week leave. He went down to Wonju for awhile, accumulating about 100,000 yuan (won), the equivalent of \$25 (U.S.) Then he took a bus to Chungju, where we set up our first dump after leaving Pohang. The bus fare was 10,000 yuan and meals and newspapers correspondingly high. The bus trip to Chongju cost him another 15,000 yuan. He visited his girl friend there and then went on to Cho-chiwon, where he once lived. By that time half of his money was gone and he decided to wait until the war was over to do any further traveling.

As a former university student, Cliff was interested in the social and political situation. He said that when the UN forces neared the Manchurian border last winter, all the North Koreans who had any money at all thought it was an appropriate time to leave, so they departed for the south. Now they are among the few wealthy citizens of South Korea who are demanding, along with President Syngman Rhee and his fellow bigwigs, that the UN forces keep going north to reunite Korea and, above all, never make a settlement with the Chinese based on the 38th Parallel.

Recently all over Korea crowds gathered in the towns to wave their flags on cue and demonstrate on behalf of a continuation of the war. According to Cliff, 90 percent of them actually favor an end to the war. They want a chance to rebuild their homes and return to a normal life, but, as it happens frequently in other third world countries, the rulers do the talking while the little people wave their flags because to do otherwise would be considered treason. Most of the people do

not have enough to eat, mainly the mass exodus of civilians from the north.

All men between the ages of 17 and 40 are in a kind of reserve and subject to immediate call by the army. A good share of the men who formerly supported their families, including their parents and/or their wives' parents, are serving in the army or have lost their lives. The women find it almost impossible to make ends meet by working in the fields and this has contributed to the deterioration of moral standards, which, according to Cliff, is shocking for a country that has traditionally prided itself on its strict codes of behavior. That's the gist of Cliff's story, which takes one about as far behind the lines or scenes as it's possible to go and will never appear in the *Seattle Times* or the *Bellingham Herald*.

I'm trying to follow the fortunes of the *Seattle Rainier* as well as I can, and sometimes I lose track, but it does appear that they're on their way to another pennant.

The weather last night was rainy and chilly and I don't think winter is far off. All through the hot summer weather I was never able completely to forget the bone-chilling cold of last winter here in Korea.

***Inje, Korea***  
***September 2, 1951***

Since I wrote last we have gone back into action. We moved up a considerable distance north of the 38th and set up next to a river as usual. We are north of Inje, to be precise. All the fighting in this sector over the past two months has been north of Inje or

Yanggu. Now we are near enough to the ocean to call in naval gunfire if it is needed, which is the way Marines prefer to fight.

I saw Bill for awhile this morning. He missed the draft that leaves tomorrow by one day, so it appears that we will be coming back at the same time, around September 25, I hope, but there's no definite word on it yet.

I like the arrangements here. I have my own office, in one tent. I have seven or eight men in my section, but find it difficult to keep track of them. We are located directly across the river from a huge army ammo dump and operate out of it. Everyone is involved in the ammunition picture except those who should be, thanks to the army brass. They have finally forced us into their system and we have trouble getting enough ammunition to operate. When we had our own dump we managed to keep a good supply on hand and get the ammunition and other supplies to our men when they needed them.

We have all new officers now, except for the company commander, and the captain is relying on me, now that Lt. Miller has left, to familiarize our new executive office, a captain, with our procedures, but I haven't had much time lately. I have to make at least 25 telephone calls a day and that takes most of my time.

It's getting cold at night and frost is just around the corner. It's odd how winter descends so suddenly, or is it fall?

Our radios have quit so we haven't heard the news lately. We don't know how the truce talks are coming, if they're still underway, but we hope

there's a settlement soon because no one has anything to gain by fighting anymore, except additional losses in men, if that's someone's objective. There has to be an end to this eventually, but right now we don't seem to have the manpower to bring it to a decisive conclusion.

#### ***North of Inje, Korea September 17, 1951***

I'm still just waiting it out. There's been no definite word but I'm hoping for the 25th because that's previous drafts have left.

Things here have been fairly quiet. We are working out of the army dump and, since they do most of the record keeping that we would normally do, we have more spare time. Things are humming at the dump, however. During the past 24 hours 190 truckloads of ammunition were issued. It may be doing more damage to the taxpayer, though, than it is to the Chinks and North Koreans, who are so well dug in that when their bunkers take direct hits from our heavy artillery, afterwards they climb out, readjust and repair their fortifications, and then climb back in.

Unofficial reports place our casualties as unusually high, considering the situation. When the Marines are ordered to attack, they do just that and, since the Chinks are well supplied with automatic weapons throwing a lot of lead, the results are predictable. Their big mortars are also effective because they give little warning and the shells fall from above and scatter a lot of red hot fragments. One regiment suffered over 1,000 casualties in a short time, another one over 400 in 24 hours, and now our last one is about to be thrown in. After that, I would think there will be

a necessary pause in the action.

It is getting cold. I've heard that there will be a shortage of cold weather gear this winter. How can that be possible after all this time in Korea? I went down to the river to bathe today, but it was so cold that it was probably the last time. I've seen some stoves appearing in several tents, but I think it's a little early for that unless you're from California or Florida.

*September 18, a.m.*

I heard this morning that the departure of the draft has been postponed until October 4, but that is unofficial.

When I was playing football last night, I turned my ankle so I am limping around this morning. I soaked it in hot water last night and it doesn't appear to be a serious injury. I think it's the first time I ever did such a thing.

The captain asked me to take a jeep ride this morning to a new dump the army is establishing in an area where we were formerly set up. I've never seen anything so fouled up as this ammunition matter is. The army insists on running our dump for us. They can't keep records, they don't try to stock what we need, and, when some item is issued, they take forever to replace it and seem to resent it when we dispatch our trucks to the rear to pick up the items we know our men on the line will need. We think that the least we can do is to provide our men with the ammunition they want, but the army, relying on heavy artillery barges to keep the Chinks at a distance, ignores those items that men need for close combat. At the moment they have none of the critical items that should have been replaced during the recent

two months' lull. Several of the key ammunition personnel in the division have been replaced by newcomers recently and these people are apparently listening to advice from the army or bowing to their demands, I'm not sure which, and no one has found a solution to the problem.

(ONE OF THE MARINES' MAJOR COMPLAINTS DURING THE KOREAN CAMPAIGN WAS RELATED TO THE LACK OF CAS (CLOSE AIR SUPPORT), ACCORDING TO THE HISTORY OF U.S. MARINE OPERATIONS IN KOREA (1950-1953).

THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND WAS INCLINED TO VIEW AIR POWER AS STRATEGIC IN NATURE, TO BE USED BEHIND ENEMY LINES FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF SUPPLIES, THE DISRUPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND TROOP MOVEMENTS, ETC. THE MARINES PREFERRED TO EMPLOY THEIR AIR WINGS IN TACTICAL SUPPORT OF THEIR TROOPS ON THE LINE IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH ARTILLERY FIRE.

ALL REQUESTS FOR CLOSE AIR SUPPORT HAD TO BE CLEARED THROUGH JOC (JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER) OF THE FIFTH AIR FORCE, A ROUNDABOUT AND TIME-CONSUMING PROCEDURE THAT OFTEN LEFT MARINE UNITS ON THE LINE WITH NO AIR SUPPORT OR, FREQUENTLY, ARMY OR NAVY PILOTS WITH NO REAL UNDERSTANDING OF MARINE TACTICS OR NEEDS. DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CUMBERSOME SYSTEM WAS VOICED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS BY MARINE OFFICERS FROM COMPANY COMMANDER TO COMMANDANT).



**Still north of Inje, Korea  
October 2, 1951**

I know it's time I wrote again or you will be expecting me back there soon. As you can see, our draft was postponed, for another month, in this case. I'm partly at fault for taking it for granted that we would leave on September, just because the other drafts have left on that date. There were so many casualties lately that the division couldn't spare us. A small draft of men who made the Inchon landing last September is leaving, but there are still quite a few of them here. Our departure date is set for October 25 (subject to change) so I really can't complain very much.

We're still just whiling the time away. I spend much of my time reading. I lost eight out of eleven games of cribbage today but we won our touch football game 42-12.

We've had some fairly warm weather again lately. Now it's getting cooler at night as it was before. We were issued winter sleeping bags today, a sign of the times. Everyone was glad to get them too. You might say they are a man's best friend over here.

Bill dropped in a few days ago. I expect him again before long. His outfit is set up about a half mile down the road. It looks now as if we will be coming back together, but I suppose he will get out a few days before me. Maybe not.

**EPILOGUE**

As we waited an additional

month, out of frustration, boredom, and, yes, empty-headedness, I acquired a vice and an addiction that I have regretted to this day, smoking. Cigarettes were handed out free like candy, so why not take advantage of the government's largess? I was 26 at the time and I was not to rid myself of this obnoxious habit until I was 39. Alan was three, Sheri was two, and Curtis just a baby, and I did not want any of them to remember their father as a smoker, hoping that I might be a positive influence with regard to smoking. Later I was to find that I had grossly overestimated my potential influence.

So far as I can recall, Bill and I left in the draft of October 25. We departed the beach at Kansong, a village on Korea's east coast north of the 38th Parallel, in small boats of some type and boarded the *U.S.N.S. Woodford* waiting offshore. My memory is hazy at this point but I believe we put in at Kobe, where we enjoyed a brief liberty, recovered our seabags stored there for about a year, and set sail for home.

We disembarked at San Diego and received our coveted discharges. In a few days Bill and I left Los Angeles in my "new" second-hand Pontiac for a virtual non-stop 22-hour trip to Seattle. I can still vividly recall a beautiful dawn breaking over Mt. Hood as we came down the long hill into Portland. We were back in God's country and the Korean adventure was finally over.

**MORE ABOUT KOREA**

In the late 15th century a Japanese warlord launched a campaign to conquer China. When Korea refused to join him, his powerful army conquered Korea in less than a month. However,

Korea's Admiral Yi constructed a fleet of Turtle Ships, propelled by oars and armed with cannon. Using these ships, which were partly protected by sheets of iron plate, he defeated the Japanese fleet in several battles, sinking over 200 enemy ships. All of this happened over 250 years before the historic clash of the ironclads Monitor and Merrimack in our own Civil War.

The traditional heating system in a Korean house consists of a series of flues running from a kitchen stove, or oven, under stone slabs that underlie the floor of one or more rooms. In former times the principal fuel was wood or corn stalks, even grass, but today the Koreans seem to prefer coal briquettes for cooking and heating.

The seafood that I saw on the drying racks at Mesan was apparently not squid but cuttlefish, a close relative and a type of octopus. The dried form is used throughout the country as a snack in the same way that potato chips are used in this country.

Simon Winchester in Korea (1988) tells of being startled by a four-foot long snake as he hiked about Korea. It seems that there is even a poisonous variety, the halvs. Koreans commonly use snakes for soup and for wine, supposedly for the health benefits. It is just as well that I was aware of the existence of these creatures because it would probably have dampened my enthusiasm for exploring the countryside.

Korea is known as the world's leading exporter of ginseng products. Ginseng is a root that resembles the human form and has been highly prized in the Orient for centuries. The more popular red variety requires six years to mature and is grown under carefully controlled conditions. It is converted

into tablets, capsules, and pills and a powdered form is widely used for tea. It is best known as an aphrodisiac but its supposed benefits run the gamut from life-prolonging powers to anti-cancer ingredients.

Dog meat has traditionally been eaten in the summer by middle-aged men to increase their virility and in the winter by women to increase their resistance to cold. More than one male has been able to boast of his conversion from chihuahua to wolfhound.

The Korean "national dish" is kimchi, which consists of cabbage, white radishes, red peppers, and garlic in its winter form. Many Koreans insist on including at least a small portion of the fermented dish with every meal.

Travel books in 1988 listed a hotel in Masan with 121 rooms, another in Pohang with 50, and even one in Chunchon with 50. I'm sure I would not recognize any of these reconstructed cities today.

The population of North Korea is approximately 20 million. South Korea, having absorbed a migration of nearly 10 million during the war, boasts over 40 million, at least 25 percent of them in the capital, Seoul. Korea is the world's third most densely populated area.

Most Americans are probably puzzled by the widespread anti-American sentiment accompanying the demonstrations that have erupted in Korea in recent years. The attitude seems particularly ironic and annoying in view of the certainty that South Korea owes its existence to American sacrifices of men and material and continued support of all kinds.

Koreans have had little experience with democracy, having lived under various dynasties such as the Koryu, which gave its name to the country, and after paying tribute to the Chinese. The 50-year Japanese occupation prior to World War II was an even more galling experience.

The attitudes and behavior of American G.I.'s since the Second World War seem to be responsible for much of the hostility evident today, but the communist influence cannot be ignored. While some members of the "occupation" forces treated the Koreans with respect, the majority apparently regarded them as inferior because their ways seemed so different from ours, not realizing or concerned that the Koreans' life styles had been drastically changed and disrupted by the war. Frequently the attitude was one of indifference or even cruelty.

Though the Marines were not present in the early years, their record is hardly unblemished. On one occasion at Masan I saw impoverished women manhandled by uncouth Marines and I referred earlier to the Korean house that I feel certain was the target of an arsonist. Another time I heard someone brag about swerving his jeep toward the side of the road in order to swat some unsuspecting "gooks" with a stick. Agnes Keith in "I Married a Korean" (1953) says, "The examples of drinking and of loose living set by too many of the officers' families, the attitude of superiority displayed by so many Americans, these too reduced the respect and good will of Koreans toward America, if they did not kill it altogether."

The callousness and cruelty of so many Americans, as well as our government's consistent support of right-wing

regimes beginning with Syngman Rhee's, have had a negative impact on Korean-American relations, but the straw on the camel's back may have occurred in 1980 at Kwangju.

Kwangju, Korea's fifth largest city, located in the southwestern part of the country, has always been the center of a large student population and in Korea the students have been the only politically active element. In 1979 when President Park Chung-hee was assassinated by his director of central intelligence, General Chon Doo-Hwan withdrew elements of several Korean divisions from the front line on the DMZ under mysterious circumstances. General Chon then assumed dictatorial powers, arresting scores of fellow generals and imposing martial law. Students rebelled and demanded an end to the restrictions. Using the communist threat as justification, Chon jailed thousands of students and brutalized more. The demonstrations became increasingly violent, especially in Kwangju, and Chon's forces slaughtered hundreds, some say thousands, of persons of student age.

Whether Chon acted with American connivance is a matter for conjecture, but many Koreans are convinced he did. In any event, South Koreans were elated by the success of the recent summer Olympic games in Seoul and perhaps that pride will be translated into more unity and self-confidence in that beleaguered nation and the result will be a more democratic country with less dependence on the United States and better relations as a consequence.

Your reward for having the patience to read this far is my assurance that you have reached

**THE END.**

### THE FINAL WORD

*By Former Lt., but still present,  
Charles Miller*

Several months ago I received a Xerox copy of a letter signed by a Robert Hall of Bellingham, Washington, requesting information on the whereabouts of one Lt. Charles Miller, O44000 USMCR. There were no clues as to what this was all about, but my innate curiosity got the better of me, and I picked up the phone and talked with Bob Hall in Bellingham.

Very quickly a flood of memories came rushing back, ranging from the sad to the ugly to the humorous, and it is fortunate for me personally and I hope for most Marines, that the last category of memories will far outweigh all of the others. I will attempt to add a few recollections of some incidents during the many months we both spent in Korea that Bob has touched on fully, or perhaps only very lightly. I am going to be hard pressed to compete with Bob's outstanding descriptions of events and the sensitivity that he expresses in his letters.

Bob joined Ammunition Company, 1st Ordnance Battalion, shortly after we had come from the Chosin Reservoir, and just after we had celebrated the Christmas holidays while the Division was in reserve. The town of Masan left much to be desired as a place to decorate a Christmas tree, but we did so and it was truly memorable. It was here that Bob first came to know the men of Ammo Company, and we in turn quickly learned of his qualifications, prompting us to assign him to the records section. As C.O. at that time, I quickly came to rely on his abilities, good common sense, and accuracy in

recording ammunition status, so that I seldom had to issue orders or instructions to him, for I knew the section was running smoothly and efficiently.

I suspect Bob was often frustrated and found his duties made much more difficult and confusing due to the fact that the Lt. C.O. was often replaced by a captain, as per the T.O., and I would revert to Ex.O., and often to Plt. Ldr. when more than one captain was on the scene. The most depressing of all, however, was when I was relegated to taking charge of the Korean labor platoon. Fortunately, however, I would again revert to C.O., Ex.O., and begin the entire process all over again. I frequently felt like a yo-yo.

As you read Bob's letters you will have realized that with the number of ASP's we operated up and down the MSR, the members of the Ammo Co. were often well behind or to the rear of the actual combat areas. We often loaded the trucks with ammunition and rode to the forward dumps and frequently into the front lines delivering the much needed ammo. We rather looked forward to these trips. All too often we served as front line troops when the friendly forces on our two flanks decided it best to evaporate in the face of the Chinese and NK assaults on their assigned positions. This happened with some degree of regularity, and it was disconcerting to say the least. The supposed soft rear echelon duties also evaporated into the hard realities of combat.

Several times Bob mentions the infrequent beer rations and what a great treat it was to get our hands on any alcoholic beverages. When I went aboard ship in San Diego headed for Korea, I had a 103 degree fever. A very large bottle of Aureomycin, one of the

first wonder drugs, knocked out the flu, and the remaining tablets were kept well hidden. Several months later I was able to parlay these golden tablets into many bottles of Doc Grey's medicinal brandy, which Doc guarded with his life. But it seems that a few of our men and many from other units came down with some rather nasty diseases they were silly enough to acquire during their unauthorized recreational activities. Doc desperately needed my tablets to combat the bug.

In those days there was a CWO renowned throughout the Corps for his *sweet water*, a devilish concoction of torpedo juice, lots of simple syrup, and a little bit of whatever else might be available, such as grape juice, orange juice, bourbon, scotch, etc. During a lull in the fighting and hence in our duties, a bridge game was arranged and CWO Gebhardt, or *Sweet Water John* as he was known, was my partner. He fed me copious amounts of this tasty and silky, smooth drink. I bid and played those hands of bridge almost to the point of brilliance, and even went out several times to inspect our guard posts and the dump in general, for I was the O.D. I went to bed quite sober, I thought, only to awake at reveille with a monstrous headache and partial paralysis. I could not get up from my bunk. And Doc just laughed, no aspirin, nothing.

I relate these little episodes to illustrate the unsympathetic bedside manners of my old bunk-mate, Doc Grey, toward my foolishness at consuming so much *sweet water*, and to reveal how he got revenge from my holding him up for the Aureomycin. But also to thank Bob for his sympathies during my little personal hell, for it was a five-day hangover, and for assuming so many of my duties and carrying them

out to perfection. Suffice it to say that not once have I indulged in any form of *sweet water* since those five days in Korea.

From time to time we were allowed to send an N.C.O. or commissioned officer to Japan on a liquor run to purchase a fairly decent quantity of less powerful imbibibles, although I was never so privileged. When not creating an alcoholic drink of somewhat questionable quality in the five-gallon water cans on the trucks as they made their runs with ammo to the other dumps, we did make a number of secretive raids on the U.S. Army liquor rations, and to my recollection never got caught. We also raided the Army's ice cream platoon when it was nearby. That didn't happen often enough.

Bob asked that I make a few comments about my personal experiences at the Chosin Reservoir. There has been so much written about U. S. Marine operations in Korea in the five-volume official history and by such authoritative historians as S.L.A. Marshall, that it seems to me redundant to attempt to add to it herein. The bitter cold we experienced, the agonies over our wounded, the loss of friends, the sight of hundreds upon hundreds of dead Chinese, the suffering of the Korean people, and finally the thousand and one tales of Marine heroism simply need not be recounted here.

I am compelled to comment that the official histories make little or no mention of the role of the Ordnance Battalion and the Ammo Company in the defense of the northeast sector of the defenses at Hagaru. Our dump bordered directly on the elevated railroad tracks leading north. We had the ultimate responsibility of protecting the ammunition for the entire division, but

also the entire encampment from attack from the mountains overlooking our area. I do not underestimate the roles played by the 105 howitzers, the anti-tank personnel, and tank units themselves, and all the other service troops that backed up our positions and defense. But it was the Ordnance Battalion and Ammo Marines who repulsed the assaults of the Chinese pouring down the mountain side.

One night the Chinese mortars hit a portion of the fuel dump located to our west, and the resulting fires lighted the entire mountain side. With the fires behind us and the Chinese coming down into the light and unable to see well, we had the proverbial turkey shoot; there wasn't a single maggie's drawers that night. Those who did make it to the reverse side of the railroad were quickly done in by the tanks during their 90mm H.E. and TSQ only a couple of feet over the tracks. With the first light of day we could not believe what a terrible toll we had exacted. Hundreds of bodies were stacked one on another. This was to me the classic example of the service troops proving themselves to be equally competent fighting Marines.

Another incident that is ingrained in my memory was the sight of three soldiers coming toward our positions on the ice of the reservoir. One was crawling on hands and knees as the other two walked up from behind, split to either side of the crawling soldier, and made no effort to help him in any way to the safety of our positions. It took all my will power to refrain from shooting them, and I had to stop several others who had the same idea.

Just before we started our movement southward from Hagaru, General O.P. Smith summoned the regimental

commanders, his entire staff, all service troop commanders, and Major Bill and myself to a meeting to finalize the details of our fight in the new direction. As probably the most junior officer there, I was more terrorized by those two stars than of the Chinese. General Smith asked for my personal assessment of the ammunition situation and asked for my recommendations as to how much to issue to the troops and load aboard the trucks, and finally to destroy. He gave Major Bill a nod of approval and we shoved off to put it into effect. General Smith was the finest gentleman I have been privileged to meet in any of the services, and if he had any doubts or fears as to the outcome it never showed. As I remember it after all these years, he thanked each of us personally and wished us well.

Bob tells of my departure from Korea, and then goes on to relate his additional experiences and observations of the war and of the Ammo Company operations. My thanks go to him for this additional information on the exploits of one of the finest groups of Marines I know of, the men who served in the Ammunition Company, 1st Ordnance Battalion, 1st Marine Division. It was a very real pleasure to have served with the men of Ammo Company, to have known them, however briefly, and now to have so many of those memories brought back through Bob's Letters from Korea.

I can think of no better way to close than to say again how pleased I am that Bob remembered his old C.O./Ex.O./Plt. Ldr., and made the effort to contact me. I sincerely hope we will keep in touch, and that through your efforts and writings, Bob, that others from the company will follow suit.

Thank you, congratulations, and much success. **Well done.**

**EDITOR'S COMMENTS AND ETC.'s  
SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE**

If you have been paying attention, you will note that this is the June issue and the end of Volume 1. The next Volume, Volume 2 Number 1 issue will be **September 1990**. If you have been pleased with our efforts thus far, it is hoped you will renew your subscription.

If you came in late and want to get the first issues you may have missed, let us know **NOW** and we'll get them to you. Your \$10 subscription entitles you to all 10 issues.

Unfortunately, the Post Office has decided to raise the cost of postage as of February. We will have to pass it along in the form of **\$12.50 for 3rd Class postage and \$15.00 for 1st Class postage**. Most of these issues are running .60c to mail 1st class, so we will be absorbing a little of the increase as it is.

**If you intend to renew** it would be appreciated if you would send it along **before** the end of July.

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We have a subscriber who has written what appears to be a pretty interesting book, **RED BLOOD**. .  
**.PURPLE HEARTS**, by Joeseph A. Saluzzi, covering from Pusan through the Kansas Line in '53. There are over 330 individual combat accounts of Marine valor based on official citations and personal interviews AND ALSO a **COMPLETE** listing of **ALL Marine Medals of Honor, Navy Crosses and Silver Stars** awarded in Korea. For the small sum of \$16.00, which includes the mailing cost, you can add this to your library. The list of awards alone is worth the price of the book.

If you are interested, send \$16.00 to **Joseph A. Saluzzi, P.O. Box 1872, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008-1872**.

We have another subscriber who edits a newsletter for those who are interested in genealogy, that is tracking down who were your ancestors. Sometimes that can come as a real shock, but it is an interesting search for those who are curious about such things. It's called **THE PANGBURN LETTER**, by Donn E. Wagner, 5245 Walton St., Long Beach, CA 90815. Wagner is a former Corpsman with F-2-11 and C Battery 1st 4.5 Rockets from April of '53 to June of '54. Interested? Drop him a note.

These are unsolicited ads. That means simply that we have not been paid to advertise either of these items, but thought that you might find the information useful and of interest.

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The following was noted in a recent issue of **MILITARY** and for those of you who may not know, we will bring you up to date:

**"HANOI JANE"**

*"We understand Jane Fonda wants to portray the wife of the new Czech President, Vaclav Havel in a forthcoming movie. She hopes to change her image. The Rocky Mountain News of Denver, which mentioned this in an editorial, suggested she's best suited for the role of Konstatin Chernenko's wife."*

**"Rogue State:**

*Farmers in North Korea have been ordered to grow marijuana. This is part of that country's policy for raising hard cash through the sale of arms and drugs.*

*"Australia made the North Koreans close their embassy because of incidents involving the diplomatic staff selling drugs. When asked about the matter, the Koreans said they had to do it in order to pay their bills."*

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If this nation ever conquers the drug problem we may bankrupt North Korea! We can get two-for-one!