

# NAVAL AIR WAR

## OVER THIRD OF U. S. COMBAT AIR STRIKES IN KOREA BY NAVY

**T**HE KOREANS have a national hero, one Tangoon, of circa 2400 B.C. who, according to legend, has since appeared many times in spirit form to lend wisdom, insight and inspiration to authors. Apparently he was very active in the 14th century during the writing of the book *Chung Kam Rok* or *The Story of the Chung Prophecy*.

This bit of Oriental wisdom forecast foreign rule over Korea beginning in the Christian year 1892. The Japs took over in 1895. It foretold the defeat of these foreign rulers in 1945. In 1945 the Japs were whipped. It described 1946 as a year of flood and epidemic. It was, surprisingly enough.

The amazing *Chung Prophecy* allowed seven years for an occupation by the victors prior to the outbreak of war between North and South Korea. This war has been underway since 1950.

Looking once again into his crystal ball, the 14th century prophet predicted a new and great Korean dynasty to follow the war. Its leader would be Chung

To Rok. In view of the seer's batting average, it might pay to start looking for Mr. Chung.

Since none of NANEW's staff has had the benefit of any of Tangoon's inspiration, it can't make any predictions on this last one, but it can bring you up to date on what has taken place in the Korean fighting.

The U. S. Navy first took a look into Korea in 1853 when Commo. Shufeldt visited the place aboard the USS *Ticonderoga*. The Navy was there again in 1871 when a survey party of Adm. Rogers got involved in an unfortunate shooting scrape. It's back there again now, and it has been for two and a half years.

Two and a half years is a long time when one is fighting. It's also a good time to pause and review the past 30 months of accomplishments by the Navy's striking arm, naval aviation.

Korea, Land of Morning Calm, has enjoyed little calm of any kind since June 25, 1950, when the Kremlin decided the plum was ripe for plucking. The United Nations stood firm against this "harvest."

*Illustrations by Herbert C. Hahn, Navy Combat Artist*

Defenders Are Hard-Pressed

That control of the sea is vital was again clearly illustrated when the United Nations were able in brief time to build up more power than the enemy whose territories bordered the hapless peninsula. The sea proved once again to be the most efficient means of transport on a ton per mile per day basis, and that he who controls the sea, if he wills it, can control the world.

U. S. naval aviation, Navy and Marine, furnished the basis of U. N. sea power. Month after month it averaged over 35 per cent of the combat sorties flown by all United States aircraft; it dropped as many tons of bombs as it did in World War II, used more rockets, and fired half as much ammunition. This was achieved with a smaller force, first-rate evidence of the intensity of the fighting. In addition, the Navy had sup-

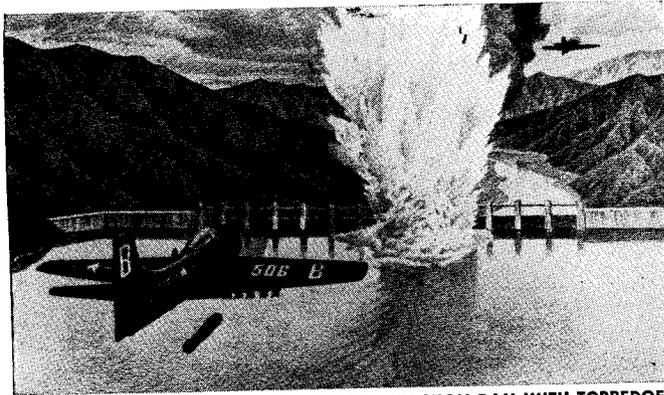
ports began the long flight across the Pacific. While Marine ground troops packed their gear, their supporting air units hastily assembled the equipment needed to operate from CVE's and shore bases. Carrier air groups practiced techniques of war with a new feeling of urgency.

Like the ripples from a stone cast in a pond, the effects of Korea spread in ever wider circles. Navy and Marine units along the Atlantic prepared to change oceans. Farther it went until at the far end of the Mediterranean, it reached the SIXTH FLEET. Early in August came orders to detach a Marine battalion and the carrier *Leyte*. The Marines set out for the Far East by way of Suez; the *Leyte* took the other route, westward across two oceans and through the Panama Canal.

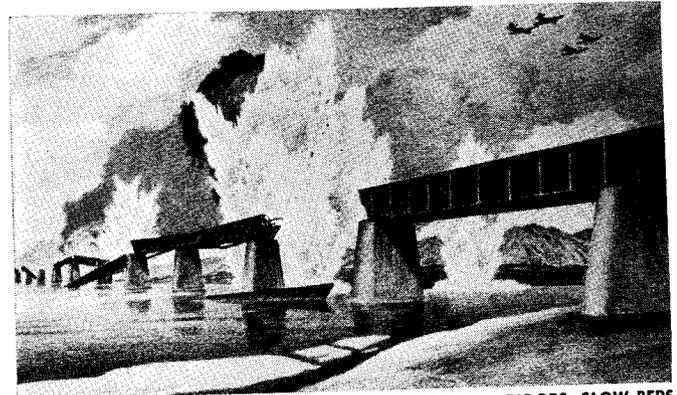
Naval aviation did not wait the coming of these reinforcements to go into ac-

tion. When that amphibious operation was unopposed, the carrier aircraft raided up and down the coast and delivered a devastating strike at the Wonsan oil refinery. From then, until the 29th, the *Valley* continued operations, moving from the east to the west coast of the peninsula and back again as the urgent situation ashore demanded.

While the *Valley* replenished again in Okinawa, another attack carrier, USS *Philippine Sea*, arrived from the States. At the same time the 1ST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE with units of the 1st Marine Air Wing and the escort carriers USS *Sicily* and USS *Badoeng Strait* were moving into the combat theater. The number of Navy and Marine carrier aircraft had risen to approximately 200. They were none too soon in making their appearance because U.N. ground forces had been pushed back into a narrow perimeter around the port of Pusan.



PRINCETON SKYRAIDERS OPEN GATES OF HWACHON DAM WITH TORPEDOES



NAVY BOMBS TUMBLE HUNDREDS OF NORTH KOREAN BRIDGES, SLOW REDS

ported the Marines and the ships of the Navy around the world, all on less than one-third of the Nation's defense budget, evidence of the efficiency and relative economy of naval power.

Before the situation deteriorated to the point where the U. S. and other members of the U. N. ordered ground troops to the assistance of the hard-pressed South Koreans, the President had assigned the Navy two missions. It was ordered to do what it could to help the defenders of the Republic of Korea, and to play the major role in seeing that the communist Chinese did not seize Formosa. To carry out its share of these assignments naval aviation had little immediately available—in Japan, just two patrol planes and a handful of maintenance personnel; in the Far East generally, elements of two patrol squadrons, one engaged in relieving the other, and a single carrier, USS *Valley Forge*, with accompanying escorts.

As the *Valley* turned north, a seaplane tender set sail for the Pescadores Islands just west of Formosa and patrol squad-

tion. On June 27, 1950, patrol planes took off on their first patrols. On July 3, the *Valley* was joined by the British carrier, HMS *Triumph*. The two launched their planes against airfields and transportation facilities around Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea. For the first time, since August 1945, naval aircraft shot enemy planes from the air, destroyed others on the ground, and wrecked bridges and rail yards. For the first time anywhere naval jet fighters went into action. The following day U. S. and British pilots continued their task of reducing the Pyongyang transportation center.

The *Valley* then hurried to Okinawa from which it could help prevent a landing on Formosa, if necessary. Whatever the intention of the Chinese Reds, the North Korean variety showed no disposition to wait and pushed steadily ahead against the all-too-few defenders. The *Valley*, again joined by the *Triumph*, sortied once more and on July 18 covered the landing of the 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION at Pohang on Korea's east

Marine aviators went into action August 3 flying from the *Sicily*. *Badoeng Strait* followed on August 6 with Marines aboard, one day after naval pilots on the *Phil Sea* began operations. When the 1ST PROVISIONAL BRIGADE went ashore, it took along ground controllers and their communications equipment, an integral part of the most accurate system of close air support known to any service.

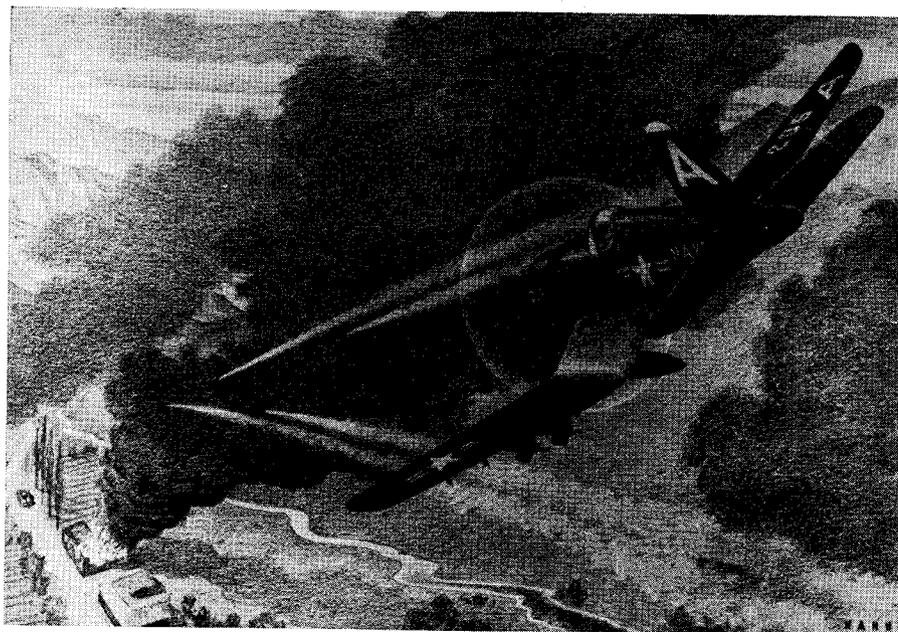
Close Air Support Paves the Way

On the morning of August 17, U.N. troops with Marines in the lead, started elimination of an enemy bridgehead across the Naktong River. As the artillery barrage lifted, Marine *Corsairs* from the CVE's hammered the reverse side of a ridge across a narrow valley. Marine ground troops shoved off. An hour later they were within 20 feet of the crest when the communists drove them back with hand grenades. As they reformed, they called again for air support, and again they got it. The Marines made it across the top of the bomb-scarred ridge.

This went on all through the hot summer day, until by nightfall a large section of the ridge had been cleared of the enemy. Under cover of darkness the Reds counter-attacked and penetrated Marines' position at two places. At daybreak, the *Corsairs* returned and the line was restored. To veterans it was reminiscent of World War II island fighting. It was typical of that August in South Korea. Close cooperation and the flexibility of aircraft in delivering fire power where it was urgently needed saved the Pusan perimeter. The 3,000 sorties of naval and Marine aircraft had made its contribution.

Early in September the carriers withdrew to Japan. The arrival of patrol planes eliminated the need of sending the carriers to Okinawa. Seaplanes from tenders in the Pescadores and land-based VP from Okinawa were present in sufficient numbers to keep Formosa approaches under constant surveillance.

In Tokyo big things were in the wind. Time had come for the U.N. counter-offensive. Flanks of the contending armies were firmly anchored on the sea, and only the power which controlled the sea could possibly outflank the other. The North Koreans had tried just such a maneuver which, if successful, would have given them the port of Pusan. This move was thwarted by the small, U. S.-trained ROK naval forces. The United Nations command was now ready to change the course of war by using its command of the sea to outflank the communists by launching an attack well to their rear. The objective was Seoul, center of the transportation and communications net serving all South Korea. It was to be reached through an amphibious landing at the nearby port of Inchon.



NAVY-MARINE CLOSE AIR SUPPORT HITS COMMUNIST POSITIONS HARD TO COVER U.N. TROOPS

### Carriers Cover the Landing at Inchon

The U.N. air plan called for the carriers to furnish the entire support in and near the objective area. For this purpose the Navy had the fast carriers *Valley* and *Phil Sea*, the small *Sicily* and *Badoeng Strait*, and His Majesty's scrappy *Triumph*. Another fast carrier, USS *Boxer*, was enroute and joined, in spite of an encounter with a typhoon on D-day. Since the opening of hostilities, the *Boxer* had run a shuttle service. She helped get the U. S. Air Force into action by leaving San Francisco on July 14 with a cargo of 145 F-51's, 2,000 tons of urgently needed Air Force supplies, and 1,000 military passengers. She had set a record for the Pacific crossing and then proceeded to break it again on the return. Now she was in the Far East once

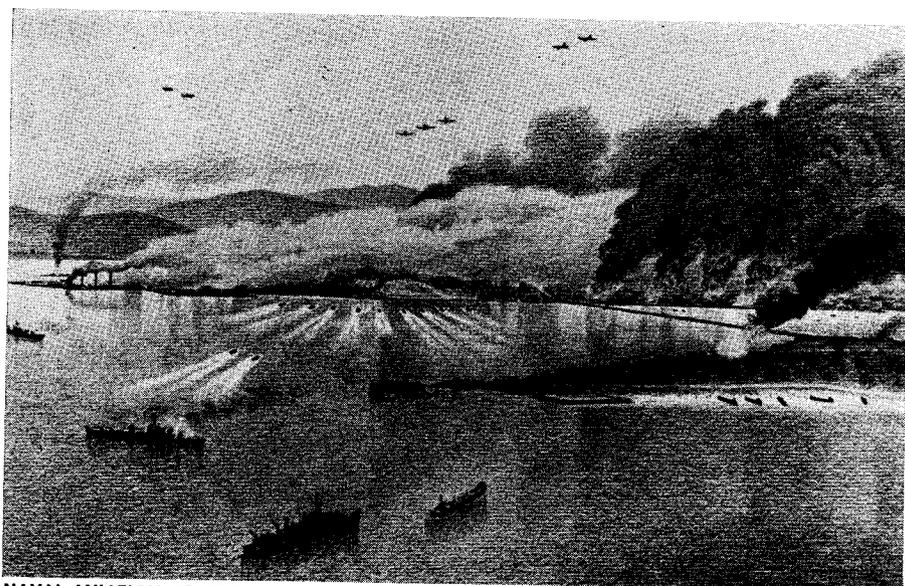
more with her air group aboard and ready for action.

The *Valley* and *Phil Sea* commenced hammering the objective area on September 12. *Sicily* and *Badoeng Strait* sortied from Japan with the amphibious force and commenced air operations on the fourteenth. The *Triumph* maintained combat air patrols over the amphibious and fire support forces. Naval patrol aircraft flew anti-submarine searches.

The 30-ft. tides at Inchon made the operation ticklish. Delicate timing and complete cooperation among the elements involved were required. The combination of air attack and off-shore bombardment paved the way for the landing. The Navy and Marine way for requesting and directing air support of the troops ashore worked as it always had. It worked well.

After Naval and Marine air strikes and bombardment, the Marines went ashore on September 15, first to Wolmi Island, then to the city itself. Under the protective cover of carrier air, the troops pushed forward towards Seoul. Two days later they overran Kimpo Airfield. Marine squadrons from Japan arrived at Kimpo on September 19 and the following day the first operational flights were made. With the capture of Seoul and the linking up of the invading force with Eighth Army elements which had pushed north from the Pusan Perimeter, the amphibious operation came to an end.

In the hope of cutting off Red troops fleeing north the Xth Corps of which the 1st Marine Division formed a part was withdrawn from the Seoul area and sent by sea to the other side of the peninsula for a landing at Wonsan. Again the car-



NAVAL AVIATION CONTROLLED SKIES AT AMPHIBIOUS INCHON LANDING WHEN U.N. FLANKED REDS

## Navy's Air Strengthened

riers were to furnish the necessary air support, and for this occasion still another joined.

*Leyte* had completed its journey more than three quarters around the globe averaging 23 knots. She was ready to prove that a ship and air group assigned to one theater could operate equally effectively in another. From the one fast carrier of July, the number had increased to four in addition to the escort carriers. From the autumn of 1950, the Navy has kept at least three fast carriers and one or more CVE's or CVL's in the Far East. The British have also provided a CVL. VP squadrons in the Korean theater numbered five, and shore-based Marines five, including one VMO equipped with liaison aircraft and choppers.

By rotation of ships and units, the burden of the Korean fighting has been spread to many. A by-product of the war has been testing equipment under combat conditions. One of the major developments has been the use of jets, another occurred in the wide use of the 'copters. The helicopter's greatest impact came as a rescue craft to lift downed pilots from the water and from behind enemy lines. Countless lives have been saved by speedy evacuation of wounded. A landing platform was put on a hospital ship so casualties could be delivered direct by 'copters. These versatile craft have also been used for artillery spotting and other types of observation. On the basis of Korean experience, the Marine Corps has organized assault helicopter squadrons to deliver men and supplies to forward positions from ship or shore.

In addition to the need for high per-

formance jet fighters, the Navy has recognized the necessity for an attack plane capable of going in low to the objective, remaining in the target area for a considerable period, and delivering dive bombing and other low level types of attack. At the present time none but propeller driven aircraft has the proper characteristics for this type of work. The load carrying ability, the accuracy of dive bombing, and the ruggedness of the AD *Skyraider* attack plane employed from carriers and by the Marines has been the most devastating attack factor in the Korean air war.

### Heavy Mining Encountered at Wonsan

When the fast carriers returned to action off Wonsan on October 10, 1950, ROK forces were already in the area. The North Korean army rapidly disintegrated after being outflanked at Inchon. Many surrendered in South Korea while others fled northward toward the Manchurian border. At Wonsan, however, they left behind a memento in the form of one of the heaviest concentrations of mines ever encountered anywhere. Here and in other Korean ports naval aircraft assisted the minesweeping forces in removing this menace. Helicopters did excellent work in mine spotting and patrol planes became skilled in destroying them with gun fire.

While the Xth Corps waited to go ashore, carrier aircraft raided targets in the dwindling area under communist control and assisted South Korean units. In October it looked as if the war were approaching its end; then U.N. troops began encountering Chinese Communist units. At first these appeared scattered and not particularly aggressive, but the

increasing number of contacts gave cause for concern. Early in November it was decided to hinder further Chinese reinforcements from reaching the battle area by destroying the bridges across the Yalu River which for a distance of over 200 miles formed the boundary with Manchuria.

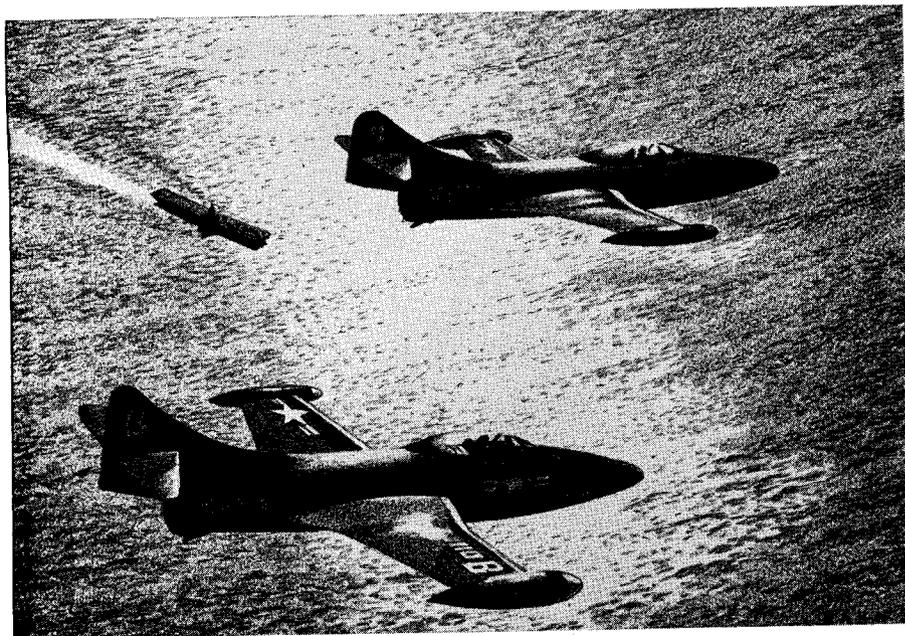
Naval aviators had long specialized in the dive bombing type attack which is most effective against small targets requiring the greatest possible accuracy. It was not surprising that they should be called in to try their skill. On November 8 they received their assignment—bridges scattered from Sinuiju completely across the Peninsula, to Hyesanjin 200 miles upstream.

This was a particularly difficult job because the aircraft had strict orders not to cross the Yalu into Chinese territory. This not only prevented them from diving along the axis of the bridges, the natural method of approach, but also exposed the attackers to antiaircraft fire from the Chinese side of the stream. As if to underline the importance of the bridges, the enemy's air force which had virtually disappeared in the early days of hostilities made a dramatic reentry with the Russian built MIG-15's. This time they played it safe. Rather than risk having their planes destroyed on the ground as had happened to the original North Korean air force, they based their aircraft in Manchuria. From this sanctuary, it was easy to make a diving attack across the border, and return quickly to a safe haven when pursued.

### Panthers Meet Migs Near Yalu River

Jet-versus-jet in combat was an interesting prospect, but, putting first things first, the Navy was primarily concerned with getting its attack planes safely into the target and out again. To provide escort over distances up to 250 miles when such wide differences existed in the characteristics of jet fighters and attack bombers presented a problem not previously encountered. On the morning of November 9, the attack planes took off alone and flew toward their targets far across Korea. Fifty minutes later the carriers launched the first of three jet flights, followed by the two others at fifteen minute intervals. Well before reaching the objective the first relay of jets overtook the attack planes and accompanied them in; the second flight provided protection over the target; and the third escorted them back out until danger of interception had passed.

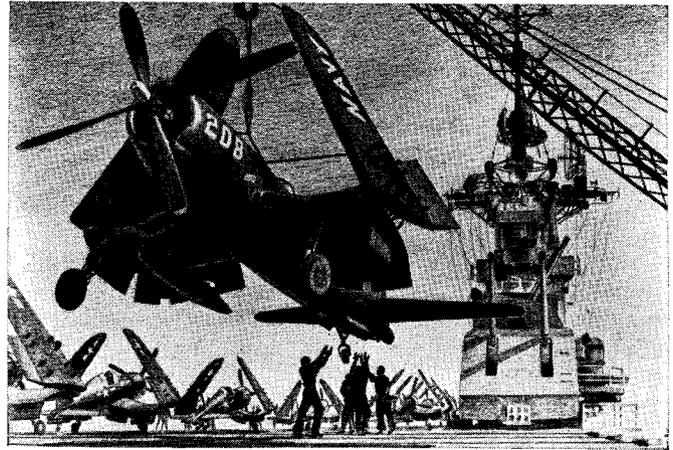
The system worked. In spite of repeated attacks by enemy MIG's, in the numerous bridge attacks carried out during the month no escorted aircraft were lost to enemy fighters. Further-



NAVY JET FIGHTERS BESTED MIGS IN ENCOUNTERS WHILE COVERING DIVE BOMBERS AT YALU



CARRIERS SUPPORTED MARINE WITHDRAWAL FROM CHOSIN RESERVOIR



VETERAN CORSAIR IS STILL AN EFFECTIVE PLANE FOR CLOSE SUPPORT

more, in the encounters fought high in the air over North Korea, Navy F9F *Panther* jet pilots shot down three MIG's confirmed and several probable and lost one of their own. Meanwhile the Air Force had shot down one MIG. This was the status of the jet-vs.-jet battle until the summer of 1951 when our Air Force and the MIG's began their present almost daily duels.

While our *Panther* jets were engaging the MIG in the tropopause, far below, the *Skyraiders* and *Corsairs* dove across the bridges, under intense anti-aircraft fire which they had no chance to silence. On nine strike days, the bridges were hit repeatedly. In spite of dropped spans, the Chinese continued to pour across the frontier when the river froze into one elongated bridge. By November 26, as the communists launched their counter-attack, Yalu bridge-busting was over for the season. Naval and Marine aircraft had more urgent matters to attend to.

Late in November the bulk of the 1st Marine Division had penetrated the mountainous area north of Hungnam with its advanced units around the Chosin Reservoir. At this point the Chinese struck. The Marines were trapped. Picking up elements of the U. S. 7th Division and some Royal Marines, the force started to fight its way out. Fifth Air Force, forced to abandon many of its Korean airfields, had its hands full supporting the Eighth Army retreating in the west and therefore turned over responsibility for air operations in Xth Corps area to the 1st Marine Air Wing. This proved an ideal arrangement for the naval aircraft of Task Force 77 and Marine aircraft. The full effectiveness of the Navy-Marine system of close support was again demonstrated as it had been at Inchon.

At the beginning of the crisis, the "Leading" *Leyte* and the *Phil Sea* were the only fast carriers available. *Princeton* was on her way across the Pacific. She joined the action on December 7. *Ba-*

*doeng Strait* was on the scene and *Sicily* nearby, exercising an antisubmarine squadron. The light carrier *Bataan* luckily arrived in Japan early in December carrying needed aircraft replacements for both Navy and Air Force.

The carriers for five days allowed neither bad, winter weather nor the need for replenishment to interfere with a schedule of continuous close support for the hard pressed Marines pushing down the single mountain road which led to safety. From December 4 to 7, Navy and Marine aircraft flew over 1,100 close support missions, and after a day when the weather made flights either from shore or ship impossible, came back on the ninth to fly 350 more.

#### Troop Air Support Provided by Carriers

The carriers kept up their average, but the Marine squadrons ashore were soon caught in the general withdrawal and had to abandon their advanced fields. All but one of the shore-based squadrons would, of necessity, have retired to Japan, had it not been for *Sicily* and *Bataan*. In both cases a Marine squadron left its shore base, landed aboard its carrier, and continued operations against the enemy. This flexibility paid off during the Marine withdrawal.

In November fast carriers contributed 44 per cent of the total naval aviation effort, escort carriers 9 per cent, and shore-based Marines 47 per cent. In December as the enemy forced abandonment of fields in Korea, the percentages changed to fast carriers 67 per cent, escort and light carriers 27 per cent, shore-based Marines 6 per cent. Because of the ability of the Navy to bring up additional carriers and of Marine squadrons to operate from ships as well as from land fields, the troops ashore received a constant volume of close air support.

As the situation became clear in early December, the Navy not only recalled the *Sicily* from ASW exercises and

pressed *Bataan* into service, although her orders had called for return to the States after delivering her cargo in Japan, but also sent for veteran *Valley Forge*. This ship had earned a rest and had returned to the States where she arrived on December 1. No sooner had ship's company departed on leave, than they received orders to report back. They sailed on December 6 with a new air group aboard and arrived in time to participate in the final two days of operations at Hungnam.

The U.N. forces faced a weary task of pounding their way down a narrow mountain road through numerous roadblocks with the enemy holding the heights on either side. In this situation close air support directed by Marine controllers with the troops and coordinated by a flying CIC the Marines had rigged in a transport plane for the occasion was indispensable. It was essential especially along the flanks where it neutralized the enemy's advantage of holding high ground.

Liaison aircraft, transports, and helicopters landed on emergency strips to bring out the wounded. *Skyraiders* and *Corsairs* constantly circled overhead ready to dive on Red strong points. Through snow, ice, sleet and rain the carriers operated, ducking about the Sea of Japan to find areas clear enough for flight operations. An airfield which can move has its advantages on this score.

At last, the Marines fought their way past the one remaining roadblock, convinced they would never have made it but for the Navy and Marine air support. As they approached the shore at Hungnam, a welcome sight awaited them. The Navy had assembled an array of ships. The landing craft, the transports, the fire support vessels, all the panoply of an amphibious landing was there, ready to carry out the operation in reverse. Out of sight, over the horizon, stood the carriers to furnish air cover for the hard-pressed troops ashore.

Marines Evacuated by Sea

The United States Navy prepared to execute one of the time-honored maneuvers of all navies. Readers of history know the tactic which baffled the genius of Napoleon who occasionally could corner British armies but never capture them so long as their backs were upon the sea. Others could cite examples from our war between the states. Those whose knowledge of history was no longer than their memory recalled Dunkirk, but perhaps nowhere else could the rapid development of amphibious techniques be better disclosed.

When the British Expeditionary Force was taken off the beaches of Northern France, it left behind its heavy equipment. The Marines brought theirs with them. Not only were all the military units, some 100,000 troops, complete with equipment and supplies safely evacuated but so were 90,000 Korean civilians who preferred to take their chance of survival in refugee camps of South Korea than to live again under communist rule.

Christmas Day 1950 found the Marines successfully evacuated. Only a few observation and harassing flights were made over the enemy that day. TASK FORCE 77 provided its own Christmas spirit. A USS *Anderson* quartet provided some light entertainment over the TBS followed by a brief singing of carols from *Phil Sea*. Santa Claus visited all the

ships of the Task Force in the *Leyte* helicopter.

On December 28, the *Leyte* and *Phil Sea* left the operating area after 52 consecutive days of operations, the longest since World War II. Pilots and deck crews met the test of the high, cold winds and snows of winter. They did not falter in the support of our hard pressed forces ashore.

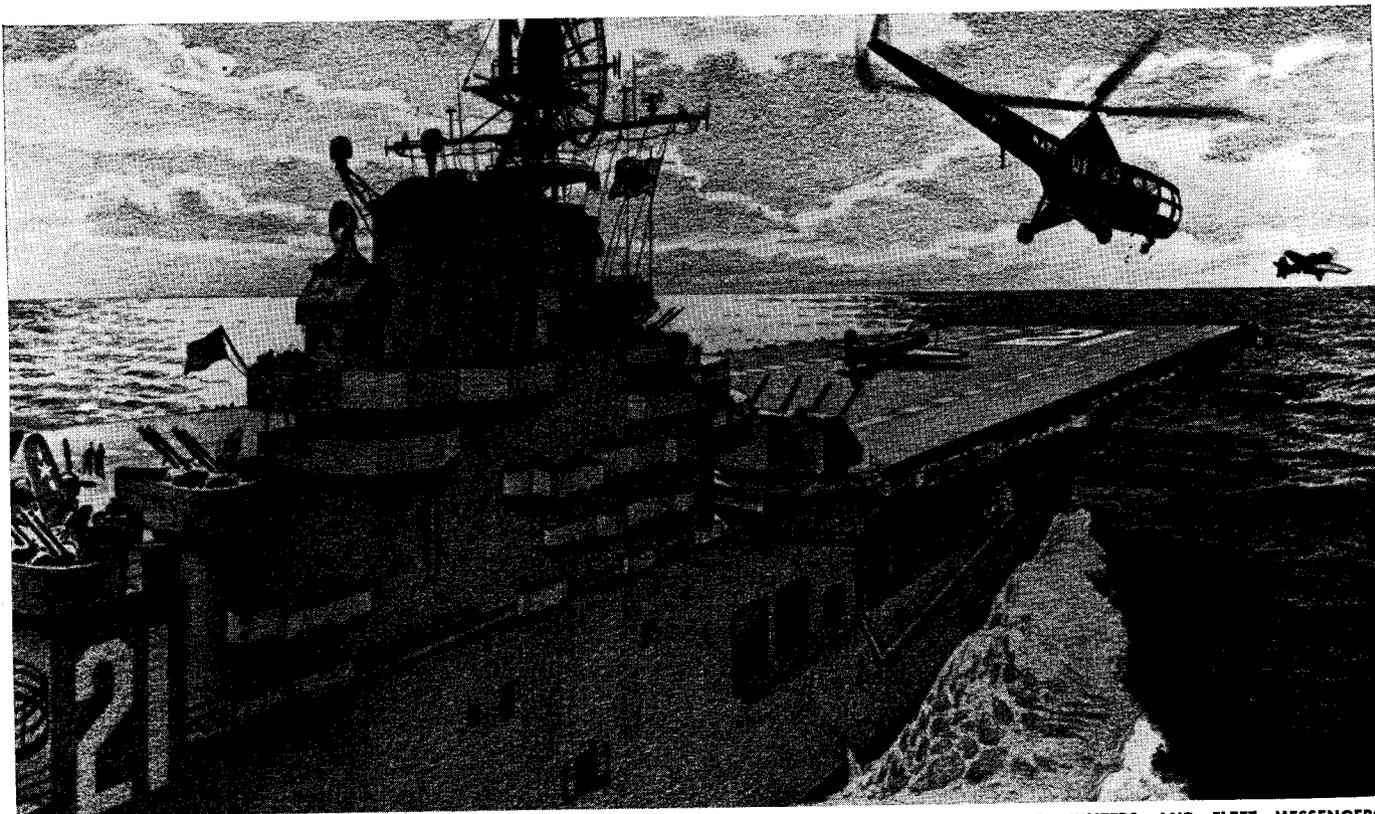
The communists had played their second trump and failed. True, their offensive by sheer momentum rolled on across the 38th parallel again, but the effort fell far short of Peking's boast to drive U.N. forces out of Korea. Many factors contributed to this failure. Important among them was the enemy's lack of the ability to control the sea. Our ability to control the sea in these first hectic six months thrice proved decisive—first in building of the forces to hold Pusan, second at Inchon when the North Koreans were outflanked and again at Hungnam when Xth Corps escaped the trap and moved south by sea in time to take part in the U.N. counter-offensive which began in January. Naval aviation had not only played its part with other naval forces in making sea power effective but also it had fulfilled its collateral function of assisting the other services in carrying out their primary missions.

Marine land-based operations did not return to normal until February when the squadrons evacuated during Decem-

ber returned to Korea. The carriers meanwhile continued to take up the slack. In the early months of 1951, except for an emphasis on close support during periods of heavy action at the front, generally ending with the breaking of the communist offensive in May, the nature of air activity began to change. From the beginning of hostilities, naval and Marine aircraft had flown a number of interdiction sorties to interrupt enemy movement of men and supplies toward the front. Except perhaps for the Yalu bridge campaign, the effort had been secondary. The change of emphasis coincided with a new concept of operations on the part of the U.N. command. Destruction of enemy personnel and material became the principal objective rather than the acquisition of territory. The share of aviation in this phase was to destroy enemy lines of communication by attacks on rail yards, bridges, and other transportation facilities and equipment.

Dive Bombers Excel at Interdiction

With U.N. naval forces in command of the sea not only were both flanks of our ground forces secure, but also the carriers could operate from positions to the rear of the enemy. This proved particularly important to the interdiction campaign in northeast Korea because land-based fighters from South Korean fields could not penetrate this area. The Air Force, therefore, requested the as-



CARRIER-BASED HELICOPTERS ARE PILOT LIFE INSURANCE AS WELL AS NAVAL GUNFIRE SPOTTERS, MINE HUNTERS AND FLEET MESSAGERS

sistance of the fast carriers whose aircraft could cover the Northeast Korea and also were able to fly completely across to the mouth of the Yalu if required.

Once their aid had been solicited, the carriers went about their task with enthusiasm. The tried tactic of dive bombing appeared particularly suited to the pin point attacks required to destroy bridges, cut rail tracks, blow up locomotives, demolish supply dumps, and generally do those things needed for interdiction. Naval planners studied the problem carefully.

The first concerted, extended effort was carried out from February 25 to April 2, 1951. Bridges were the main target and each one to be attacked was selected because of its vulnerability and the extent to which its destruction would effectively block operation of the entire transportation net. Aircraft and surface vessels struck at coastal routes from Wonsan north to Chongjin and aircraft roamed inland concentrating particularly on east-west lines of communication between Wonsan and Pyongyang.

In the late spring of 1951, carrier aircraft continued to devote some, although a diminishing percentage of, effort to close air support. As U.N. troops pushed their slow way northward, they met stiff local resistance and, on two occasions, the communists launched full scale counter-offensives. Wherever and whenever requested the naval and Marine aircraft went to the assistance of the ground troops and added another contribution to the destruction of enemy men and material which had become the objective of all United Nations forces.

Naval aircraft had an opportunity to use torpedoes, although not exactly in the way designers of that potent weapon had contemplated. During the communists' spring offensive which began in late April, 1951, U.N. forces entrenched themselves behind the Pukhan River, an advantage which the enemy sought to overcome by closing the gates of Hwach'on Reservoir so as to lower the river to fordable depth. *Skyraiders* from the *Princeton* scored five direct torpedo hits and the gates were opened—permanently.

Increasingly, however, the campaign settled down to a steady pounding largely at enemy supplies and supply lines. During the first six months of 1951, naval and Marine aircraft flew 36.8 per cent of the combat sorties flown by all United States aircraft. Since, when ashore, the 1st Marine Air Wing operated under the operational control of the Fifth Air Force, the exact extent of the damage it inflicted upon the enemy can-



HELICOPTER BASE CAMPS CLOSE TO FRONT LINES HELP SPEED EVACUATION OF WOUNDED TROOPS

not well be separated from the total for the force as a whole. When June 27, 1951, rolled around, the carriers added up their score for the year to show the destruction of 83 enemy aircraft, 313 bridges, 12,789 military buildings, 262 hostile junks and other enemy craft, 22 locomotives, 1,421 railroad cars, 163 tanks, and 2,999 other support vehicles.

#### Persistence Against Red Perseverance

With the defeat of the communist spring offensive in 1951 and the initiation of truce talks early in July the front became stabilized and ground action was largely limited to patrol activity. Close support missions, unfortunately, became increasingly infrequent until for the fast carriers they ceased altogether in December. Although the shore-based Marine squadrons throughout the second year furnished some support to front line troops, the majority of their flights too were concerned with interdiction. Patrol squadrons continued their surveillance of coastal waters alert to detect enemy ship movements and watching for signs of possible submarine activity. Farther south other patrol planes from land bases in Okinawa and from tenders in the Pescadores did not relax their vigil over the Formosa Straits and adjacent waters.

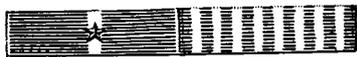
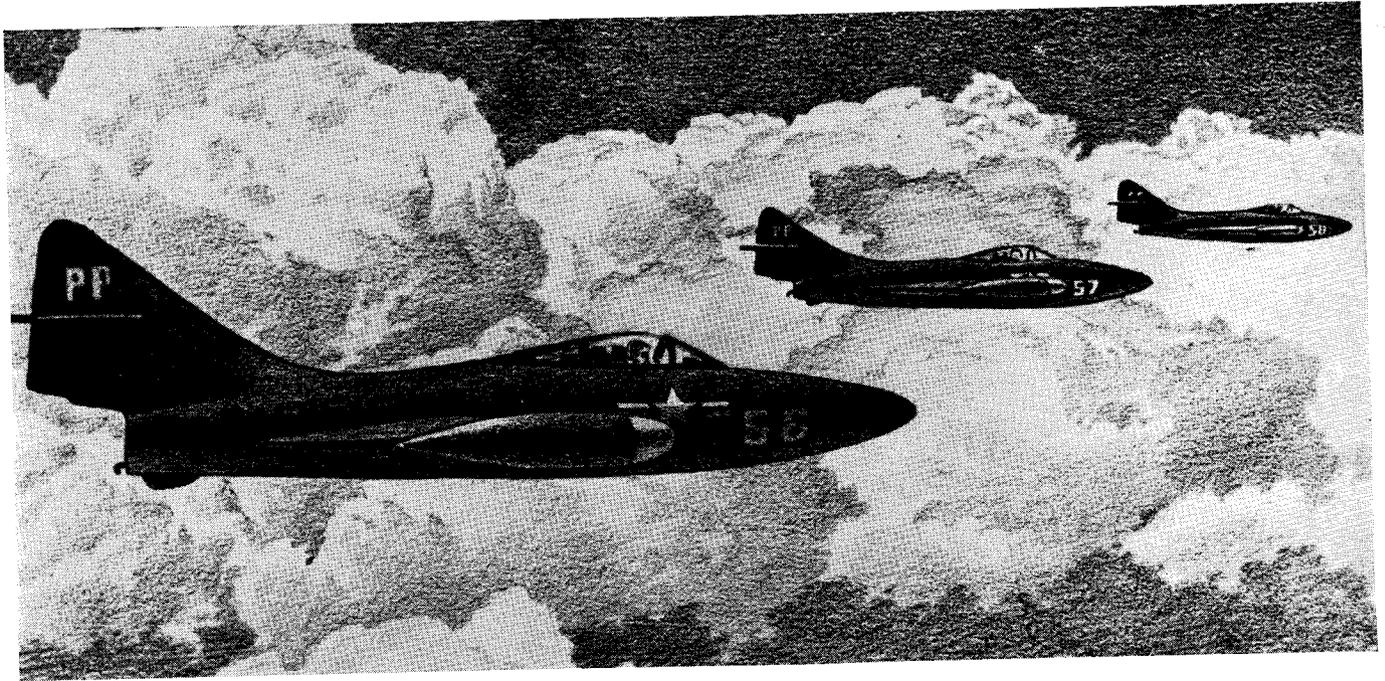
In the situation existing during the second year of the war, naval aviation continued to exercise its primary as well as secondary missions. Control of the sea, because of the very presence of strong naval forces built around carriers, was not contested. No amphibious landings requiring large scale air support were carried out. Ashore the 1st Marine Air Wing was relatively little used to support the 1st Marine Division. Naval and Marine aviation devoted its major

effort, however, to a collateral function—participation in the overall air campaign which in this instance became almost exclusively interdiction. The directive which restricted carrier aircraft to the northeast corner of Korea separated them from the scene of enemy air operations and prevented carrier aircraft from engaging in successful counter-air operations as earlier in the war.

Commander Task Force 77 characterized the situation in the following words. "Operations resolve themselves into a day to day routine where stamina replaces glamor and persistence is pitted against oriental perseverance."

On June 23 and 24, 1952, the carriers and the shore-based Marines went all out in a joint operation with elements of the Fifth Air Force to destroy Red power plants near and along the Yalu River. On the first day approximately 223 carrier and 77 Marine Corps *Skyraider* attack planes and *Corsair* piston and *Panther* jet fighter bombers dropped explosives on the plants. *Sabre* jets flew high cover. The next day, in a similar attack, carriers with some 323 aircraft and shore-based Marines with 60, again supplied the major part of the striking power. Naval aviation returned to the Yalu with a vengeance, strike photographs revealing that 90 per cent of the power potential of North Korea was no more. When delivered, these raids were the largest since World War II.

They were a harbinger of the future, a pledge that United States naval air power could strike and strike hard anywhere around the world. They were witnesses to the fact that in naval aviation the armed services had a potent weapon ready to carry out all assignments in achieving our common goal of victory.



## THEY WERE THERE

CARRIER	COMMANDING OFFICER	AIR GROUP	AIR GROUP COMMANDER
CVA-45 USS Valley Forge	CAPT Lester K. Rice CAPT Joseph M. Carson CAPT Oscar Pederson CAPT R. E. Dixon	CVG-5 CVG-2 ATG-1	CDR W. Lanham CDR W. Rynd CDR H. Crabb, Jr.
CVA-47 USS Philippine Sea	CAPT R. R. Waller CAPT W. E. Goodney CAPT T. E. Hobbs CAPT Allen Smith, Jr.	CVG-1 CVG-2 CVG-11	CDR R. W. Vogel (KIA) CDR Ralph Weymouth CDR R. W. Rynd CDR Jacob W. Onstott
CVE-118 USS Sicily	CAPT John S. Thach CAPT W. A. Shoemaker CAPT A. E. Loomis	CVG-1 CVG-2 CVG-11	LCOL W. E. Lischoid (KIA) MAJ R. P. Keller MAJ W. M. Lundin MAJ C. M. Kunz LCOL G. F. Vaughan
GVE-116 USS Badoeng Strait	CAPT A. W. McKechnie CAPT J. C. Alderman CAPT R. L. Johnson CAPT H. L. Ray	CVG-2 CVG-101 CVG-2	MAJ A. A. Lund MAJ S. S. Nicolay LCOL Joseph A. Gray CDR W. N. Pugin
CVA-21 USS Boxer	CAPT Cameron CAPT James J. Sullivan CAPT Marshall B. Gurney	CVG-2 CVG-101 CVG-2	CDR Don White CDR Wm. W. Brehm CDR Arthur L. Downing
GVA-32 USS Leyte	CAPT T. U. Slisson CAPT Paul L. Dudley	CVG-3	CDR W. F. Madden
CVA-37 USS Princeton	CAPT W. O. Gallery CAPT Paul D. Stroop	CVG-19	CDR R. C. Merrick (MIA) CDR Charles R. Stapler (MIA) CDR A. L. Moltby, Jr. (Acting) CDR Donald E. Bruce (Acting) CDR William Depton, Jr.
CVL-29 USS Batyan	CAPT W. R. Hollingsworth CAPT W. A. Miller CAPT E. B. Horner	CVG-1 CVG-2 CVG-1	CDR R. R. Wysocki CDR Donald P. Frame (KIA) MAJ E. H. Presley MAJ E. J. McGee LCOL R. E. Smith, Jr. LCOL G. C. Astell, Jr.
CVA-31 USS Bon Homme Richard	CAPT Cecil B. Gill CAPT P. W. Watson	CVG-7 CVG-7	CDR H. W. Fuhr CDR G. B. Brown
CVE-114 USS Badoeng Strait	CAPT J. E. Manning	VMF-212	LCOL Manuel Brilliant LCOL Joseph A. Gray CDR Marshall U. Beebe
CVA-9 USS Essex	CAPT J. E. Manning		CDR R. E. Farrington
CVA-38 USS Antietam	CAPT J. E. Manning		LCOL J. H. Macdonald, Jr. CDR R. E. Smith, Jr.

U. S. CARRIERS AND AIR GROUPS THAT HIT COMMUNISTS IN KOREA