

## ***THE KOREAN WAR 1950-53: A 50 YEAR RETROSPECTIVE***

### ***THE KOREAN WAR THROUGH CHINESE EYES* Paul McLeod**

The history of UN forces in the Korean War has been comparatively well documented by Western scholars, but it is only now, fifty years after the war, that detailed accounts of China's version of events are becoming available in the West. Probably the most authoritative and comprehensive account yet published is *The History of the Chinese People's Volunteers in the War to Resist America and Aid Korea*, compiled by a team of twenty-two researchers from the People's Liberation Army's peak strategic research and historical institute, the Academy of Military Science.<sup>1</sup>

The authors have based their account on original Chinese material, including archival correspondence between Mao Zedong and his Chinese People's Volunteer (CPV) commanders, unit records, and extensive interviews with surviving soldiers. As noted in the preface, the editors' aim was to compile an authoritative record of the CPV's involvement in the war, both to document a major campaign in modern Chinese military history and to serve as a reference for today's students of the operational art.

The result is a comprehensively researched volume documenting the other side of the Korean War. Every engagement above regimental level is covered, as well as smaller actions of special significance. The book adopts a chronological approach to the task. The political and military antecedents to the war are covered in the first chapter. In later sections, we are presented with an analysis of the operational situation at the beginning of each of the five main CPV campaigns, the conduct of the campaign itself, and finally, a distillation of the operational results and lessons learnt. The annexes contain dozens of fold-out maps illustrating the actions described in the text. The final chapter outlines the operational and strategic lessons to be learnt from the war.

This is a military book written by military men for a military audience. With the exception of the first chapter, the book is remarkably free of gratuitous ideological rhetoric. The authors have been brutally honest about the CPV's performance. Where the authors consider an operational decision to have been questionable, they have said so. Where there were weaknesses in the CPV organisation or equipment, these too are acknowledged and discussed dispassionately.

The Academy of Military Science account has not been published in English. The translation offered here is believed to be a first in the West, but it is far from complete. The translation process itself is not particularly demanding, but it is time-consuming. Korean place names present a particular problem. Military actions are described using Chinese names of nearby Korean villages or hamlets, many of which no longer exist or have changed their names. Despite my best efforts to match the Chinese rendition of Korean placenames on English maps, some places mentioned in the Chinese account remain untranslated. In these cases, I have used capital letters for the transliterated (Chinese) Pinyin romanisation along with a brief explanation of the feature's location derived from context in the accompanying text.

The translation is a work in progress. The work proceeds as I find hours available. I am happy to provide copies of the work to date, as I am to provide access to the original Chinese volume.

Finally, readers unused to Communist rhetoric may find that parts of the first chapter appear to present an ideological view of history at odds with our understanding of it, and that some of the language is politically charged. That is a fact of life, but it is a fact which makes this book all the more interesting because it presents not only the military details of the CPV's involvement in the War, but gives an insight into China's contemporary world view as well.

Nor do the Chinese have a monopoly on ethnocentric accounts of history. The same culturally and ideologically-centric approach is evident in some respected Western studies of the Korean War, as readers of SLA Marshall's historical works will attest. If there are two sides to every story, this is China's side of the story of the Korean War.

***The History of the Chinese People's Volunteers  
in the War to Resist America and Aid Korea***

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## Chapter One

### ***US Imperialist Armed Aggression Against Korea and Occupation of Chinese Territory in Taiwan.***

### ***The Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Decides Upon a Strategic Policy of Resisting America, Assisting Korea and Protecting the Nation.***

By the end of the Second World War the international situation had changed dramatically. Of the six strongest pre-war imperialist nations, Germany, Italy and Japan had been defeated, while Britain and France were in decline. With the exception of the US, the capitalist system had been severely weakened. Several European and Asian countries had broken free from the shackles of imperialism to establish people's democratic structures as they trod the path towards socialism, which itself had spread beyond the Soviet Union to become an international system. In many colonies and quasi-colonies, people's national democratic revolutions were flourishing and inflicting fierce blows on imperialist colonial regimes. The world had divided into imperialist and socialist camps, and contradictions and conflict between the two great camps was, for a period, a new defining feature of post-War international conflict. National democratic revolutionary movements and socialist revolution had become an irresistible tide of history.

The US imperialists, who had prospered obscenely during the war and faced inflationary pressures afterwards,<sup>2</sup> relied on their massive economic and military strength actively to pursue a policy of aggression and world domination. They were hostile towards socialist nations and people's democracies, constantly interfering in their affairs and engaging in subversive activities and warlike propaganda. The US actively propped up all manner of reactionary forces around the world. By their frenzied oppression of national democratic revolutionary movements, by their colonial and quasi-colonial plundering and enslavement, and by their aggression against other nations' independence and sovereignty they became the chief enemies of democracy and progress and world peace. In their international affairs, socialist and people's democratic nations pursued policies of democracy, progress and world peace. They actively supported national democratic revolutionary movements among colonial and quasi-colonial peoples; they actively initiated the formation of a broad united front for the protection of world peace; and they opposed the imperialists' policies of aggression and war.

In 1949, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, the people of China underwent a long period of armed struggle before finally overthrowing Chiang Kai-Shek's US imperialist-backed reactionary KMT regime and establishing the People's Republic of China. The triumph of the people's revolution was the world's biggest political post-War development. It smashed through the imperialists' front in the Far East, it changed the international balance of political power, and it gave a tremendous fillip to international people's anti-imperialist struggles and democratic revolutionary movements. This was a serious blow to US imperialism.

But the US imperialists did not willingly accept defeat. They stubbornly continued in their staunch resolve to pursue reactionary policies which viewed the peoples of China and Asia as the enemy. The US imperialists established over 200 military bases of various sizes throughout the Asia-Pacific, to which they deployed nearly a third of US ground forces, nearly 100 naval combatants and over 1100 warplanes. In China the imperialists continued to aid the remnant KMT forces and obstruct the Chinese people's liberation of Taiwan, and they conspired to carry out armed aggression against the Chinese mainland. The US continued to bolster its military occupation in Japan in an attempt to turn Japan into the main US military base in the Far East. With Korea occupying a strategically important position on the borders of China and the Soviet Union, the US imperialists flatly reneged on the allies' wartime agreement to create a free and independent Korea under a unified Korean government. Instead they split Korea and obstructed the realisation of independence and unification in an attempt to turn Korea into a US colony and to further expand US forward bases through aggression.

On 15 August 1948, the US imperialists installed the Syngman Rhee clique into power in the South as the 'Democratic Government of Greater Korea'. The people of the North responded by establishing the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 September, with Kim Il-song as Premier. With the emergence of two different forms of government in the North and South, the North resolutely proposed national general elections, free from interference by outside nations, to establish a central and unified government and to realise self-determination and peaceful unification. This proposal was in the fundamental interests of the Korean people, yet, acting with support from the US, Syngman Rhee unreasonably and flatly rejected it. Firmly maintaining his reactionary policy of 'unification by arms', Syngman Rhee publicly raised a great fuss, saying that 'the split between the North and South must be resolved by war'.<sup>3</sup> On 30 December 1949 in Seoul, Syngman Rhee declared at a press conference that 'North and South must be unified' within the new year, and followed this statement by accelerating war preparations and stepping up armed provocations along the 38th parallel. Facing the threat of war from the Syngman Rhee clique, the DPRK responded tit-for-tat, while at the same time, it too made the preparations necessary to protect the fruits of the people's victory. After this, conflict between the progressive and reactionary forces intensified with each passing day and the situation became increasingly grave.

On 25 June 1950, the Korean civil war broke out.

On 26 June 1950, Premier Kim Il-song issued a statement calling for the entire Korean people and the Korean People's Army (KPA) to strive for Korean freedom, independence and unification by mobilising together in a war to liberate the motherland. Responding to the call, the KPA bravely took up arms and charged southwards.

With the outbreak of war, the US imperialists, true to their strategy of world domination, could not restrain themselves from armed interference. On 26 June, US President Truman ordered his Far East air and naval forces into battle to support the Syngman Rhee clique. On the 27th, Truman issued a statement publicly announcing the US armed invasion and interference in Korea's internal affairs, and he ordered the deployment of the US 7th Fleet into the Taiwan Strait and the occupation of the Chinese sovereign territory of Taiwan.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, during an absence of China and Soviet Union from the UN Security Council,<sup>5</sup> the US deliberately misrepresented the nature of the Korean civil war and manipulated the Security Council into passing an illegal resolution calling for 'emergency assistance' to the Syngman Rhee clique. The US was nominated to invade and attack Korean forces. On 30 June, Truman ordered Japan-based US ground forces into Korea. On 7 July, the US manipulated the UN Security Council into passing yet another illegal resolution draping the US and other nations' forces in the cloak of 'UN Forces' and naming US Supreme Commander in the Far East, Douglas MacArthur, as 'Commander UN Forces'. In this way, the Korean people's civil war of independence and unification gradually evolved into a national war of liberation against US imperialist aggression.

The heroic people of Korea were not frightened of the overbearing US imperialists. In a broadcast on 8 July, Premier Kim Il-song, on behalf of the people of Korea, expressed his resolve to continue resistance. He said, 'Our people will never again be colonial slaves ... We can never forgive the US imperialists for the monstrous crimes they have committed on the soil of our motherland. We can never forgive them for their barbaric bombing of our peaceful towns and villages and their slaughter of our mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and our innocent children'.<sup>6</sup> He called for the people of Korea to unite and join all compatriots in a war of national liberation for the honour, freedom and independence of the motherland, and to drive the US imperialist aggressors out of Korea.

The KPA answered Premier Kim Il-song's call, fighting resolutely and dealing the US-led aggressors a heavy blow. KPA forces liberated Seoul on 28 June, took Taejon on 20 July, and captured the commander of the US 24th Division William Dean. Ninety percent of southern Korea had been liberated by mid-August and US and puppet forces<sup>7</sup> had withdrawn into a narrow 10,000 square kilometre strip east of the Naktong River. The US aggressors fought stubbornly with their backs to the sea while at the same time bringing up reinforcements through the port of Pusan as they made preparations for a counter-attack. The war had reached a stalemate.

The US imperialists' brazen armed aggression in Korea aroused feelings of righteous indignation among the people of the world, who stood up to express their opposition. As a friendly neighbour of the DPRK, China could not tolerate the US imperialists' armed aggression in Korea, the serious threat they posed to our security, nor their aggressive occupation of our sovereign territory in Taiwan. On 28 June, at the 8th session of the Central People's Government Committee, Chairman Mao Zedong issued a statement clarifying China's just position:

Each nation on Earth should manage its own affairs. Asian affairs should be handled by Asians, not by Americans. US aggression in Asia is certain to arouse widespread and resolute opposition among the peoples of Asia.

The Chinese people, he said, will 'not be seduced by imperialist riches, nor will they be scared by imperialist threats'. Chairman Mao called on 'the people of China and the peoples of the world to unite, to make ample preparations, and to defeat any US imperialist provocation'. On the same day, Premier and Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai announced on behalf of the Chinese government that,

Truman's statement of the 27th and the US Navy's actions amounts to armed aggression against Chinese sovereign territory and is a complete repudiation of the UN Charter ... With hearts as one, the entire Chinese people will fight to the very end to liberate Taiwan from the clutches of the US aggressors.

On 6 July, Zhou Enlai issued another statement from the Chinese government opposing the illegal 27 June resolution passed by the UN Security Council as a result of US manipulation. Zhou pointed out that the resolution was one which supported US armed aggression, which interfered in the internal affairs of Korea, and which destroyed world peace. It ran counter to an important principle of the UN Charter: the UN may not be given authority to interfere in the affairs any nation where those affairs are essentially within the internal jurisdiction of that nation. This was a gross violation of the UN Charter. He also pointed out that the resolution was passed without the presence of the PRC and Soviet Union as permanent Council members; it was therefore illegal and was resolutely opposed by the Chinese people.

At the same time, China was closely watching developments in the Korean war. After the US imperialists began their armed aggression, the CCP Central Committee and Chairman Mao conducted a far-sighted analysis of the fighting in Korea. They considered that the war was increasingly complex and had become a focal point for international struggle. At the very least it had become the focus of struggle within Asia. They assessed the situation as it might unfold in two scenarios. The first was a rapid resolution of the issue. That is, the Korean people might achieve a quick victory and drive the invading US forces into the sea. The second was a protracted war, in which the US would not admit defeat but would continue to reinforce Korea, possibly even mounting an amphibious landing in the north. The conflict would expand into a protracted war. When the KPA fought to the Pusan perimeter and the battle had become stalemated, the Party Central Committee noted clearly that there was an ever increasing likelihood that the war would become protracted and that the US imperialists would expand its scope. The Chinese people must prepare themselves. They also pointed out that we are not afraid of war. Our Party and our Army had twenty-three years' experience in armed struggle, while the US imperialists faced many difficulties. The US was riven by internal squabbles and even their allies did not speak as one. They also had insurmountable military weaknesses. And yet China had to defend against the irresponsible actions of the US imperialists; that is we had to be ready to fight World War III, to fight a protracted war, and to fight against nuclear weapons.

We don't want to fight you [US imperialists], but if you insist on a fight then you'll get one. You fight your war and we'll fight ours. You use your atomic weapons and we'll use hand grenades. We will find your weak spot. We will come after you, and in the end we will defeat you.<sup>8</sup>

In any event, to avoid being caught short it was necessary to make full preparations.

Consequently, as a precaution the Military Commission of the CCP Central Committee quickly adopted a series of contingency measures to protect the security of northeastern China and, if and when necessary, to provide aid to the Korean people in their war against aggression. Even as the American aggressors were retreating pell-mell, the Military Commission met on 7 and 10 July, at Mao's suggestion, to discuss the formation of a Northeast Frontier Defence Army and to issue the initial deployment orders. These meetings were chaired by Zhou Enlai, a Vice-Chairman of the Military Commission. On 13 July, the Military Commission formally issued a document entitled *Decisions on the Defence of the Northeast Frontier*. The Northeast Frontier Defence Army was formed by transferring the 38th, 39th, 40th and 42nd Corps from the 13th Army,<sup>9</sup> the 1st, 2nd and 8th Artillery Divisions, as well as an anti-aircraft regiment and an engineer regiment—a total of more than 255,000 men. By mid-August this force had assembled and begun training in areas such as Andong (now Dandong), Fengcheng, Ji'an, Tonghua, Liaoyang, Haicheng, Benxi, Tieling and Kaiyuan. (On 6 September, the Military Commission also ordered the 50th Corps to move from Hubei to join the Northeast Frontier Defence Army.) In late August, at the suggestion of the acting Chief of the General Staff, Nie Rongzhen, the Military Commission further decided to support the new force by transferring the 9th Army from the Shanghai region and the 19th Army in the northwest to areas near the railway lines at Jinpu and Longhai respectively. At the same time, the Military Commission decided to build up the special arms quickly, immediately forming four aviation regiments, three cavalry brigades, eighteen anti-aircraft regiments and organic artillery for ten corps. The Military Commission also drew up an air defence plan covering the large cities and industrial bases. Three aviation divisions, fifteen anti-aircraft regiments and a searchlight regiment were deployed around Shenyang, Anshan, Benxi, Beijing, Tianjin, Nanjing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Guangzhou etc, while some industrial facilities and strategic reserve materials were moved north—away from the southern parts of the northeast region.

At the same time, the Chinese government opened up a diplomatic war. On 20 August, Premier (and Foreign Minister) Zhou Enlai sent a telegram to the Security Council and the UN Secretary General supporting the Soviet proposal for peaceful mediation on the Korean problem and calling for the cessation of all military action in Korea and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the peninsula. In late August, invading US aircraft began constant violation of China's territorial airspace in the northeast, bombing and strafing cities and towns such as Andong and Ji'an. Zhou Enlai sent a series of telegrams to the Security Council and the UN Secretary General condemning the US for its crimes in occupying Taiwan and violating Chinese airspace near Korea. Zhou called on the Security Council to sanction the US government for the crime of armed violation of Chinese territory; to take immediate steps to cause the US government to withdraw its forces of armed aggression from Taiwan and other parts of China; to sanction the US for criminally violating Chinese sovereign airspace and for brutally killing and maiming the people of China. On 29 August, after strong demands from the Chinese government, the Security Council placed China's accusation onto its agenda, and invited representatives of the Chinese government to attend the meeting. This was a major victory in the diplomatic war.

The situation in Korea changed dramatically in mid-September. The US imperialists wanted to reverse their losing position. To its front, the US faced the KPA concentrated on the Naktong River while its rear was empty. On 15 September, after considerable preparation, the US seized this opportunity to land on the western coast at Inchon. The landing was carried out by over 70,000 troops of the 10th Corps' 1st Marine Division and 7th Infantry Division, as well as artillery, armour, and engineer units sailing in 260 naval vessels and supported by nearly 500 warplanes. After landing these forces advanced towards Seoul and Suwon. On 16 September, ten divisions of US and puppet forces on the Naktong River front launched a counterattack (that is, the US 1st Cavalry Division, 2nd, 24th, and 25th Infantry Divisions and the puppet forces' Capital, 1st, 3rd, 6th, 7th and 8th Divisions) under the command of the US 8th Army. Facing unfavourable situations on two fronts, the KPA shifted to a strategic retreat. The Inchon force took Seoul on 28 September, while units on the main front reached the 38th parallel on 29 September. At this point, the US imperialists resolved to launch an even greater military adventure—to cross the 38th parallel in an attempt to swallow up the whole of Korea rapidly and decisively.

On 30 September, Premier Zhou Enlai delivered a speech at the National Day session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee, sternly warning the US imperialists that,

The Chinese people love peace, but they never have and never will be afraid to fight against aggression. The Chinese people will not tolerate foreign aggression and will not stand by while imperialists carry out wanton acts of aggression against China's neighbours.

On 3 October, Premier Zhou, again through the Indian ambassador to Beijing, issued a further stern warning to the American imperialists. Outlining China's serious and principled stand, Zhou pointed out that,

US forces are attempting to cross the 38th parallel and expand the war. If this is indeed the case, we cannot stand idly by. We will intervene ... We propose that the Korean situation should be resolved peacefully, and hostilities in Korea must cease immediately. Invading forces must withdraw.

However, the American imperialists underestimated the resolve and might of the Chinese people. Believing that China's just and stern warning was an idle threat, the US imperialists refused to resolve the situation peacefully and continued their massive invasion northwards towards the 38th parallel in an attempt to occupy the entire peninsula by force of arms. On 1 October, in line with instructions approved by Truman concerning the conduct of military action north of the 38th parallel,<sup>10</sup> MacArthur ordered the puppet forces to lead the crossing of the 38th parallel. Later, on 7 October, US forces crossed the 38th parallel in a frenzied push towards the Sino-Korean border. They arrogantly issued their so-called 'ultimatum' demanding that the Korean people lay down their arms and cease hostilities. The arrogance of this was extraordinary.

On 15 October, Truman flew from Washington to the Pacific to meet MacArthur on Wake Island. There they discussed the 'final stage' of the war of aggression in Korea and whether China would enter the war. They underestimated the strength of the Chinese people and estimated the likelihood of China entering the war to be 'remote', and that, at any rate, it would not be a disaster. They firmly believed that all resistance in Korea would end before Thanksgiving,<sup>11</sup> and that the war in Korea was 'in the bag'.<sup>12</sup> After the Wake Island meeting, the enemy dramatically accelerated his aggressive military push toward the Sino-Korean border. At the same time, the US openly fanned the flames of war by stepping up its aerial bombardment of towns and villages in China's northeast. The war took a turn for the worse. The DPRK was in peril, and China's security was seriously threatened.

Under such straitened circumstances, the Korean Workers' Party and the DPRK government requested, on behalf of the Korean people, that China send troops to assist. Filled with indignation, the Chinese people repeatedly demanded to resist the US aggressors with the people of Korea. The peoples of the world universally expressed concern over the situation in Korea. At the time, China had won victory in the war of liberation only the year before and had still not recovered from casualties suffered during years of fighting. China was still in some financial difficulty. Prices were unstable and three to four million urban workers and intellectuals were unemployed, while flood and drought afflicted thirty or forty million peasants. At the same time, land reform was yet to be carried out in the newly liberated areas and small bands of armed KMT and other bandits needed to be wiped out. Although China had over five million brave, combat-hardened soldiers, its navy and air force were embryonic and the army's equipment was antiquated. Under such circumstances, whether to commit troops and whether to do battle with US imperialism was a weighty strategic choice, both politically and militarily.

In late October 1950, Chairman Mao presided over a series of Politburo meetings to analyse the overall situation. The Politburo carefully assessed the difficulties involved. Proceeding from the standpoint of saving Korea from peril, safeguarding China's security and defending world peace, the Politburo decided resolutely on a strategic policy of resisting America, aiding Korea and defending China. The Politburo resolved to overcome all difficulties to raise the Chinese People's Volunteers for battle in Korea. Fighting with the Korean people, the CPV would strike back at the US aggressors.

The Politburo pointed out that it was necessary to send forces under the name of Chinese People's Volunteers to Korea to fight against US and Syngman Rhee forces, because if the entire Korean peninsula were to be occupied by the US and if the Korean revolutionary movement were to fail, then the US aggressors would become more rampant than ever, and this would run counter to the interests of the entire Far East. China's decision to enter the war:

is in the interests of China, Korea, the Far East, and the world. Conversely, if we do not send troops, and allow the enemy to press on our Yalu River frontier, there will be more reactionary bluster domestically and internationally. This is in no-one's interest, and is especially not in the interest of China's north-east. The whole North-east Frontier Defence Army will be drawn in, and we will lose control of our electric power supply to the south ... In short, we think we should enter the war. We must enter the war. It is in our very great interest to enter the war. If we do not enter the war our losses will be enormous.<sup>13</sup>

After making its decision to enter the war, the Politburo considered the possible changes our entry would bring to the course of the war, and put forward two essential strategic preparatory considerations. It said that since we had decided to fight the Americans in Korea,

First, we must be able to solve the problem. That is, we must prepare to destroy or drive US and other nations' forces out of Korea. Second, since Chinese forces will be fighting US troops in Korea (even though our troops will be known as volunteer forces), we must be prepared for the US to declare war on us. We must be prepared that the US could, at the very least, use its air force to bomb a large number of Chinese cities and industrial bases and the US navy could shell China's coast ... Of these two issues, the most important is whether the Chinese army is capable of destroying US forces in Korea, thus effectively resolving the Korean situation. As long as Chinese troops can destroy US forces in Korea (mainly the US 8th Army, an experienced and effective combat unit) then although the second problem (of the US declaring war) would remain as a serious issue, circumstances would be more to the advantage of the revolutionary front and China.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, the Politburo estimated that heavy fighting with the US could force the US into negotiations.

For the initial commitment of troops, the Central Military Commission decided upon twelve divisions from four NFDA corps. Later, 24 divisions from seven armies would be transferred to become the second and third groups committed in stages. The CMC decided that Chinese forces would first 'establish a Korean base area in the mountains north of a line from Wonsan to Pyongyang'.<sup>15</sup> Two or three defensive lines would be constructed in the region north of this line and south of the Tokch'on-Yongwon road. The first step was to fight a defensive war destroying only small numbers of the enemy. If the enemy attacked, he would be destroyed piecemeal before our positions. Once we had completed our supply and training tasks and established overwhelming superiority in the air and on the ground, then we were to launch a counterattack coordinated with our Korean comrades to destroy the invading American forces. As well as this, further arrangements were made for the air defence of China: a National Air Defence Preparatory Committee was organised to accelerate territorial air defence work in case the US air force bombed our cities and industrial bases. Four corps were transferred to each of Fujian and Guangzhou Provinces to defend coastal regions against attack by the US Navy, or by Chiang Kai-Shek on Taiwan at the incitement of the US.

At the same time, the Central Committee issued guidance for all Party members and the entire Chinese people to understand the situation correctly and to be confident of victory: not only is it imperative to enter the war, we are definitely capable of winning against US imperialism, because the US is a paper tiger. Although the US is economically superior and is better equipped, its global aggression is opposed by the people of the entire world, and it is isolated. It has military weaknesses: its front is too long, its rear is too distant, its troop strength is inadequate and its morale is low. Its allies such as Britain and France are no

longer powerful while Japan and West Germany have not yet rearmed. The US is no longer the only nation with atomic weapons, and, in any event, these do not make the difference between victory and defeat. Final victory belongs to the Chinese and Korean people.<sup>16</sup>

These important Central Committee policies established a solid foundation for our army's victory in the Korean war.

On 8 October, the Chairman of the Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Commission, Mao Zedong, promulgated the following orders to form the Chinese People's Volunteers:

1. To assist the Korean people in their war of liberation and to resist attacks by the US imperialists and their running dogs, to protect the interests of the people of Korea, China and the whole Far East, the North-east Frontier Defence Army is to be renamed the Chinese People's Volunteers and dispatched immediately to Korea. The CPV is to coordinate with our Korean comrades to fight the aggressor and win a glorious victory.
2. The Chinese People's Volunteers comprises the 13th Army and its subordinate 38th, 39th, 40th and 42nd Corps, as well as the Frontier Artillery Headquarters and its subordinate 1st, 2nd and 8th Artillery Divisions. The above named units are to prepare for immediate deployment.
3. Comrade Peng Dehuai is appointed to command the Chinese People's Volunteers and to serve as that unit's Political Commissar.<sup>17</sup>
4. The Chinese People's Volunteers will have the North-Eastern Administrative Zone as its rear base. All rear area work, supply matters and matters pertaining to aid to our Korean comrades are to be managed by the Commander and Political Commissar of the North-East Military Region, who will also be held responsible for such matters.
5. As it enters Korea's borders, the Chinese People's Volunteers are to show friendship and respect towards the people of Korea, as well as the Korean People's Army, the Democratic Government of Korea, the Korean Workers Party (ie the communist party), other democratic parties, and the leader of the Korean people, Comrade Kim Il-song. The Chinese People's Volunteers are to preserve strict military and political discipline. This is an exceedingly important political foundation for ensuring that military aims are achieved.
6. It is essential that we assess seriously the complete range of difficulties we might possibly encounter, as well as those we are sure to encounter. In overcoming these difficulties, we should prepare to bring to bear a spirit of the utmost enthusiasm, courage, attention to detail, and painstaking hard work. The current international and domestic situation is favourable to us, but not to the aggressor. As long as all comrades are resolutely courageous, as long as we unite with the local people, and as long as we fight the enemy hard, then final victory will be ours.

After the formation of the CPV, a series of meetings was convened in Shenyang between 9-16 October for all corps level officers and above, as well as divisional level officers. At these conferences, in accordance with instructions from the Central Military Commission and Chairman Mao Zedong, Peng Dehuai explained the current situation in detail. He explained the necessity for China's entry into the war, and he outlined the CPV strategy. He told his officers that the CPV's mission was to offer active assistance to the Korean people in resisting the aggressor, to maintain a base for revolution, and to serve as a base for us to watch for any opportunity to destroy the enemy. Peng Dehuai also pointed out that the enemy had technically superior equipment and that the Korean peninsula was narrow. The sweeping manoeuvre warfare that China's troops had used in combat in their own country would not necessarily be appropriate on the Korean battlefield. We would need, Peng said, to use a combination of positional and manoeuvre warfare:

If the enemy attacks, we will pin him down and stop his advance. When we find his weak point, we will race into the attack. We will plunge into his rear and resolutely destroy him. Our mission is to defend territory, but it is even more important to destroy the enemy's effective strength.

We needed to be tactically flexible. Fixed positions did not need to be defended to the death, and the aim was not purely defensive. The ideal would be to destroy the enemy while still defending our positions.

In addition, Peng Dehuai confirmed that four corps would cross the Yalu simultaneously and assemble for deployment around Kanggye, Huich'on, Unsan, Tokch'on and Maengsan. After the conferences, all units of the Chinese People's Volunteers carried out intense preparations for combat based on the strategy and missions as briefed, and the troops took a mass pledge of loyalty for the coming battle. The vast majority of the officers were righteously indignant at the US imperialists' crimes of aggression, and with morale soaring they resolved that in the War to Resist America and Aid Korea they would uphold the spirit of revolutionary heroism, overcome all difficulties, be unafraid of sacrifice, fight courageously, unite with the people of Korea, defeat the US aggressors, and bring glory to the motherland.

On the 19th of October, just as the enemy was advancing through the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, the Chinese People's Volunteers, in accordance with Chairman Mao Zedong's instructions, began crossing the Yalu at Andong, Changdianhekou, and Ji'an and raced for the battlefields of Korea. The outstanding sons and daughters of China—the Chinese People's Volunteers—under the leadership of Peng Dehuai, and shouldering the glorious historical task given to them by the people of China, began their great war to resist America and assist Korea. Together with their brothers the Korean people, the Chinese People's Volunteers fought courageously and heroically for world peace on the extreme front line of defence against US imperialist aggression.

## Chapter Two

### ***Coordinating With the Korean People's Army in a Strategic Counter-Attack Restoring the Northern Part of the Peninsula to the Koreans***

***(The Manoeuvre Warfare Phase)*** .

#### **Part 1**

*An Early Victory—Driving the Enemy Back from the Yalu to South of the Ch'ongchon River (The First Campaign)*

*1. The US-led Aggressors Race Wildly Towards the Sino-Korean Border in an Attempt to Occupy the Entire Peninsula by Thanksgiving.*

Ignoring the Chinese government's repeated warnings, the US Imperialists aggressors continued to drive north along three axes after crossing the 38th parallel in early October. Their plan was that after occupying Pyongyang in the west and Wonsan in the east, they would first advance in the east and the west. After linking up, they planned to conduct a coordinated drive to the Sino-Korean border. To deceive world opinion and to guard against China entering the war, they announced that with the exception of South Korean troops, UN forces would advance no closer than forty miles from the border, the so-called 'MacArthur Line' serving as a buffer.

On October 10, two divisions of the puppet 1st Corps occupied Wonsan in the east, and then Hanghūm on the 17th. In the centre, three divisions of the puppet 2nd Corps occupied Yangdog and Songch'on on October 19, while three divisions of the US 1st Corps occupied Pyongyang in the west. On the 20th, the US 10th Corps' 1st Marine Division and 7th Infantry Division were transported from Inchon and Pusan by sea to waters near Wonsan, where they prepared for landing operations. With MacArthur controlling events from his temporary airborne command post, the US 187th Airborne Regiment dropped into Sukch'on and Sunch'on in an attempt to cut off KPA forces withdrawing north from Pyongyang. At the same time, the US Air Force infringed Chinese sovereign airspace on numerous occasions, bombing and strafing towns and villages in China's north-eastern frontier region.

At this time, the main strength of the KPA was still cut off in the southern part of Korea and was in the process of turning north towards the 38th parallel. To preserve its strength, reorganise and prepare a future counterattack, the Korean Worker's Party and government conducted a strategic withdrawal of party and government organs in the direction of Siniuju and Kanggye and moved the temporary capital to Kanggye. In this situation, the enemy became even more swollen with arrogance. He underestimated the strength of the Korean and Chinese peoples, believing that the fall of Pyongyang 'signified the complete collapse of North Korea',<sup>18</sup> and that almost all organised resistance from the KPA had ceased forever. The enemy believed that China, born as a nation just one year earlier, was weak both nationally and militarily, and that it would not dare to commit troops to Korea. In any event, the enemy believed the ideal moment for China to send troops had passed. MacArthur arrogantly proclaimed that the war would be over before Thanksgiving (23 November). Changing his plans for a coordinated advance in the east and west and for the establishment of a buffer zone, MacArthur ordered his units in the east and west to drive as quickly as possible for the Sino-Korean border, to seize key features along the border, to block the retreat of KPA forces, and to prevent intervention by Chinese forces. He would then occupy everything, destroy the KPA, and extinguish the Korean People's government to achieve his aim of occupying all of Korea and expanding his aggression towards China.

At this point, the aggressor forces numbered 420,000. They had 1,100 aircraft and 300 naval vessels of various types. The ground forces comprised fifteen divisions in five corps, plus two brigades, for a total of 230,000 troops. Of these, there were six US divisions in three corps. Each division of around 12,000 men was equipped with 154 tanks and 352 artillery pieces

from 57mm to 155mm. South Korean forces comprised 90,000 men in two corps of nine divisions, each division equipped with 219 artillery pieces of various calibres. A further 12,000 troops came from Britain, Turkey, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines etc. To achieve his strategic aims, the enemy left some of his forces in his own rear to deal with the KPA as it retreated to the north and to deal with guerrilla units. He concentrated ten divisions, one brigade and an airborne regiment (a total of over 130,000 men) and, adopting blitzkrieg tactics, raced in a frenzy towards the Chinese border in the east and in the west, with his main strength in the west.

In the west, this was the six divisions, one brigade and one airborne regiment of the US 1st Corps and the puppet 2nd Corps, both led by the commander of the US 8th Army Lieutenant General Walton Walker. The US 24th Division, the British 27th Brigade, and the puppet 1st Division under the US 1st Corps advanced from the area around Pyongyang and Sariwon along the Jingyi railway line (running from Seoul to Siniuju) towards Siniuju, Sakchu, Changsong, and Pyoktong. The 6th, 7th and 8th Divisions of the puppet 2nd Corps advanced from the area around Songch'on, POYI,<sup>19</sup> and Yangdog in the direction of Ch'osan and Kanggye. The US 1st Corps' 1st Cavalry Division and the 187th Airborne Regiment were located near Pyongyang and Sukch'on as the 8th Army reserve.

In the east, the US 10th Corps commander Major General Edward Almond had a total of four divisions from 10th Corps and the puppet 1st Corps. The US 1st Marine Division and the 7th Division, after landing at Wonsan planned to advance on Changjin, Kanggye and Hyesan. The Capital and the 3rd Divisions of the puppet 1st Corps advanced along the coastal railway line towards the Tumen River border.

At this time, the enemy was swollen with arrogance, believing he had entered a militarily empty space. Completely lacking in scruples, he raced toward the Chinese border in columns of divisional, and even regimental and battalion strength. As the enemy rushed forward in disunity, he placed puppet army units in the vanguard with the US and British forces following behind. With motorised infantry in the lead, the enemy pressed on, ignoring the eighty kilometre gap opening up between his eastern and western fronts. This reckless approach weakened his military position. The Korean war had become extraordinarily tense.

*1. The Chinese People's Volunteers moves into its assigned positions—a timely decision to destroy the enemy in manoeuvre warfare.*

On the evening of 19 October, as the enemy was driving north from Pyongyang, four corps of the Chinese People's Volunteers, plus three artillery divisions and one anti-aircraft regiment began secretly crossing the Yalu on three axes and headed for their assigned positions: the 40th Corps crossed from Andong, making for Kujang, Tokch'on and Yongwon. The 39th Corps also crossed from Andong and Changdianhekou. One element headed towards P'ihyon and NANSHIDONG<sup>20</sup> to take up defensive positions while the main force advanced towards Kusong and Taech'on. The 42nd Corps crossed the river from Ji'an and advanced towards Sach'ang-ni and Oro. The 38th Corps followed the 42nd Corps crossing the Yalu and headed for Kanggye. To ensure the army's continued progress, the 4th and 6th Engineer Regiments (later renamed the 14th and the 16th) carried out bridge-building and road construction tasks from Ji'an, Linjiang and Sakchu to Changsong.

Before the CPV entered Korea, we assessed that the enemy would continue to push north after occupying the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, but we needed more time. Therefore, in keeping with the Central Military Commission's strategic objectives, the CPV commander decided that the CPV would adopt a strategy of 'active defence, manoeuvre and positional warfare in combination, and the use of counterattack, surprise attack, and ambush to destroy enemy forces and wear down his main strength'.<sup>21</sup> The first task was to organise defences in good defensive terrain along the line from Kusong, Taech'on, Kujang, Tokch'on, and Yongwon to Oro. This was to prevent the enemy's advance, stabilise the situation, gain us time, cover the KPA's northerly retreat and reorganisation, and create the conditions for subsequent operations.

Based on the enemy's movements at the time, we assessed that before he discovered we had entered the war, he would probably continue his advance and we would face one of three possibilities: first, the enemy would reach our assigned positions before we did; second, the enemy would arrive just after we ourselves had reached our positions, but before we had managed to secure a foothold; or, third, we would contact the enemy while we were still advancing. Consequently, it was necessary to advance in battle order and be prepared to destroy the enemy in manoeuvre warfare at any moment. At the same time, it was imperative that our forces take a series of measures to achieve strategic and operational surprise: we moved at night and laid up during the day, and we maintained strict cover and concealment, operational security, and communications security to conceal our forces' movements and objectives.

After our troops crossed the Yalu, the enemy continued to split his forces and drive rapidly north. On October 20, the puppet 2nd Corps' 6th, 7th and 8th Divisions in the west had reached a line going through Sunch'on, Sinch'ang-ni, Songch'on and POYI, only 90-130 kilometres from our assigned defensive positions at Kujang, Tokch'on, and Yongwon. In the east the puppet Capital Division had taken Oro, Hongwon and other objectives in our assigned positions. At this point, the five CPV divisions which had crossed into Korea had only advanced to locations on the southern bank of the Yalu east of Uiju and south of Sakchu and Manp'o—still 120-270 kilometres short of our assigned positions, and it was highly unlikely that we would beat the enemy to those locations. But the enemy had still not discovered that we had entered Korea. He had split his forces with units and was advancing boldly along several routes. Moreover, the three puppet divisions in the centre were exposed, with an eighty kilometre gap opening up between enemy units on the eastern and western fronts. The situation was ripe for us to exploit the enemy's flawed strategic judgement and his uncoordinated disposition of forces by launching a surprise attack through manoeuvre. This was an excellent opportunity to destroy the enemy in bite-sized pieces. Chairman Mao Zedong sized up the situation and made an immediate decision. On 21 October, he sent a telegram ordering the CPV to drop its earlier plan in favour of a manoeuvre war to annihilate the enemy. The telegram said,

It is now a question of seizing an opportunity. It is a question of completing our theatre deployments within days so that we can engage the enemy a few days after that. We will not make our defensive deployments first and then see about attacking later.

As for the deployments to be made, he pointed out that if our first battle was not against the puppet Capital Division and 3rd Divisions in the east, but rather if we blocked the enemy with a division of the CPV 42nd Corps in Changjin while the main strength of the 42nd Corps was deployed to the south of Maengsan (that is, in the path of the puppet 6th Division) to cut the Wonsan-Pyongyang railway link and apply pressure to the enemy at Wonsan and Pyongyang by preventing him from reinforcing to the north, then we would be able to concentrate the main strength of three corps to destroy the puppet 6th, 7th and 8th Divisions one by one. We also needed to ensure that we controlled key points at MIAOXIANGSHAN<sup>22</sup> and at Sobaeksan to separate the enemy in the east and west. At the same time, Mao specifically pointed out that this was an ideal opportunity to destroy three divisions of the puppet army, to win our first battle in Korea, and to begin to turn the war around.

In accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, the CPV commander lost no time in changing the deployment orders. At 2100 hrs on the 21st, he decided to concentrate three corps in the west to annihilate the puppet 6th, 7th and 8th Divisions. One division of the CPV 42nd Corps and the 45th Regiment of the 8th Artillery Division were to take up defensive positions around Changjin to block the puppet Capital and 3rd Divisions. The main strength of the 42nd Corps was to control the area around Sobaeksan, assess the situation, and extend towards a position south of Maengsan. The 40th Corps was to advance to Tokch'on and Yongwon, while the 38th would move into the area around Huich'on. The 39th Corps was to advance on Kusong and Taech'on, assess the situation and destroy any enemy located there. The CPV commander also recommended to the Central Military Commission that a further corps be dispatched to the area around Andong to plug the gap between Siniuju and Chongju

which would be created by the 39th Corps' advance, to prevent the enemy attempting an amphibious landing behind our flank, and to protect our transport lines. The Central Military Commission concurred, ordering the 66th Corps, which at that time was carrying out production work, into the CPV order of battle. The 66th Corps was to be trucked on the 23rd from Tianjin to Andong, where one of its divisions would defend our communication line from Siniuju to Chongju. The 66th's main strength would serve as the CPV reserve.

To carry out CPV logistic work, the North-Eastern Military District Logistics Department organised forward logistics posts to direct the work of three logistics units, three transport regiments (with around 700 vehicles), medical facilities for 45,000 personnel, and 30,000 coolies. At the same time, it was decided to establish soldier stations along three routes. The first ran from Changdianhekou, XINCANG, to Pukchin; this route was the responsibility of the 3rd Logistics Unit. The second line from Ji'an and Pyorha-dong to WUPINGLI was the responsibility of the 1st Logistics Unit. The 2nd Logistics Unit was responsible for the line from Linjiang to ZHOUBO and Changjin. Materiel and supplies ran along three lines between the front and the homeland, with distribution at each echelon. Each supply chain stored one resupply of ammunition and one month's supply of food.

To ensure a good showing in our first battle in Korea, CPV political organs issued a political mobilisation instruction on the 22nd of October, calling on all commanders and soldiers to develop a courageous and resolute combat spirit, to ensure that we were victorious in our first battle, to change the course of the war, and to bring glory to the motherland.

On 22 October, we learned that the puppet 6th Division, then located between Sunch'on and Sinch'ang-ni had received orders to advance towards Siniuju. The puppet 8th Division, which was between Kangdong and Songch'on was to make for Manp'o, while the 7th Division near Songch'on and Sunch'on was to rest and reorganise. We assessed that within a few days the puppet 6th Division would move through Sinanju to Pakch'on and the area to its west, while the 8th Division would advance to the north of Yonghyon-ni. Mao Zedong sent a cable to all CPV units at 0700 hours on the 22nd, saying that to destroy these two puppet divisions it was imperative that our routes of advance avoid the area from Chongju, Pakch'on and Yonghyon-ni and the area twenty kilometres to the north. Otherwise, the enemy might discover our presence too early and either halt his advance or withdraw. Mao pointed out that the best approach to this battle would be to envelop and destroy the enemy around Chongju, Pakch'on and Yonghyon-ni and the area to the north.

Accordingly, the CPV commander decided as follows: the main strength of the 39th Corps would advance secretly to Kusong and northwest of Taech'on, where it would wait to seize and destroy the puppet 6th Division. The 40th Corps would move secretly to the WENJING and Unsan area, where it would wait to destroy the 8th Division. The 38th Corps was to move quickly on Huich'on and coordinate in combat with the 39th and 40th Corps. The 42nd Corps was to detach a division to control Sobaeksan, while its main strength was to move rapidly on to Changjin and JIUJINLI to prevent the eastern enemy from advancing to the north.

However, the enemy was advancing very quickly indeed. By the 22nd, the puppet 6th Division had already reached Kaech'on and Yongbyon, and the 1st Division advancing north from Pyongyang had arrived at Yonghyon-ni. We were still quite a distance from our positions. To lure the enemy deeper and to give us the advantage in attacking, Mao sent a cable on the 23rd, instructing the CPV commander to issue orders to cede to the enemy all territory to the south of a line through Huich'on, WENJING and Kusong, and to avoid premature contact with the enemy. He also pointed out that the enemy was driving hard, and that to seize the opportunity it was imperative to decide upon a theatre level plan quickly.

On 24 October, the puppet 6th Division in the west occupied Huich'on, and its main strength advanced toward WENJING, Hoemuk-tong and Ch'osan, while the 8th Division moved into an area east of Yongwon and Tokch'on, and continued to drive on Huich'on and Kanggye. The 1st Division and a regiment of the 7th Division was moving towards Yongbyon and Yongsan-tong. The 7th Division was still located between Kangdong and Sunch'on. The British 27th Brigade and the US 24th Division had crossed the Ch'ongch'on River from Sinanju, and were

moving to Chongju and Taech'on respectively. Chairman Mao Zedong ordered the CPV commander to first destroy the puppet 1st, 6th and 8th Divisions before attacking US and British units. He also said we should lure the enemy deep into the mountains before surrounding and destroying him.

At this time, our forces were advancing quite slowly because we were moving at night. The terrain was mountainous and with only a few narrow paths available, our columns often found themselves bunched up. By dawn on the 25th, most of our vanguard units were still 20-50 kilometres from their objectives, although two forward divisions of the 40th Corps had reached locations east of Pukchin (the 118th Division) and north of Unsan (the 120th Division). The 117th Division in the vanguard of the 39th Corps had advanced on Taech'on, and the forward division of the 38th Corps (the 113rd Division) was at Ch'onch'on. The 124th Division leading the 42nd Corps was north of GUTULI [transliteration of a Korean placename south of the Changjin Reservoir and northwest of Sinhung - trans]. The 125th Division had advanced to a position west of Sobaeksan and north of ROUYUAN.

Noting these developments and Mao Zedong's instructions, the CPV commander decided that the 40th Corps and the 42nd Regiment of the 8th Artillery Division would assemble to the north of WENJING and east of Pukchin. There they would await an opportunity to destroy the puppet 6th Division located northwest of WENJING. In the 39th Corps, the 1st Division's 26th Regiment and one battalion from the 25th Regiment, together with the 2nd Artillery Division's 29th Regiment and 1st Anti-Aircraft Regiment, would assemble immediately in an area northwest of Unsan. There they were to prepare to destroy the puppet 1st Division near Unsan as it moved to reinforce the 6th Division when that unit was surrounded by the 40th Corps. The 38th Corps, reinforced by the 125th Division from the 42nd Corps and the 46th Regiment from the 8th Artillery Division, would immediately assemble near Myongmum-dong and CANGDONG north of Huich'on. The main strength of the 42nd Corps and the 8th Artillery Division (less its 46th Regiment) would still position itself south of Changjin at Kot'osu and Pujon Nyong. This would block the enemy's drive north, maintain the wedge between his eastern and western forces, and secure our western flank. The commander also ordered the 66th Corps to cross the Yalu from Andong and advance towards Ch'olsan in preparation for blocking actions against the British 27th Brigade.

As our forces moved forward, Chairman Mao Zedong pointed out in a cable to CPV commander Peng Dehuai that, from a military perspective, the following points would be decisive in the conduct of the war: The first was whether the theatre deployments currently underway would allow us to use surprise to exploit the enemy's complete ignorance, and destroy two, three or even four of his divisions. If we prove victorious in the coming battle, and the enemy redeploys, then based on current military strengths, he will lose the initiative. If we are beaten, the enemy will have the advantage. The second decisive factor was the capacity of the enemy's airpower to inflict casualties on our personnel and hinder our movements, to what extent we are able to move and fight at night, and whether we are able to engage in combat favourable to us even under the threat of frequent enemy air attacks. The third was whether the US would reinforce its units in Korea (such as with five to ten divisions), or whether we are able, by manoeuvre warfare or attacks on isolated strongholds, to destroy a few US divisions and a few puppet ones before the US reinforces. Accordingly, the cable instructed the CPV to strive for complete victory in the war, to maintain a vigorous spirit even in the face of enemy bombing and harassment from the air, and to annihilate several enemy formations before he could bring in reinforcement from the US or elsewhere, so that his reinforcements would not make up for his losses. In summary, 'We should base ourselves on a solid and reliable foundation, and seek victory wherever it is achievable'. These instructions from Chairman Mao provided the CPV with exceptionally important strategic and theatre-level guidance, which was to prove enormously significant in achieving victory in this campaign and in later battles.

*2. Advancing, we make contact with the advancing enemy—and destroy the bulk of the puppet 6th Division.*

On October 25, the enemy continued to advance in the west in divisional and regimental strength to a line joining Pakch'on, Yongsan-tong, Unsan, WENJING, Hoemuk-tong and Huich'on, pressing near our 40th Corps positions. The enemy vanguard, the 7th Regiment of the puppet 6th Division, had already driven past our flank and reached the area near Kuch'ang-tong south of Ch'osan on the Yalu River. At dawn that day, our 118th Division, which had arrived at a position to the east of Pukchin, received orders to prepare for early contact. The 118th occupied the high ground to the north of the road between Pukchin and WENJING, and prepared to ambush following units of the puppet 6th Division. The 120th Division north of Unsan was ordered to assign a regiment (the 360th) to take up positions northeast of Unsan near Kangdong, CHAOYANGDONG and YUNUFENG to block any northward advance from Unsan by the puppet 1st Division. At about 0700 hours, the vanguard of the puppet 1st Division, with tanks in the lead, was driving north along the road from Unsan to WENJING when they ran into a heavy frontal attack by our 360th Regiment. At 1000 hours, the vanguard unit of the 6th Division's 2nd Regiment, the 3rd Battalion, and an artillery unit were riding north from WENJING to Pukchin. As they travelled between FENGXIADONG and Yansudong, our 118th Division's 354th and 353rd Regiments attacked the enemy. Employing the tactic of 'blocking the head, cutting off the tail and hacking the body', CPV troops attacked suddenly and ferociously, destroying the enemy in detail. That night, the 118th and 120th Divisions followed up their victory by attacking the enemy at WENJING, taking that objective by the following dawn.

Thus the curtain unfolded on the War to Resist America and Aid Korea. This day, October the 25th, 1950, became the Chinese People's Volunteers' Korean War commemorative day.

*[Remainder of Chapter 1, Part 1 up to 6. Conclusion, yet to be translated.]*

*6. Conclusion*

a. In this campaign, our forces had been thrown hurriedly into battle at an extremely grave juncture of the Korean War. Under the correct leadership and command of the Central Military Commission, Chairman Mao Zedong and CPV commander Peng Dehuai, and with an unequalled spirit of courage and tenacity, we achieved initial victory during 13 days and nights of hard combat. We destroyed over 15,000 enemy, and drove the frenzied aggressor back from the Yalu all the way south of the Ch'ongchon. We put paid to his plan to occupy the entire peninsula by 'Thanksgiving' and achieved an initial stabilisation of the situation. We won time for the Korean People's Army to reorganise, we secured a foothold for our own forces, and we gained initial experience in fighting US and puppet forces. This lifted our confidence of victory and set the scene for later operations. However, we paid a price: we took over 10,000 casualties. The friendly/enemy casualty ratio was 0.62:1.

b. The main command lesson we took from this campaign was that it is necessary to closely monitor developments and make timely adjustments to battle plans based on the changing combat situation. It is necessary to propose new plans and, any time the situation allows, to seize the opportunity to shift from the passive to the initiative. Before we arrived in Korea we had no experience of combat outside China and we were not familiar with the situation in Korea, its people or the terrain. Our equipment was antiquated. Moreover, we judged that the enemy would need time to drive north after seizing the Pyongyang- Wonsan line. For all these reasons we decided that our initial posture would be defensive. We would destroy only small groups of the enemy to check his advance, stabilise the situation and gain time for us to mount a counterattack. Once we entered Korea we discovered that the enemy was advancing rapidly, and it was already impossible for us to beat the enemy to our designated positions and prepare our defences. But the enemy was still unaware that we had entered the war and he continued to rush north, splitting his forces and advancing rashly. The situation was ripe for us to use our campaign-level surprise to destroy the enemy piecemeal on the move. Proceeding from this reality, the Central Military Commission and Chairman Mao Zedong amended the original plan. They decided to commit a portion of our forces to block the enemy in the east while concentrating our own main strength in the west. Luring the enemy in deep, he would be destroyed unit by unit on the move. It was decided to fight puppet forces before tackling US and British troops. Operating under this guidance, our army seized combat opportunities by repeatedly redeploying, even while on the march, in response to changes in the enemy's advance. At the same time, we ordered the 66th and 50th Corps into Korea as a

timely addition to our follow-on troop strength. Once the battle was joined, and noting that the enemy was advancing in divisional and regimental strength, we adopted the flexible tactic of annihilating isolated enemy units while gradually expanding our combat successes. When the fighting began this gave us an advantage as well as the campaign initiative. It also created the conditions for us to destroy enemy forces in a piecemeal fashion. Noting that after the enemy had withdrawn to the southern banks of the Ch'ongchon River and blocked our advance, the CPV commander noted that further opportunities to destroy the enemy had been lost. Additionally, our supplies of food and ammunition were exhausted and if we pressed on in the attack we would place ourselves at a disadvantage. A further consideration was that our full strength had not yet been revealed and the enemy had not been dealt a heavy blow. It was quite possible that he would launch another offensive. To preserve our strength for later battle, the CPV commander decided to halt our advance and end the campaign. Experience proved that this strategic guidance was correct. Not only did this assure our victory, it created conditions even more conducive to victory in the subsequent campaign. It also gave us significant experience in how to seize combat opportunities and in 'fighting prudently in the early battles'.

c. This campaign proved that night fighting, close combat, flanking at campaign level and cutting off the enemy's withdrawal route were all effective means of fighting to our strengths and the enemy's weakness and defeating a well-equipped foe. The strength of the US forces was their technologically modern equipment, their strong firepower, rapid mobility and air superiority. Their weaknesses were, first, their attacking spirit was poor, they relied heavily on their air force, artillery and armour, they were scared of night fighting at close quarters and they were scared of being cut off and surrounded. Second, since they were highly mechanised, with heavy equipment and logistic needs, they were greatly reliant on roads and resupply. They were, as a result, particularly sensitive about their flanks and were frightened of being cut off by our forces. In this campaign, we brought our own strong points fully into play, with the widespread use of night fighting and close quarters combat. This not only reduced our casualties from enemy air and artillery, but it added to the shock effect of our campaign fighting. At the same time, we used the correct tactics against the enemy's weaknesses by penetrating, dividing, flanking and surrounding enemy formations. This proved successful. When our 38th Corps performed a flanking manoeuvre towards Won-ni, the enemy faltered along their entire front, and beat a hasty retreat south of the Ch'ongchon River. The facts showed that if our forces carried out bold flanking movements to seal off the enemy's rear, then it was easy to create chaos in the enemy's disposition of forces—a condition conducive to destroying the enemy.

d. Although we achieved a great victory in this campaign, we were unable to destroy more enemy forces. Apart from the spectacular disparity in the quality of equipment, which created many combat difficulties for us and limited our ability to move quickly and at will in response to changes in the combat situation, the objective reasons we could not destroy more enemy include pressures of time, incomplete preparation (in particular, the 66th Corps had been dispersed and were performing production duties when they were thrown immediately into battle), unfamiliarity with the terrain and road system, language barriers, mountains and dense vegetation. Once the enemy had collapsed, he would flee into the hills and forests, thus escaping annihilation. From a subjective viewpoint, this was our first combat with the US, and some of our commanders overestimated US forces. They did not thrust boldly with their main strength into the enemy's rear flanks to cut off his withdrawal route. Some commanders missed opportunities because they deployed their forces as if to attack an enemy in fixed defensive positions, rather than a dispersed enemy rushing forward. From a campaign manoeuvre perspective, if our flanking units had, at the appropriated time, seized and held Yonghyon-ni and Sinanju, thus severing the enemy's withdrawal route; or if, from a deployment perspective, we had not deployed the 66th Corps northwest of Kusong but rather at Taegwan-tong, thus allowing the US 24th Division to come further forward more boldly, then that division's withdrawal and consolidation might have been slower than it was; or, had the 66th Corps been deployed within our front northeast of Kusong, it would have been in a better position to interdict the fleeing enemy. In all these ways, our victory might have been somewhat larger.

*[End of Chapter 2, Part 1. Remainder of book yet to be translated.]*

## Endnotes

1. Shen Zonghong and Meng Zhaohui, eds, *The History of the Chinese People's Volunteers in the War to Resist America and Aid Korea (Zhongguo Renmin Zhiyuanjun Kangmei Yuanchao Zhanshi)* (Beijing: The People's Liberation Army Academy of Military Science Historical Research Section: Military Science Press, 1989, neibu [internal] edn).
2. Not only did geographical factors see the US escape the ravages of the Second World War, it reaped US\$107.7 billion in profits from arms sales. In the five years after the Second World war, the US obtained a further US\$200 billion in profits from capital exports, dumping of surplus equipment, and by seizing other nations' resources. By 1950, US GNP comprised two-thirds of the entire capitalist world's GNP.
3. A speech made by Syngman Rhee on 31 October 1949 on board the US cruiser *USS Shangri-la*.
4. From 27 June, over 10 combatants of the US 7th Fleet occupied the Taiwanese ports of Keeloo and Kaohsiung, and conducted 'surveillance patrols' and combat exercises in the Taiwan Strait. On 4 August, aircraft of the US 13th Air Force occupied the Taipei air base. At the same time, HQ US Far East Forces established a command organisation known as the 'Taiwan Investigation Team' to unify command of naval and air forces carrying out aggression against Taiwan.
5. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the US supported the Chiang Kai-Shek clique to usurp China's seat at the UN and in the Security Council, thus leaving the People's Republic without a seat. In opposition to the perverse acts of the US and in support of the PRC's resumption of its rightful seat at the UN and in the Security Council, the Soviet Union had refused to participate in Security Council deliberations since January 1950, and so it too was absent. The USSR did not resume its attendance at the Security Council until August.
6. Korean Institute of Science Research Office: *History of the Korean People's Just War to Liberate the Motherland* (Korea Foreign Literature Press, 1961) 54.
7. During the war, we called the South Korean forces 'Syngman Rhee's forces', or 'Li's puppet forces', or simply the 'puppet forces'. To be consistent with cited publications, the term 'puppet forces' is used throughout this book.
8. Mao Zedong, Speech to the 9th Session of the Central People's Government Committee, 5 September 1950.
9. The Chinese 'jun' (STC: 6511) has been translated as 'corps' throughout. 'Bingtuan' (0365 0957) has been translated as 'Army'. While other translations are possible, these terms give a realistic indication of the unit's size and position in the CPV command structure. The CPV formation above divisional level was the 'jun' (corps), usually comprising three divisions. Similarly, the 13th 'Bingtuan' (13th Army) comprised several subordinate 'jun' (corps)—trans.
10. *Truman's Memoirs*, Chinese edition, vol 2 (Beijing: Life, Study & New Learning Publications, 1974), 430.
11. A US festival. Its origins go back to the days of the British colony at Plymouth, in northern America. After reaping a bountiful harvest, the denizens of Plymouth held a celebration to 'thank God'. This later evolved into a national festival, held on the fourth Thursday of November. In 1950, Thanksgiving Day was on 23 November.
12. *Trumans Memoirs*, 435-37.
13. Mao Zedong, *Military Writings* (internal edition) (Beijing: Soldiers' Press, 1981), 347.
14. *Ibid*, 345-46.
15. *Ibid*, 347.
16. *A Central Committee Directive on Current Events Propaganda*, 26 October 1950.
17. On 25 October 1950, the Central Military Commission further decided that the command elements of the 13th Army would be reorganised too as part of the CPV command structure, and appointed Deng Hua as a CPV deputy commander and deputy political commissar. Hong Xuezhì and Han Xianchu were appointed as CPV deputy commanders, and Jie Fang became Chief of Staff. 'Heads of the Political Department, the Logistics Departments and other elements [of the CPV] will remain unchanged'. (NB: The reorganised 13th Army's command echelon was, in effect, merged with Peng Dehuai's headquarters.)
18. *MacArthur's Memoirs* (Chinese edition, Shanghai Translation Press, 1984), 267.
19. Transliteration of a placename. Throughout the translation, capitalised placenames denote Chinese Pinyin romanisation of unlocated Korean population centres or geographical features—trans.
20. Transliteration of a Korean placename near Yomju—trans.
21. A telegram sent at 1200 hrs on 19 October 1950 from Deng Hua, Kong Xuezhì and Jie Fang to all commanders and copied to CPV commander Peng Dehuai.
22. Shown on PLA maps as a spot height on an east-west mountain range ten miles south of Huich'on—trans.