Establishing a Lodgment during Large Scale Combat Operations: A Case Study on the Korean War

A Monograph

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Abstract

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The Eighth US Army served as the land component headquarters for the US military during the Korean War. Conducting a combination of training and occupation duties in Japan at the outbreak of hostilities, the Eighth US Army needed to secure a lodgment on the Korean Peninsula to build and sustain the necessary combat power to repel the North Korean invasion of South Korea. Using the Korean War as a case study, the research focuses on how the Eighth US Army gained and maintained a lodgment on the Korean Peninsula following the phases of joint forcible entry. It focuses on the impact of decisions leading up to the Korean War through October 1950 when the US military transitioned to a general offensive. Eighth US Army established a lodgment on the Korean Peninsula because of the way they arranged operations with the other services to amplify strengths and shield weaknesses. Planners need to understand the capabilities of each service and how to arrange operations across various domains to create opportunities.

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Acronyms

FEAF	Far East Air Force
FEC	Far East Command
FM	Field Manual
JP	Joint Publication
NavFE	Far East Navy
NKPA	North Korean People's Army
ROK	Republic of Korea
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Introduction

> As a global power with global interests, the United States must maintain the credible capability to project military force into any region of the world in support of those interests. This includes the ability to project force both into the global commons to ensure their use and into foreign territory as required.
>
> –Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC), 17 January 2012

The US Army remains an expeditionary force utilized by policymakers. Future conflicts will continue to require the United States to project forces into a contested environment. Once in that environment, land forces like the US Army need to secure a lodgment to build up the forces required to execute offensive operations. Force projection limitations stem from physical distances, capabilities, and anti-access & area denial. These limitations make it likely that the forces placed initially on the ground in an immature theater will begin by conducting defensive operations and face an enemy with overmatch in capabilities. The Joint Staff, under the direction of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has published the *Joint Concept for Entry Operations* and *Joint Publication (JP) 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry* to establish in general terms a vision of how the joint force will enter into foreign territories and conduct operations to achieve its' objectives.

The Korean War is an example of how US policymakers' used the US Army in conjunction with the joint force to enter the Korean Peninsula and re-establish the territorial sovereignty of South Korea. The US Far East Command (FEC) leveraged the various services in the Korean War. The Eighth US Army, located in Japan during the outbreak of hostilities on 25 June 1950, became the Army's senior headquarters in Korea responsible for conducting ground operations and requiring the Eighth US Army to deploy its under-manned and ill-equipped subordinate units to the Korean Peninsula while mobilizing additional forces from the continental United States as reinforcements. Eighth US Army's theater-level defense around the Pusan lodgment presents historical insights that allow one to understand what aspects contributed to

success in this challenging and complex environment.

Most research on the Korean War focuses on ground operations. However, to understand how the Eighth US Army was able to conduct ground operations successfully it is essential to understand how it arranged operations with US services. There is a lack of research on how the US FEC arranged operations across the joint force and with its principal ally, the Republic of Korea, to enable the transition to offensive operations and this requires additional research to analyze and synthesize.

The purpose of this study is to examine the arrangement of ground operations with joint, multinational, and strategic operations to successfully create a lodgment in a contested theater that enables the transition to offensive operations. The initial period of the Korean War serves as the vehicle to look at operational design to understand how the multinational and joint nature of large-scale combat operations in a contested environment influences ground operations. By examining past actions and how commanders and staffs understood the operational environment, the historical case study will provide context to the current US military doctrinal concept of operational design and its influences on the performance of operational art. Insights into how the US Eighth Army was or was not able to arrange operations provides insights for contemporary planners that are attempting to arrange operations during initial phases of operations. The Korean War case study provides applicable challenges with joint and multinational operations associated with projecting an expeditionary force.

The research question of this study is "How did the United States' Eighth Army stabilize the Pusan lodgment from 25 June 1950 to September 1950 to enable the transition to offensive operations?" While the Eighth US Army conducted land component operations, it did so within a larger joint and multinational force with strategic influences on the force. Ground operations formed the preponderance of operations. However, air and naval operations directly influenced the timing and tempo of land operations. The initial force during the Korean War came from

elements of the Japan occupation force. Thus the 24th Infantry Division (ID) provided the initial element that formed Task Force Smith. Before Task Force Smith began operations and additional forces arrived on the Korean Peninsula, it required at least local air and naval superiority. The Air Force and Navy created the conditions for the Army to conduct operations. Therefore, the Eighth US Army's ability to arrange land component operations with joint force operations allowed them to stabilize the lodgment and transition to offensive operations.

The scope of this study is the examination of the Korean War through the amphibious landing at Inchon which marks the US military's transition to offensive operations. The phases of joint forcible entry provide a tool for examining the first months of the Korean War. The phase examination includes how the Eighth US Army arranged operations with strategic actions by policymakers and the joint force. It does not attempt to provide an exhaustive historical account of operations during this period. Numerous countries contributed to the Korean War and helped shaped the outcome, but the focus of this study will be on the participants that provided the bulk of the personnel and equipment. Nor is the study about placing blame on particular services or actors in the Korean War. Rather, it emphasizes the arrangement of operations among policymakers, various services, and operations internal to the Eighth US Army.

Before the landing at Inchon, the foundation for the conduct of military operations on the Korean Peninsula occurred around Pusan. Operation Chromite, the amphibious assault at Inchon is often considered as the beginning of the Korean War. While the seizure of Inchon disrupted North Korean military operations, it provided an additional dilemma for North Korea and provided the Eighth US Army the opportunity to seize the initiative. The United States required a lodgment from which to conduct operations and without securing and sequentially maintaining the Pusan lodgment, the US military lacked staying power. Challenges in the operational

environment require the US Army to take a multi-domain approach.[1] In doing so, the initial force must establish "the conditions for friendly forces to transition to the offense" by "disrupting the enemy's attack [and] contesting the enemy's initiative."[2] This study will explain how the various services, apart from the US FEC, arranged operations in light of strategic decisions by policymakers and provide an assessment regarding the influence of simultaneity, depth, timing, and tempo on the initial stage of the Korean War.

[1] US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 1-3.

[2] US Army, *FM 3-0, Operations* (2017), 1-3.

Methodology

Operation Chromite, the Inchon landing during the Korean War, was the decisive operation that enabled the United States to achieve its initial strategic and operational aim of restoring the status quo of restoring the 38th parallel. The forcible entry operations conducted by the United States spanning the four months leading up to Operation Chromite enabled its success. During the Korean War, the US military conducted entry operations outlined in *Field Manual (FM) 31-5*, *Landing Operations on Hostile Shores*. The contemporary framework for entry operations is *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*. Upon entering the Korean peninsula with the initial entry force, Task Force Smith, the 24th Infantry Division found itself on the defensive. The purpose of defensive operations, the same then as today, is to create more favorable conditions that allow the defender to transition to offensive operations and regain the initiative.[3] For American scholars, the initial defensive during the Korean War is often referred to as the "dark days" of the war.[4] However, it is during this trying time that the US FEC arranged operations with available combat power to achieve initial war objectives.

The initial objectives of the war required the US military to establish a lodgment on the Korean Peninsula, conduct delay operations, defensive operations, and transition to the offense once sufficient combat power arrived. The doctrine developed after World War II guided these operations. *FM 31-5*, published in 1944 by the War Department, outlines the responsibilities of the Army in amphibious operations. It includes applicable naval doctrine on landing operations to

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[3] US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949), 526a. The general object of defensive combat is to gain time pending the development of more favorable conditions for undertaking the offensive, or to economize forces on one front for concentrating superior forces for a decisive action elsewhere. US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-90, Offense and Defense* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 4-1. Their [defensive tasks] purpose is to create conditions for a counteroffensive that allows Army forces to regain the initiative.

[4] Theodore Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (New York: MacMillian Company, 1994), 167.

enhance understanding of amphibious operations.[5] *FM 31-5* includes objectives, phasing, and additional considerations during the conduct of amphibious operations. The objective of an invasion corresponds with the US military's initial operations into Korea around Pusan with continued action against the North Korean military.

Further, *FM 31-5* provides a generic phasing construct at the tactical level in planning, concentration, specialized training, embarkation, voyages, landing, and consolidation.[6] In plain language, after developing a plan for the operation, the force required for the operation is brought together and trained. Once training is complete, the force moves to the objective location and conducts the operation. After the shore is secured, additional personnel and material are unloaded to support operations. *FM 31-5* expands beyond the Army's role to include the Navy's responsibilities during land operations. In all, *FM 31-5* provides foundational knowledge to consider in planning, organizing, and executing amphibious operations; however, it defaults to *FM 100-5, Operations* to guide operations beyond initial air-borne and sea-borne landings.

FM 100-5, Operations provided the doctrine on "leading troops in combat and the tactics of the combined arms."[7] It guides the conduct of operations by outlining fundamental principles in warfare and the ideal way of conducting offensive, defensive, and retrograde operations. The planned defense by Task Force Smith at Osan while additional forces arrived on the peninsula and the retrograde operations trading space for time as the 24th ID withdrew southward toward Pusan were consistent with the 1949 edition of *FM 100-5, Operations*. A study of *FM 100-5* shows that the US Army before the Korean War understood that warfare demanded close

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[5] US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 31-5, Landing Operations on Hostile Shores* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1944), 1.

[6] US Army, *FM 31-5* (1944), 3.

[7] US Army, *FM 100-5* (1949), V.

coordination amongst the Army, Navy, and Air Force to be successful.[8] *FM 100-15, Larger Units* expands upon *FM 100-5* and "stresses the fundamental doctrine that successful modern military operations demand *air* superiority."[9] Furthermore, it directs corps- and division-sized operations and the development of a campaign plan. The scope of *Larger Units* is how to combine various operations in time, space, and purpose to achieve political and operational objectives.

World War II brought vast and varying amphibious experiences to the US military primarily through experiences in the Central Pacific, in the Mediterranean and Normandy, and the Southwest Pacific. Capturing the experiences in unified doctrine based on the various services' experiences post-World War II proved to be a struggle. The Navy supported Mid-Pacific doctrine that "assumed the withdrawal of the landing force, including shore parties, and its replacement by a garrison force once the beachhead was established."[10] Risky amphibious operations in Europe and essential amphibious operations in Southwest Pacific divided the Army on appropriate direction for amphibious operations. However, the difference between the US Marines and US Army was their divided focus. The Marines focused on developing doctrine for landing on hostile shores while the Army focused on developing doctrine for large-scale operations.

The amended National Security Act of 1947 established a joint staff with one of several purposes to provide the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force "authoritative coordination and unified control and for their integration into an efficient team of land, naval, and air forces."[11] In 1951, the Secretary of Defense merged the Army's *FM 100-5* and Navy doctrine into the *Joint*

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[8] US Army, *FM 100-5* (1949), VI.

[9] US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 100-15, Larger Units* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1942), II.

[10] Donald Boose, *Over the Beach: US Army Amphibious Operations in the Korean War* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 68. Based on views set forth in a 1948 historical study by Albert N. Garland, *Amphibious Doctrine and Training*, AGF Study No. 6.

[11] US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 110-5, Joint Action Armed Forces* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1951), V.

Action Armed Forces, which became applicable "when two or more Services or elements thereof are acting together to achieve a common task or mission."[12] While joint publications entered their infancy during the 1950s, the process some seventy years later is more refined. Today, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 5120.01A, *Joint Doctrine Development Process* (29 December 2014) and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 5120.02D, *Joint Doctrine Development System* (5 January 2015) establish policy for developing and maintain doctrine focused on the "joint employment of the Armed Forces."[13] The importance of close coordination among the services identified in *FM 100-5, Operations*, and pulled into *Joint Action Armed Forces,* continues to drive current joint publication development.

The contemporary doctrine, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations* and *JP 5-0, Joint Planning*, builds on the idea and concepts captured in doctrine guiding the US military during the Korean War. These joint publications describe operations to enter hostile territory and how to connect various tactical actions into one campaign. For the Army, *Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-90, Offense and Defense* and *ADRP 3-0, Operations* include foundational ideas on the conduct of large-scale operations. It is important to understand the development of doctrine and the linkage between doctrine utilized in the Korean War to the doctrine of present-day. Nevertheless, it is the application of doctrine to a case study that provides insights.

Examining the development of the Korean War through the Inchon landings and the counter-offensive at the Pusan perimeter as a case study presents multiple aspects and types of operations that require study. The context for a case study is found by understanding the background circumstances and conditions that led to hostilities. The conflict phase is four

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[12] US Army, *FM 110-5* (1951), V.

[13] US Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 5120.01A, *Joint Doctrine Development Process* (December 29, 2014), 1; US Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 5120.02D, *Joint Doctrine Development System* (January 5, 2015), 1.

separate types of operations: the initial US military response, retrograde operations, defensive operations, and counter-offensive. Furthermore, the Korean Peninsula and US military bases in Japan provided each service the ability to influence operations during the Korean War, so to examine Army operations in isolation from the other services would discount significant influences on Army operations. The joint forcible entry phasing construct accounts for the variation of operations. While the element of operational design—arranging operations—provides service influences on the Eighth US Army's operations. The phases of joint forcible entry are preparation and deployment, assault, stabilization of the lodgment, the introduction of follow-on forces, and termination or transition operations.[14]

Preparation and deployment begin with exploring the post-World War II division of the Korean Peninsula that created instability and the chain of events that increased to open hostility between the two Koreas. This phase explains the chain of events leading to the Korean War, and the political and military influences on US policymakers to intervene militarily on behalf of South Korea. The phase demonstrates the simultaneity of political and military service operations to set the stage for land operations at the appropriate time. This initial phase concludes with the reintroduction of US land forces onto the Korean Peninsula.

The semi-permissive assault of the Korean Peninsula inland to establish contact with the North Korean advance constitutes the focus of phase II (Assault). This section provides the roles and function of each service played as the conflict unfolded and highlights the US military's retrograde operations to the Pusan Perimeter due to overwhelming North Korean military strength and unmatched firepower. The analysis in this section shows it was a simultaneous effort across the services throughout the depth of the Korean Peninsula that allowed the US Army to slow the North Korean attack and begin to stabilize the defensive front. The introduction of additional

[14] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), IV-2.

reinforcements permitted the United States to stabilize the Pusan lodgment.

Phase III, stabilization of the lodgment, covers how US military forces worked with the Republic of Korea to secure a lodgment to allow continuous landing of material and personnel. The primary focus of this phase is the United States' and Republic of Korea's defense of the Pusan perimeter. It outlines naval and air operations that enabled land operations and conversely Eighth US Army's operations that affected the joint force and policymakers. Analysis during this phase continues to demonstrate joint aspects of depth, timing, simultaneity, and tempo. As the lodgment began to stabilize, follow-on forces continued to flow onto the Korean Peninsula.

The introduction of follow-on forces focuses on how Eighth US Army arranged operations internally and externally, with the joint force, and with the Republic of Korea to increase flexibility in the conduct of operations. This phase outlines the Eighth US Army's actions both apart of the Pusan perimeter breakout, but also the amphibious landing at Inchon conducted by X Corps. This section demonstrates how the depth of the defense enabled the US military to plan the September counter-offensive simultaneously. The analysis further highlights the US military use of timing and ability to conduct amphibious landings at the decisive point to cause the collapse of the North Korean offensive. Eighth US Army's arrival at the thirty-eighth parallel, re-establishing the boundary between North and South Korea marks the transition to the final phase.

The termination, or in this case transition, operations during the Korean War focused on the planning considerations for the continuation of offensive operations into North Korea. It includes the influence of military operations on policymakers as well as the challenges the United States would experience as it continued offensive operations. The analysis will demonstrate how each element of arranging operations assisted in achieving success in achieving the initial objectives of the war and the difficulties in implementing each element as offensive operations continued north. The initial campaign objectives will be laid out before transitioning to overall

case study insights behind the United States' use of arranging operations during the initial portion of the Korean War.

US military doctrine provides a common understanding of various terms in the military community that may not be understood by the common reader. Several terms from Joint and Army doctrine will frequently be referenced and contain nuances that separate them from common usage. While not an exhaustive list of military terminology used throughout this study, the primary terms provide a general understanding of the scope and nature of the examination.

Joint doctrine provides the framework of joint forcible entry to examine the Korean War. "Joint forcible entry operations seize and hold lodgments against armed opposition."[15] A lodgment is a physical area that when secured allows for personnel and material to land and once expanded provides maneuver space for follow-on operations.[16] Traditionally, the establishment of a lodgment is inherent in the conduct of amphibious operations. Amphibious operations are military operations conducted from the sea by a predetermined landing force to enable operations on a hostile shore.[17] Amphibious operations with the intent of continuing land operations against the enemy in the manner the US military conducted operations during the Korean War is categorized as an invasion.[18] Two of the challenges the joint force encounters while establishing the lodgment is anti-access and area denial, which respectively are long-range and short-range threats to prevent entering into the operational area and ability to maneuver inside the operational area.[19] The joint force conducts unified action to defeat these challenges. Unified action is "the synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and

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[15] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18* (2012), VIII.

[16] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, DOD Dictionary of Military Terms and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 143.

[17] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), 12; US Army, *FM 110-5* (1951), para 955.

[18] US Army, *FM 31-5* (1944), 3.

[19] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), 19-20.

nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.[20] Campaigns and operations, parts of unified action, contain various elements.

The one element of operational design central to this study is arranging operations. Arranging operations is the "combination of simultaneous and sequential operations to reach the end state conditions with the least cost in personnel and other resources."[21] There are four factors when arranging operations: simultaneity, depth, timing, and tempo.[22] Simultaneity consists of two parts. The first part is about the integration application of military and nonmilitary power against the enemy.[23] The second part is how operations conducted from the battlefield at the tactical level through national level operations at the strategic level occur and influence the overall end state.[24] The second factor, depth, is when commanders "creat[e] competing and simultaneous demands on enemy commanders and resources and contributing to the enemy's speedy defeat."[25] The third factor, timing, is the "point and time that maximizes the effectiveness of friendly capabilities and inhibits the adversary."[26] Tempo refers to the pace of operations in relation to the enemy. Tradditionally, defensive operations attempt to buying time for friendly forces in slowing the pace of operations. Increasing the pace of operations to overwhelm the enemy's capabilities is traditionally associated with offensive operations.[27]

While the initial phase of the Korean War did not encounter a large enemy force in the vicinity of Pusan when forces began arriving on the Korean peninsula, the United States Air

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[20] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), 240.

[21] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-36.

[22] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-36.

[23] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-37.

[24] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-37.

[25] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-37.

[26] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-37.

[27] US Joint Staff, *JP 1-02* (2016), IV-37.

Force and Navy, in addition to United Nations' partners, conducted operations to shape the introduction of the predominantly Army land forces. The piecemeal introduction of forces into a conflict in the future is likely because of political constraints and military transportation capabilities. The joint forcible entry phase constructs account for the various phases of entry operations in past operations and hold applicability for future conflicts. As an expeditionary force with limited forward position basing, the United States will likely conduct some form of entry operation along the lines of this construct. The selection of arranging operations to examine US political and military operations along the joint forcible entry construct provides future policymakers and planners with an understanding of how one service's actions influence others. Therefore, enabling individuals in the future to make the application and evaluation of simultaneity, depth, timing, and tempo a part of arranging operations and understand the second- and third-order effects. Arranging operations draws sub-elements from tenets of *Unified Land Operations* (Simultaneity and Depth) and both elements of operational art & characteristics of the offense (tempo). The selected elements provide a wide range assessment of foundational aspects of modern military operations. Multi-domain operations and the ability to operate simultaneously (simultaneity) across all domains (depth) to achieve temporary and localized advantages (timing) in contested domains will only increase the importance of arranging operations. While not a central focus of this study, insights into sequencing operations become available when addressing the aspect of timing.

Case Study

> Here is the story of how US Army combat units, thrown piecemeal into the battle to slow the Communist advance, fought a desperate and heroic delaying action, buying time until the United Nations forces could attain the military strength necessary to take the offensive.
>
> –BG James A. Norell

Overview

The Korean Peninsula has more than 5,400 miles of coastline and is similar in shape to the state of Florida.[28] In 1950, the peninsula held a population of approximately thirty million with two-thirds of the population residing in South Korea.[29] The terrain of the peninsula consists of "high mountains [that] come down abruptly to deep water on the east where there are few harbors, but on the south and west a heavily indented shoreline provides many [harbors]."[30] Despite being surrounded by water on three sides, Korea experiences a continental climate. North Korea's invasion of South Korea in June 1950 occurred during the summer season that traditionally is "hot and humid with a monsoon season generally lasting from June to September."[31] Between the geography and the monsoon season, ground forces in 1950 Korea were limited to a few mobility corridors to traverse the Korean Peninsula; these natural barriers favored defense in depth.[32]

The Cairo Conference in 1943, the Potsdam Conference in 1945, and General Order Number 1 signed by United States President Truman in August 1945 established the conditions of surrender for the Japanese forces in Korea. North of the 38th parallel, Japanese forces would

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[28] Roy Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History US Army, 1992), 1.

[29] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 2.

[30] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 1.

[31] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 2.

[32] Allan Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2010), 34.

surrender to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). South of the parallel, Japanese forces would surrender to the US military.[33] Unknown at the time, the division along the 38th parallel would drive the Korean narrative through present-day.

The United Nations established a temporary commission on Korea to supervise elections with the goal being a unified national government and the end to military occupation.[34] The UN Commission on Korea was denied access into North Korea preventing the establishment of one national government voted on by both. Instead, in 1948 South Korea adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Korea and, months later, North Korea adopted the Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.[35] It resulted in two Korean governments declaring authority over all of the Korean Peninsula.

The United Nations recognized the government of South Korea, whose elections it helped oversee, and recommended the withdrawal of occupying forces "as early as practicable."[36] Consequently, this resulted in the withdrawal of Soviet forces from North Korea in December 1948 and US forces from South Korea in June 1949. Rather than reduce tensions on the peninsula, they remained high. North Korea denied the legality of United Nations activity on the Korean Peninsula and, in October 1949, threatened to drive them out of Korea.[37]

The post-World War II opportunity to expand its economic, political, and military influence guided Soviet actions in the late 1940s. The Korean peninsula offered year-round

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[33] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 3; Republic of Korea, Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (Republic of Korea: Korea Institute of Military History, 1997), 7-8.

[34] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 4.

[35] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 4-5.

[36] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 5; Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 30-31.

[37] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 5; Stanley Sandler, *The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 27-30.

harbors, especially below the 38th parallel. Holding influence over North Korea or a unified Korean Peninsula provided the Soviet Union the prospect of enhancing their strategic positioning; they viewed the peninsula as an important national interest that led to providing significant military aid to North Korea.[38]

For the United States, President Truman's foreign policy of containment known as the Truman Doctrine provided the basis for American assistance to other countries. The United States did not place the same strategic importance on South Korea that Russia did. The US policy objectives for Korea consisted of "a united, self-governing, and sovereign Korea" that established a representative government supported by a sound economy and education system.[39] At the same time, the US Government correctly recognized that the USSR aimed to establish a Soviet "zone of occupation" through the creation of a puppet government in Korea, providing the Soviet Union the control it desired.[40] The United States had three courses of action leading up to the Korean conflict: it could abandon Korea to Soviet domination and communist influence, provide unconditional backing to the political and territorial sovereignty of South Korea, or something in the middle ground.[41] The United States chose to follow the middle ground course of action, backed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as "the US has little strategic interest in maintaining its present troops and bases in Korea."[42] The middle ground solution led the United States in the late-1940s to provide some military and economic aid but not on the scale the Soviet Union provided North Korea, which helped shape the opening sequences of the Korean War. The US

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[38] US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History US Army, 1997), 3-4.

[39] Secretary of State, Draft National Security Council Report 8/1: *The Position of the United States with Respect to Korea*. (Washington, March 16, 1949), 1.

[40] Secretary of State, Draft National Security Council Report 8/1 (1949), 10.

[41] Secretary of State, Draft National Security Council Report 8/1 (1949), 12.

[42] Secretary of State, Draft National Security Council Report 8/1 (1949), 12. Based on JCS opinion in SANACC 176/38.

strategic policy direction affected military options and the arrangement of operations.

The withdrawal of Soviet forces from North Korea did not end its support to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The DPRK in mid-December 1948 reached an agreement with Communist China and the Soviets to build up the North Korea People's Army (NKPA) to the level required to invade South Korea within the next eighteen months.[43] Furthermore, Kim Il Sung of North Korea and Stalin of the USSR reached an agreement in March 1949 to use force to reunite the Korean Peninsula, and Stalin provided a Soviet loan to aid North Korea in importing required military equipment.[44] In June 1949, the Soviets approved the shipment of 15,000 rifles, 130 artillery pieces, eighty-seven T-34s, and ninety-eight airplanes to North Korea. Similarly, Communist China returned 50,000 Korean veterans to North Korea.[45]

The financial, material, and personnel assistance the Soviets and Communist China provided North Korea turned a defensive-type army with four divisions into a ten-division army consisting of 182,000 personnel with 242 tanks and over 700 artillery pieces and increased their navy and marines to 13,700 personnel equipped with thirty patrol ships and eighty support vessels. The Soviet and Communist China support provided North Korea with an Air Division of 2,000 people equipped with 211 aircraft of various types.[46] To assist with the troop buildup and anticipated replacement requirements, the NKPA adopted conscription in July 1948 and declared total mobilization in early 1949.[47] The external assistance and internal developments contributed to the tempo advantages the NKPA held at the onset of hostilities.

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[43] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 43.

[44] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 44; Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 27-30.

[45] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 45 Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 27-30.

[46] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 45.

[47] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 45; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 9.

South Korea's military development traveled along a different trajectory because the United States, unlike the Soviet Union and Communist China, was not looking to arm South Korea for a hostile takeover of North Korea. Rather the United States focused support on providing for South Korea's internal defense but left it incapable of attacking North Korea.[48] In 1949-1950, the Soviets provided North Korea $40 million in aid while the United States allocated approximately $10 million in aid to South Korea.[49] The US military advisors in Korea—KMAG—acknowledged the minimum amount of $20 million was needed to mitigate the widening military gap on the peninsula. The KMAG further estimated that the Republic of Korea forces could hold back a North Korean invasion for no more than fifteen days.[50]

The Republic of Korea Armed Forces post-World War II expanded into an eight-division army of approximately 98,000 personnel, but they possessed zero tanks and a limited ninety-one artillery pieces. Their navy and marines equaled 8,900 personnel with twenty-eight patrol ships and seventy-three support vessels. Their nominal 1,900-member air force consisted of twenty-two aircraft.[51] Consequently, the different military developments of the divided Koreas resulted in an NKPA in June 1950 that held decisive advantages over the South Korean armed forces. A summarized list of advantages includes tanks, a 6,000-yard maximum range advantage in artillery, three times the artillery and air force capacities, and a greater number in army personnel by 24,000.[52] Overcoming these disadvantages would take time and require South Korea to slow the tempo of operations to provide the necessary time for force movement.

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[48] US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 7.

[49] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 88.

[50] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 89; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, Volume VII, Korea, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 97; Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 31.

[51] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 89-90.

[52] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 17-18.

The US military post-World War II saw drastic reductions in personnel and funding; as well as the introduction of the *National Security Act*. These changes required the United States to reexamine its policy stance around the world including Korea. The US FEC, commanded by General MacArthur, was responsible for the region of the world containing Korea and East Asia. In June 1950, the primary mission of the FEC was "the defense of its area of operations, a geographical region including Japan, the Ryukyus, the Marianas, and American bases in the Philippines."[53] Each service provided elements under the FEC, but during the initial period in this study, the United States had no joint command coordinating among the various services. The lack of a joint commaned required the services to coordinate among each other and lead to various disputes centered on the expectations each had of the other services. Delaying the pace and simultaneity of operations, the FEC consisted of Eighth US Army, Naval Forces Far East, and the Far East Air Forces, in addition to support provided by the United Nations, but this study's focus will remain on the US military and particularly Eighth US Army's actions during the Korean War.

General Walker commanded the Eighth US Army—land component command of the Far East Command—and at the outbreak of hostilities. Eighth US Army, stationed in Japan, conducted occupation duties along with the headquarters of 1st Cavalry Division (CD), 7th ID, 24th ID, and 25th ID at an average of seventy-four percent combat readiness.[54] 2nd ID arrived in Korea from Washington State from mid-July to 20 August 1950 and served under the Eighth US Army during the initial stage of the war.[55] Scholars debate the overall combat readiness of the Eighth US Army at the outbreak of hostilities, but generally agree it was a postwar peacetime

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[53] Robert Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (Washington, DC, US Government Printing Office, 1983), 2.

[54] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 84.

[55] Clark Munroe, *The Second United States Infantry Division in Korea, 1950-1951* (Tokyo, Toppan Printing Company, 1992), 3.

army that faced many challenges to reverse the readiness issues of the late-1940s.[56] Further, there were shortfalls in "training ammunition, vehicles, spare weapon parts, and even clothing."[57] Being forward-positioned in Japan allowed the Eighth US Army to respond to the events on the Korean Peninsula rapidly, but the nature of its occupation duties during a post-war demobilization degraded its initial performance. Eighth US Army in Japan "had no corps headquarters, corps artillery, or the engineers and other support elements normally assigned to corps headquarters"[58] stressing command and control systems and denying divisions traditional combat support and fires capabilities until those capabilities arrived in Korea from the continental United States. Similar to South Korean forces, the US Army required time to develop the necessary force package required to counter the NKPA ground offensive.

Naval Forces Far East (NavFE), under the command of Admiral Joy, consisted of Task Force (TF) 90 (Amphibious Force, Far East), TF 96 (Naval Forces, Japan), and, on 27 June 1950, Seventh Fleet. This initial allotment of forces provided no battleships, one aircraft carrier, two cruisers (TF 96), twelve destroyers, and four submarines to the FEC.[59] Within five weeks of the outbreak of hostilities, the 11,000 naval personnel of the Western Pacific would triple in size, because "three-quarters of all [US Navy forces] were based on the west coast of the United States."[60] The initial goal of NavFE during the Korean conflict was to provide immediate support to South Korean units "to permit these forces to reform," and to "oppose hostile landings and

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[56] Thomas Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2010), xii. Thomas Hanson in *Combat Ready* attempts to revise the narrative established by T.R. Feherenbach's *This Kind of War* (1994) and the US Army's official history by Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992).

[57] Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (2010), xii.

[58] Donald Boose, *US Army Forces in the Korean War 1950-53* (New York: Osprey Publishing, 2005), 12.

[59] James Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1962), accessed 17 November 2018, www.history.navy.mil, Chapter 4.

[60] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 4.

destroy vessels engaged in aggression, provide fire support to friendly forces, anti[-]cover shipping engaged in evacuation or in carrying supplies to South Korea."[61] Similar to the US Army, the US Navy was able to rapidly respond to the Korean crisis with regionally postured forces while requiring additional time to bring additional capabilities and supplies thousands of miles across the Pacific Ocean. Some of these capabilities came from TF 93 (Naval Force, Philippines) and TF 94 (Naval Force, Marianas). The naval capabilities in Korean waters at the outbreak of hostilities allowed the United States to begin evacuating civilian personnel from the Korean Peninsula and simultaneously transport military assets to the peninsula.

The Far East Air Forces (FEAF), the air component, was commanded by Lieutenant General George Stratemeyer. The primary mission of the US Air Force was "to maintain an active air defense of the [FEC] theater of operations;" subordinate missions included maintain "an appropriate air striking force" and "to provide air support operations as arranged with appropriate Army and Navy commanders."[62] The FEAF "contained five fighter and two bomber wings, a transport wing, and miscellaneous support units making up a total of some 1,200 aircraft."[63] With the primary mission being active air defense, two-thirds of the organized units were equipped with jet fighters.[64] Consequently, the FEAF was able to neutralize North Korea's limited air force early in the war and deter outside powers from intervening with air assets. A fighter-heavy command would hinder its ability to provide fire support to ground units in the opening days of the Korean War. The FEAF provided an aspect of depth to operations across the Korean Peninsula that the other services lacked and provided the ability to slow the tempo of operations. FEAF actions throughout the Korean War displayed timely, as well as cumulative, effects as the

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[61] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 3.

[62] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 2-3.

[63] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 3.

[64] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 3.

war progressed.

The general sequence of events describing the Korean War are posturing, the North Korean invasion, and South Korean and US retrograde toward the Pusan Perimeter. It is followed by a continued North Korean offensive and FEC defensive operations. Eventually, North Korea's offensive stalled and the FEC prepared for a counter-offensive. Lastly, operations transition to offensive operations for the FEC with retrograde operations for North Korea.

While preparation and posturing for the Korean War happened before the invasion, the FEC retrograde designed to delay the North Korean advance began on 25 June 1950 once North Korea crossed the 38th parallel in mass. Ultimately, to slow the NKPA tempo and provide a timely response, President Truman declared a state of emergency in the United States on 27 June 1950 and authorized the use of military force to assist the ROK, beginning with air and naval operations from units based in Japan.[65] Simultaneous military preparations provided the readiness required to execute President Truman's directive. The next day, the FEAF conducted direct operations against North Korea on the Korean Peninsula. Notified on 30 June and arriving from Japan, Task Force Smith from the 24th ID attempted to go north and block the North Korean advance along western routes leading south.[66] Task Force Smith around Osan, and later the remainder of the 24th ID around Taejon, failed to block the North Korean advance but delayed the North Korean offensive southward by several days.[67] The delay provided some of the required time necessary for a larger US response. The 1st CD, after seventeen days of combat and retrograding southward over 100 miles, replaced the 24th ID at Yongdong on 22 July.[68] However,

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[65] Maurice Isserman, *Korean War* (New York: Facts on File, Inc, 2003), 1-3.

[66] Richard Ecker, *Korean Battle Chronology* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005), 5; Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 286.

[67] T.R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (New York: MacMillian Company,1994), 107.

[68] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 147.

the movement south would not be complete until 1 August, after General Walker ordered the withdrawal across the final natural barrier to Pusan at the Naktong River. The defensive line, the first continuous line established, formed beyond the Naktong River consisted of eight divisions: "the ROK 3rd, Capital, 8th, 6th, and 1st, plus ROK manpower to assimilate within the weakened American units; the 1st CD, the 24th Infantry, and 25th Infantry Divisions, and 5th Regimental Combat Team."[69] The small section of land approximately fifty miles wide by one hundred miles long is known as the Pusan Perimeter and provided the Eighth US Army anchored flanks and the realistic prospect of conducting a stout defense. The US goal was to slow the NKPA's tempo through simultaneous air and ground operations.

The defense of the Pusan Perimeter began in August and continued until the counteroffensive began in mid-September. The delaying force, the 1st CD, 24th ID, and 25th ID received the 2nd ID, the 5th Regimental Combat Team, and the First Provisional Marine Brigade within the perimeter.[70] By early-August, the North Korean advance sustained approximately 70,000 causalities and possessed fewer than forty tanks. During August, the Eighth US Army grew its tank force to over 500 tanks. Air operations continued to strike North Korean lines freely while enjoying air supremacy and provide ground-support.[71] The arrival of equipment and air operations against the NKPA contributed to the depth, simultaneity, and tempo of operations. The NavFE provided a never-ending flow of troops and supplies that, by the end of August, exceeded the North Korean force and secured water routes from enemy interdiction or advances.[72] The cumulative effect of simultaneous naval operations began to emerge during the Pusan Perimeter defense. The FEC's defenses of the Pusan Perimeter with air and sea supremacy contained the

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[69] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 158.

[70] Ecker*, Korean Battle Chronology* (2005), 11.

[71] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 167.

[72] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 167-169.

North Korean offensive and prepared the United States for a counter-offensive.

September brought another transition in the war. The Inchon landing, on 15 September by X CORPS, combined with the Eighth US Army's counter-offensive—breakout from the Pusan Perimeter—from 16-22 September marked the first time in the Korean War that the FEC would go on a major counter-offensive.[73] The amphibious assault consisting of 70,000 men at Inchon introduced additional forces to secure Inchon and recapture and occupy Seoul until the Eighth US Army established a link up from the south.[74] The planned breakout from the Pusan Perimeter consisted of "four American divisions with an American Corps under direct control of Eighth [US] Army to attack from the western and southwestern zones of the Naktong front, and the two ROK Corps in the eastern zone [to] launch a concerted counterattack against the enemy."[75] The combined counterattack along the Naktong Front and the amphibious assault brought "a notable symptom of collapse" everywhere in the enemy's defense.[76] General Walker confirmed the North Korean retrograde in intelligence reports received on 22 September and decided to transition into offensive operations in conducting a pursuit. General Walker's guidance was that "all efforts must be directed toward the destruction of the enemy by effecting deep penetrations, fully exploiting enemy weaknesses."[77] At this point, the Eighth US Army would continue its offensive and link-up with X Corps and pursue North Korean Forces north of the 38th parallel after the United Nations modified the stated objective of operations against North Korea from pre-war

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[73] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 612 & 656; US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 147.

[74] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 597.

[75] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 661; US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 149.

[76] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 689; Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 58-59.

[77] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 690.

status quo to unification under South Korea.[78]

Phase I—Planning and Deployment (1945–June 1950)

The United States choose a foreign policy direction toward South Korea post-World War II that did not unconditionally support or abandon South Korea. The United States did not foresee itself participating in a military conflict on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, the planning and deployment phase of the Korean War is untraditional in that it was policy direction and decisions made during peacetime that would shape the initial phase that saw the re-entry of US military assets back onto the Korean peninsula. The state of the world heavily influenced policy and planning considerations for Korea in the mid-1940s.

The Cold War between the United States and the USSR continued to shape policy actions. Ravaged by war, the United States focused on preventing the spread of communism on the European continent. Economic aid through programs such as the Marshall Plan, along with military aid, was used to counter the threat of communism.[79] Militarily, the US force structure, to counter the Soviet threat, displayed an intention to "fight the next major war with bombers, and nuclear bombs."[80] Growing economic and military requirements cause a shift, against General MacArthur's objection, of Far East air power including "half of its medium bombers and large segments of its fighter, reconnaissance, and troop carrier units—to support the Berlin Airlift."[81] Prioritization of air power and the European continent held additional consequences for the services in preparing for a possible conflict on the Korean peninsula. It meant that the joint force possessed the ability to attack across the depth of the peninsula and with time have a cumulative

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[78] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 746-750; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 607-613.

[79] Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 35.

[80] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 60-61.

[81] Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 39.

effect on the Korean War.

The US Army, before the Korean War in 1950, consisted of ten divisions and approximately 591,000 soldiers.[82] The US Eighth Army held close to twenty percent of the total force with a little over 100,000 soldiers.[83] Budget cuts restricted the US Army's ability to sustain training and readiness. The length of initial recruit training in 1948 was reduced by forty percent and the US Eighth Army suspended live-fire training in 1947.[84] Personal turnover, as high as fifty percent in 1949, further compounded the US Eighth Army's readiness problems.[85] The low-point in for the US Eighth Army was 1949, in which its four assigned divisions held an average combat readiness rating of fifty percent.[86] The low level of readiness directly led to a reduction in tempo of US ground operations. The state of readiness, in addition to the reduced occupation requirement on Japan, prompted a long-term training program to correct readiness.

General Walker's "Training Directive Number Four," published on 15 April 1949, was the transition point for the Eighth US Army away from postwar occupation duty of Japan.[87] The training directive called for training that culminated in a series of field exercises at echelon. With company-level exercises in December 1949, battalion-level exercises six months later in May

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[82] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 78; Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (2010), 13.

[83] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 78.

[84] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 80-81; Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (2010), 16-28.

[85] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 81; Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (2010), 16-28.

[86] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 84.Based on Report of Training Inspections of the United States Army FECOM, October 1949; Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953.* (New York: Anchor Books, 1987), 48-49.

[87] Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (2010), 18.

1950, followed by regiment and division-level exercises in the second half of 1950.[88] Walker's training program succeeded in raising the readiness rate to approximately seventy percent by April 1950.[89] However, the Eighth US Army remained focused on holding Japan against a Russian offensive and not preparing for operations on the Korean Peninsula.[90] Additionally, training at company- and battalion-levels rarely included participation from other services. It ultimately failed to achieve General MacArthur's goal of an "integrated air-ground-sea fighting team" before the outbreak of hostilities in Korea[91], leaving the services early in the war without procedures in place that allowed for simultaneous operations across the depth of the Peninsula.

The sea element of MacArthur's fighting team, NavFE, faced similar problems as the Eighth US Army. The European focus of the United States left Admiral Joy limited to light cruisers, destroyers, and long-range patrol aircraft to cover waters west and north of Japan.[92] The US Navy continued its limited forward posture in the Far East and was primarily concerned with Russian long-range air and naval forces.[93] The capabilities of NavFE negatively impacted its' ability initially to conduct operations at depth until additional assets arrived and bases could be established to extend their operational reach.

Policy and budget decisions had the greatest impact on the sustainability of Admiral Joy's force. The US Navy's ability to "reinforce and sustain" themselves combined with every naval task force in the Far East being "undermanned and undersupplied" became its chief

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[88] Hanson, *Combat Ready?: The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (2010), 18; Uzal Ent, *Fighting on the Brink: Defense of the Pusan Perimeter* (Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing Company, 1996), 10.

[89] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 84. Based on Report of Training Inspections of the United States Army FECOM, October 1949.

[90] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 84.

[91] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 10.

[92] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 75.

[93] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 75.

vulnerability.[94] This vulnerability stems from decisions to halve the strength of naval aviation in favor of the US Air Force by reducing "operating carriers from 8 to 4" and "carrier air groups from 14 to 6".[95] The Secretary of Defense further required the US Navy to "trim its current budget by $353 million."[96] Reduced funding and the loss of aviation assets to the US Air Force continued to increase the tension and in-fighting of the services rather than unify them under the Department of Defense[97], further reducing a timely response by naval forces on the scale required and placed a supply limit on the pace of US operations.

Even as a benefactor of the US policy direction, the US Air Force (USAF) was not spared post-World War II. The USAF's "all-inclusive expenditures dipped from $11 million in June 1945 to $2 million in June 1950."[98] The impact to the FEAF was that while the largest USAF command had 35,000 airmen, it lacked "engineering support, [had a] shortage of navigators and bombardiers" and, like the other services, suffered from reduced training time.[99] Like NavFE, FEAF lacked additional aircraft to sustain itself in the case of losses and impacted the tempo of operations they could maintain. The defensive nature of duties in the Far East and the focus on Europe meant that the FEAF's primary operational aircraft (with 365 airframes) was the F-80C "Shooting Star" jet interceptor.[100] Designed as a counter-air interceptor, the F-80C was the oldest of its type in the USAF and possessed an operational range of 100 miles.[101] Leading up to the Korean War, the Fifth Air Force conducted joint air-ground training with the Eighth US Army but

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[94] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 75-76.

[95] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (accessed 2018), Chapter 2.

[96] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (accessed 2018), Chapter 2.

[97] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (accessed 2018), Chapter 2.

[98] William Y'Blood, *The Three Wars of Lieutenant General George E.* Stratemeyer (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 15.

[99] Y'Blood, *The Three Wars of Lieutenant General George E.* Stratemeyer (2005), 20.

[100] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 58-59.

[101] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 69.

"such joint maneuvers had been neither realistic nor extensive."[102] Despite the challenges the FEAF faced, its' posture was better than the other services for action in Korea and could operate from day one, even if at less than peak performance.[103]

Each service prepared differently for a war they did not see coming. The unexpected timing of the Korean War meant that each service entered the conflict less than ideally prepared to conduct operations. Their individual unpreparedness contributed to disjointed and single service operations early during the Korean War. The joint force struggled to arrange operations and lacked a clear understanding about the role and capabilities each service brought to the fight.

Simultaneously, in 1949-1950, there was a de-emphasising and distancing by the United States toward Korea. The US Congress sought to end economic and military support to Korea while minimizing the bad effects of the US withdrawal.[104] Reinforcing this direction was the recommendation by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to withdraw US military personnel from the Korean Peninsula because of the difficulties of sustaining such a force if a conflict did break out.[105] There was a growing belief that the USSR would continue to resist any action taken by the United States and ultimately prevent the United States from achieving political objectives associated with Korea. Therefore, the United States looked to maintain military and economic support to an extent that would not automatically draw the United States into a conflict on the Korean Peninsula if one broke out.[106] The US National Security Council concluded, in 1949, that "the effective maintenance of these security forces is and will continue for the foreseeable future to be

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[102] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 60; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 50.

[103] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 61.

[104] Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 64; Secretary of State, *The Position of the United States with Respect to Korea* (Washington, 1948), 11.

[105] Secretary of State, *The Position of the United States with Respect to Korea* (1948), 8.

[106] Secretary of State, *The Position of the United States with Respect to Korea* (1948), 12-13.

wholly dependent upon military, economic, and technical assistance from the United States."[107]

The method to achieve the US objectives in light of the strategic context was to formulize the provisional KMAG and direct it to train the Korean defense forces to the extent that allowed them to defend themselves and reduce South Korea's reliance on the US military.[108] The 482-man KMAG and economic aid remained the United States' singular ties to Korea after the withdrawal of the US military from the Korean Peninsula in 1949. In Spring 1949, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) determined it was "highly probable" that North Korea would invade South Korea with support from the USSR.[109] Due to the US policy stance, the US Army constructed plans to evacuate US nationals from the Korean Peninsula if hostilities broke out rather than contingency plans to reintroduce forces.[110]

The United States held competing viewpoints on the ROK National Defense forces' ability to repel an external invasion. Publicly, the KMAG insisted that the ROK could defend itself if attacked and worried that it was becoming too strong and may attack North Korea.[111] KMAG pleaded for $20 million in military aid in 1950 to arm an additional 15,000 constabulary forces to bring the total number to 65,000, purchase maintenance equipment, and provide weapon systems that were "absolutely necessary for the defense of South Korea.".[112]

The government of South Korea, led by President Syngman Rhee, concurred with the CIA assessment that North Korea would invade South Korea with a US withdrawal from Korea.

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[107] Secretary of State, *The Position of the United States with Respect to Korea* (1949), 9.

[108] Secretary of State, *The Position of the United States with Respect to Korea* (1949), 17.

[109] Secretary of State, *Consequences of US Troop withdrawal from Korea* (Washington: D.C., 1949), 5.

[110] Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 39-40.

[111] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 135-136. Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 55-56; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 20-21.

[112] US Department of State, Secretary of State, *Ambassador to State* (Washington, DC, January 25, 1950); Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 56-57.

The Republic of Korea faced an eroding situation that required them to mobilize security resources to counter the North Korean-supported South Korea Labor Party insurgents that were infiltrating into various South Korean institutions.[113] Further, the ROK published a defense plan on 25 March 1950 in the event of an invasion by North Korea. Army Headquarters Operations Plan Number 38 called on deploying "the main defensive effort" in the Uijonbu area and to "establish three primary defensive positions along the first line of defense" to counter conventional North Korean forces.[114] While using "quasi-military elements" to assist with "rear area operations" and prevent "popular revolts."[115] The mounting security challenges and numerical inferiority of the ROK National Defense Forces prevented them from being able to concentrate its forces in time of crisis.[116] Unable take over South Korea with "border raids, guerrilla warfare, bribery, strikes, sabotage, character assassinations, economic strangulation, and intensive antirepublican propaganda," North Korea decided on "full-scale hostilities."[117]

The North Korean invasion came at 0400 on 25 June 1950. Approximately 150 Soviet-built T-34s and between 110-200 warplanes initiated the invasion.[118] The North Korean invasion plan consisted of three phases. The first was the penetration of the ROK defensive line and the quick occupation of Seoul.[119] The NKPA 1st Corps was the main attack element and "concentrated its strength along the Yoncho'on-Unc'on-Uijongbu axis" with 2nd Corps

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[113] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 133-134.

[114] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 138-139; Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 26.

[115] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 418 & 138-139.

[116] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 134.

[117] US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 10.

[118] Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 49; Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 85; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 12. Sources differ in the exact number but remain similar in number of aircraft North Korea used in its invasion.

[119] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 112 & 116.

supporting along the "approach toward Ch'nch'on and Kangnung."[120] The second was the exploitation phase targeting rear defensive positions and ROK reserves.[121] Lastly, phase three was mop-up operations sought to "rapidly move NKPA troops to the southern shores to prevent the landing of US troops" and "end the war within a month."[122] The NKPA succeeded in taking Seoul by 28 June; the destruction of 44,000 ROK forces in the first week of the war was concerning for the United States.[123] News of the invasion and penetration of ROK lines altered the previous plan of distancing itself from the Korea situation.

Faced with how to respond to a North Korean invasion, the United States took the situation to the UN Security Council. Simultaneously, NAVFORFE's Seventh Fleet deployed the day after the NKPA invasion of South Korea to be postured to take military action.[124] On 27 June 1950, three resolutions were passed by the UN Security Council calling on member nations to "repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area;" it further established the United States as the lead nation in the effort.[125] The same day as the UN Security Council Resolution, President Truman "ordered [US] military forces based in Japan to launch air and naval strikes against the North Korean invaders in the South."[126] Forward positioning and preparation as events unfolded provided timely response options to political leaders; the next day, US bombers "attacked P'yongyang and targets nearer the front."[127] The FEC visited South Korea

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[120] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 116 & 156; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 24-27.

[121] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 116.

[122] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 112 & 116; Edwin Hoyt, *The Pusan Perimeter: Korea, 1950* (Briarcliff Manor: Scarborough House, 1984), 20-22.

[123] US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 10; Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 1.

[124] Paul Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War: Ground, Air, Sea, Special and Covert*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2010), 19.

[125] Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 1.

[126] Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 1.

[127] US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 13.

to gain a first-hand assessment of how the war was unfolding. Met with panic and chaos, the recommendation back to Washington was an "all-out US military effort" to defend South Korea or that it would be "doomed to failure."[128]

In light of the FEC's assessment, President Truman on 30 June 1950, authorized the use of US ground forces to stop the North Korean invasion.[129] The same day, the FEAF dropped UN leaflets in Korea to urge ROK forces to "fight with all your might…we shall support your people as much as we can and clear the aggressor from your country."[130] The United States understood that it required ROK Defense Forces to delay the tempo of NKPA operations as long as they could to provide the necessary time to reinforce the Korean Peninsula. In conjunction with political decisions made by President Truman, "planes based in Japan and naval craft blasted North Korean troops and installations" and the US Army activated the 24th ID.[131] In coordination with the FEAF, part of a battalion combat team—Task Force Smith—was detached from the 24th ID and transported on 1-2 June to the South Korean port of Pusan.[132] NavFE transported the remainder of the division by sea. The 24th ID was the initial assault force of US ground forces with the 406-men of Task Force Smith spearheading the semi-permissible entry onto the Korean Peninsula.

Due to US policy direction, the US military did not foresee a conflict on the Korean Peninsula that would involve US military forces. Caught off-guard, the US military relied on forward stationed forces in the vicinity of Japan to provide political leaders a timely response. Further naval and air assets were able to arrive in theater before significant external support and

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[128] Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 3.

[129] Boose, *US Army Forces in the Korean War 1950-53* (2005), 4.

[130] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 30.

[131] Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 1, US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 13.

[132] US Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (1997), 14; Ecker, *Korean Battle Chronology* (2005), 5.

the Eighth US Army relied on these assets in light of heavy forces and being numerically inferior to the NKPA.

Phase II—Task Force Smith and the US Retrograde (June–July 1950)

The US military effort seamlessly entered the second phase of joint forcible entry, initial assault. This phase approximately spanned the month of July. The central theme during this phase was that US and ROK forces traded space for time. They utilized the depth of the theater while simultaneously conducting naval and air operations to slow the tempo of the NKPA to create the conditions for a defense. The series of July engagements followed the same generalized pattern. They began with an NKPA attack with US forces falling back as they fought. The NKPA would maneuver into the rear and cut them off causing units to disintegrate and save what they could and leave behind what they could not.[133] The focus of analysis throughout this phase is the US military's rationale for fighting where it did, the various services contribution to the effort, and the impact the battle had on the overall campaign.

As the initial assault force, 24th ID arrived in Korea; the 25th ID and 1st CD were close behind. However, in addition to bringing units and resources located in Japan or the immediate vicinity of Korea, the combined delay of North Korean forces allowed reinforcements in equipment and personnel to arrive in Korea. All services proved critical throughout July in delaying the North Korean advance while bolstering the US military's posture on the Korean Peninsula. Before ground forces of the 24th ID arrived in Korea, elements of NavFE and FEAF had already evacuated noncombatants from Korea and began shipping much-needed ammunition to the Korean Peninsula. Beginning early on 26 June, 851 US noncombatants and other foreign nationals in Korea were flown out by air and another 905 by water transportation in operations

[133] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 143.

that concluded on 29 June.[134] President Truman's decision to allow increased military support to the ROK forces immediately expanded air operations from defending evacuation efforts to support of ROK forces being decimated by NKPA tanks.[135]

Equally as important to the removal of noncombatants from the Korean Peninsula was the resupply of ammunition. Despite General MacArthur and his FEC having no mission in Korea outside of supplying the US embassy and KMAG, in addition to the evacuation of noncombatants if necessary, he took independent action to support the ROK.[136] While waiting for guidance from Washington, MacArthur authorized the supplying of ammunition to the ROK National Defense forces understanding the same as ROK President Rhee that "[t]he ROK National Forces [would] run out of ammunition within 10 days."[137] Similar to the evacuation of noncombatants, the supplying of ammunition required both FEAF and NavFE efforts. From 28 June–1 July, the FEAF lifted "150 tons of ammunition from Tachikawa to Suwon" and once water transportation became available, approximately 200 tons per day of ammunition continued to arrive.[138] Additionally, in the first ten days of the war, NavFE conducted air bombardments from the Yellow Sea against the eastern prong of the North Korean advance and air strikes against North Korean air assets in the vicinity of the North Korean capital.[139] Furthermore, Task Group 96.5 began to "patrol Korean coastal waters, oppose hostile landings, and destroy vessels engaged in

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[134] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 250-251; Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 12.

[135] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), X; Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 253.

[136] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 247.

[137] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 247; Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 13.

[138] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 25-26.

[139] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 3.

aggression."[140] Each of these actions, combined with agreements between US and ROK commanders on the ground, allowed for the rapid introduction of ground forces into the conflict.

Leading the US initial assault, Task Force Smith became the first ground element engaged in combat on 5 July 1950. The military effect of Task Force Smith's efforts remains debatable from delaying portions of the North Korean advance from several hours to multiple days.[141] Weather and fluctuation of the front lines prohibited Task Force Smith from receiving air support. Less contentious is the morale effect the introduction of US forces at Osan had on both ROK and the NKPA forces. While a battalion task force, Task Force Smith sent a strategic message to the ROK. Task Force Smith's arrival on the Korean Peninsula led the ROK Defense Minister Shin to direct subordinates to "conduct delaying action until their arrival."[142] While unknown and debatable, it is likely that the timely arrival of Task Force Smith affected the vigor of the ROK defense. The US command believed that, in addition to boosting the morale of the ROK forces, it would deter North Korean forces; however, even though it "came as a shock to discover US troops in Osan," it did not halt the NKPA's advance.[143]

LTC Smith began the operation with guidance from the 24th ID commander, GEN Dean, to "stop the North Koreans as far from Pusan as we can" and to "block the main road as far north as possible."[144]Armed with his objective, LTC Smith led Task Force Smith three miles north of Osan to establish defensive positions on Hill 90 and Hill 117 across the Seoul-Pusan National

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[140] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 3.

[141] Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 59; Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 107. The more widely accepted version of events by Feherenbach argues several hours.

[142] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 233; Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 4-5.

[143] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 307; Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 13.

[144] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 97.

Road.[145] Despite destroying four tanks and inflicting over 110 casualties on the NKPA at the cost of 150 friendly casualties, the battalion task force was no match for the NKPA 4th Division.[146] Next in the series of engagements, the Battle of Chochiwon had similar results for the US military.

Like Task Force Smith, the 21st Infantry Regiment of the 24th ID was the next piecemealed US ground force to engage the NKPA. The Battle of Chochiwon spanned 8–12 July. Again, the US objective was to delay the NKPA advance. However, unlike the Battle at Osan, the 21st Infantry Regiment received limited air support that Task Force Smith was unable to receive.[147] The chief problems with air support from the FEAF in the early weeks of July centered on two main issues. First, the limited operational range the F-80C left them initially based 150 miles too far from their targets. Secondly, the design of the F-80C provided 5-inch high-velocity aircraft rockets (HVAR) as armament.[148] Neither of these was ideal for ground-support. The FEAF continued to relocate aircraft to Itazuke, Japan and work out both operational techniques to employ the HVAR effectively against tanks and command relationships to increase the timeliness of air support.[149]

Issues aside, on 9 July in support of 21st Infantry Regiment's three-quarter-mile front north of Chochiwon, the FEAF destroyed approximately 100 of the 200 enemy vehicles on the road heading south temporary halting the enemy's attack.[150] The next day in support of the 24th ID as a whole the Fifth Air Force "flew 280 combat air strikes" and "destroyed 117 trucks, 38

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[145] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I*. (1997), 303; Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 56.

[146] Sandler, *The Korean War* (1999), 58; Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 306.

[147] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 125.

[148] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 87-89.

[149] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 74 & 90.

[150] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 312.

tanks, 7 half-tracks, and a larger number of enemy soldiers."[151] Colonel Stephen's 21st Regiment would ultimately delay some of the best equipped and trained units of the NKPA for three-days before the renewed surge, and threat of encirclement compelled all elements of the 24th ID to withdrawal south of the Kum River.[152]

While the 24th ID delayed the NKPA, the 25th ID arrived on 10 July in Korea and went into position to "block attacks north of Taegu" on 15 July.[153] 1st CD arrived in Korea on 18 July.[154] Additionally, new 3.5-inch rocket launchers capable of destroying the North Korean tanks arrived in Korea and would arrive in Taegu for the Battle at Kum River Line.[155] The 24th ID, on the brink of disaster, faced their toughest challenge yet in defending the Kum River with 11,400 troops half being support troops against the 3rd and 4th NKPA Divisions on possession of over fifty tanks.[156] By 12 July, General Kean's 25th ID destroyed the bridges across the Kum River and began defensive preparations on the south bank in an attempt to give General Walker two more days to get the arriving divisions into supporting positions.[157]

Air strikes by NavFE and FEAF began to show an impact on NKPA operations. The NKPA altered to operating at night and remaining camouflaged during the day to minimize risk from the now unopposed US air assets.[158] Also, North Korean prisoners reported that "air

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[151] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 91; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 95.

[152] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 91-92; Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 128.

[153] Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 19; Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 104.

[154] Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 19.

[155] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 97.

[156] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 128-129.

[157] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 128 & 141.

[158] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 134; Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 123.

attack[s] had knocked out nearly all of their transportation" and that they would be "unable to accomplish [their] mission unless [they] received more troops."[159] Air attacks by mid-July became increasingly frequent and effective. F-80 jet fighters were flying around 200 sorties a day against front-line troops. B-26 light bombers focused on bridges and supply dumps near the front lines. The older, yet newly arrived in Korea, F-51 Mustangs capable of carrying 500-pound bombs provided highly-effective against troops and tanks alike flew thirty-four sorties a day.[160] Additionally, Task Force 77 continued to make its presence felt with coastal bombardments on the eastern and western shores of Korea and the conduct of air strikes against bridges and remaining air assets. [161]

Units of the 24th ID expected a night crossing on 15 July after seeing enemy forces build up across the river for two days.[162] Using a scheme of fire and maneuver consistent with previous battles, the NKPA 4th Division shelled US forces and conducted a frontal attack with 18th and 5th Regiments while maneuvering 16th Regiment across the Kum River on the US flank in an attempt to encircle the elements of the 24th ID.[163] While the absence of bridge-building materials delayed the transportation of NKPA heavy equipment across the Kum River by forty-eight hours the US forces again lacked the reserves and depth to deal with the reoccurring flank attacks and rear penetrations.[164] 19th Regiment suffering the loss of a little over a quarter of its remaining

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[159] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 97.

[160] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 97.

[161] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 99.

[162] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 134. Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 358. Korea Institute maintains the sequence of event happened a day earlier the Fehrenbach's accounts. This variation does not detract from the overall theme of engagements that occurred in July between the NKPA and US forces.

[163] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 357.

[164] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 358-361.

force and withdrew the remaining 1,200 men to Taejon to reorganize.[165] Likewise, the 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th ID moved twenty-five miles southeast on 17 July.[166]

The Taejon assault by the NKPA 3rd and 4th Divisions followed the preferred method of "crash[ing] into the defenders head on pinning them down, forcing them back, while at the same time they flanked or infiltrated to the rear and blocked the defender's retreat."[167] The first day of the fighting occurred along several of the main routes into Taejon in which the NKPA was able to exploit the gapping distances between the overstretch units attempting to defend the city. As the day wore on North Korean artillery continued to intensify, and the 24th ID's position continued to shrink around Taejon.[168] On the evening of 19 July, North Korean forces used the cover of darkness to maneuver closer and around Taejon to conduct a renewed attack before dawn.[169] 24th ID's position became untentable before they were ultimately forced to withdrawal yet again after the 4,000-men defense sustained 1,200 casualties.[170] Even though the NKPA attack on Taejon cost them at least fifteen tanks, twenty-one mortars, and over 200 artillerymen, they sustained few light infantry casualties and within five days conducted two enveloping attacks that drove the 24th ID toward Pusan.[171] However, not all was lost for the 24th ID and US ground forces. General Dean's formation had succeeded in delaying the overall North Korean advance to allow for the 25th ID to assume defensive positions along the central avenue and for 1st CD to press forward and assist the 24th ID's withdrawal from Taejon.[172]

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[165] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 361.

[166] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 139.

[167] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 142.

[168] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 155.

[169] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 157.

[170] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 141.

[171] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 179.

[172] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 145.

From the opening combat on 5 July in Osan to Taejon, the 24th ID delayed two North Korean divisions at a rate of six miles a day as it withdrew southeast over 100 miles in two and a half weeks.[173] In the same period, the 24th ID sustained thirty percent casualties overall and lost enough equipment in the withdrawal to equip a full division.[174] General Dean highlighted the importance of the air efforts before his capture in stating "without question the Air Force definitely blunted the initial North Korean thrust." General Dean also acknowledged the likely outcome had air support not been available in saying "without this continuing air effort it is doubtful if the courageous combat soldiers, spread thinly along the line, could have withstood the onslaught of the vastly numerically superior enemy."[175]

1st CD and 25th ID continued to be pushed back by the North Korean advance south in a similar fashion to the 24th ID.[176] After only one day as a reserve, 24th ID was sent to extend the left (western) flank of Eighth US Army. The NKPA 6th Division traveled undetected southward and now revealed to threaten the whole US-ROK defense.[177] The Eighth US Army's defensive perimeter continued to contract until the first days of August at what became known as the Pusan Perimeter.[178]

Throughout July, Eighth US Army like the numbers and geographic positioning to anchor into a defense. Instead, they continued doing what they could to provide an obstacle to the NKPA while predominately air and some naval assets used the month of July as an opportunity to strike at truck convoys. While there was some immediate relief for soldiers on the ground, striking

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[173] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 179-180; Ecker*, Korean Battle Chronology* (2005), 5-10.

[174] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 180.

[175] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 97. Futrell based narrative on Msg. A-3197, CG FEAF to CofS USAF, 24 July 1950.

[176] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 206.

[177] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 213.

[178] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 206.

logistics and NKPA divisions had a snowballing effect on North Korea's ability to continue offensive operations at the same tempo they began the invasion with. Indicators, such as camouflaging convoys during the day and shifting to predominately night operations, highlight that the NKPA recognized they could not continue to operate in the same manner in which they started if they hope to maintain the offensive.

Phase III—Stabilization of the lodgment (JUL–AUG 1950)

The Pusan Perimeter, 100 miles in length and fifty miles wide in the southwest corner of the Korean Peninsula, ran "from Chindong-ni on the south coast the line ran north along the Naktong River and east through Andong to Yongdok."[179] Fighting throughout August and early September centered along the Naktong River for US forces. Engagements occurred along the perimeter throughout the six weeks simultaneously. Highlights of a few battles during this period capture the essence of the fighting during late-summer 1950. The August and September battles differed from the July US withdrawal battles. The delay by the 24th ID provided the necessary time to land the 25th ID and 1st CD along with additional units and allowed the Eighth US Army to transition to defensive operations. Eighth US Army now had a natural barrier to defend from and US-ROK forces were finally able to fix their flanks to the sea and have a thin but continuous defensive line.[180] The degraded status of units prevented Eighth US Army from making any significant territorial gains, but was now capable of sustaining a small reserve that could conduct localized counterattacks to keep the NKPA in check.[181] NavFE and FEAF retained supremacy in their respective domains. Both made progress during the perimeter defense as they worked through combat techniques at the tactical level and operational control of air assets to increase the

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[179] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea*, Chapter 6.

[180] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 158.

[181] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 157.

effectiveness of air support. The Pusan Perimeter under constant pressure would remain elastic with the employment of reserves and airpower assisting with points of crisis. Task Force Kean's operations along the south edge of the US perimeter are representative of this theme.

Named after the 25th ID commander, Task Force Kean was responsible for containing the south-coast advance along the Chinju-Masan-Pusan axis. The NKPA 6th Division reinforced with the 83rd Motorized Regiment from the 105th Armored Division opposed Task Force Kean.[182] The newly arrived 5th Regimental Combat Team and the 1st Provision Marine Brigade—which previously served as the Eighth US Army reserve—supported General Kean's 25th Infantry Division efforts in the Masan area.[183] Throughout 7-11 August, Task Force Kean advanced twenty-six miles with 20,000 men supported by 100 tanks and field artillery pieces.[184] The two days prior, General Walker called on the Fifth Air Force to concentrate its attacks along the axis to isolate and destroy 6th Division elements.[185]

On the morning of 7 August, Task Force Kean advanced west along three roads to seize the Chinjua pass.[186] Following previous maneuver techniques, 6th Division launched night attacks along vulnerable points and cut off supply routes. [187] On the afternoon of 7 August, air assets resupplied water and other necessary supplies to the cut-off elements of Task Force Kean. Additionally, US air strikes assisted in the daybreak attack on 8 August to drive the enemy to the

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[182] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 480-481; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 190.

[183] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 481.

[184] Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (accessed 2018), Chapter 6; Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 482; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 191.

[185] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 482.

[186] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 482; Hoyt, *The Pusan Perimeter: Korea, 1950* (1984), 153.

[187] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 483; Hoyt, *The Pusan Perimeter: Korea, 1950* (1984), 153-154.

Yaban-san area.[188] By 9 August, elements of 5th Regimental Combat Team and 24th ID were able to reduce the 6th Division roadblock cutting off supplies in the Chindongri area with the help of air support.[189] The task force continued fighting its way to the Chinju pass utilizing air strikes to destroy the enemy or to force them from strongpoints. Timely air support from Navy Corsairs and F-51s destroyed fifty-five enemy trucks, forty-five motorcycles, and other equipment of the NKPA 83rd Motorcycle Regiment.[190] While ending in the same location it started, Task Force Kean caused over 3,000 casualties and brought 6th Division down to half-strength while incurring an estimated 1,000 casualties themselves.[191] Task Force Kean's attack spoiled the 6th Division's attack, but the task force failed to achieve its objective before conditions in other parts of the perimeter required additional support.

Task Force Kean's operations were cut short in the south when the NKPA 4th Division launched an attack against the 24th ID at what was known as the "Naktong Bulge."[192] A total of 10,000 men manned the 24th ID's thirty-four mile front but only half of it was combat-effective.[193] As the NKPA 6th Division did in the south against Task Force Kean, 4th Division began its attack in the early-morning hours of 6 August with 7,000 men crossing the Naktong River.[194] Understanding the state of his force, General Walker ordered 2nd ID to send its 9th Infantry Regiment to assist the 24th ID.[195] Lacking a clear understanding of the battlefield, the

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[188] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 484.

[189] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 484-485.

[190] Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War Volume I* (1997), 485; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 197.

[191] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 161; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 197.

[192] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 198; Field, *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (accessed 2018), Chapter 6.

[193] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 198.

[194] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 199; Hoyt, *The Pusan Perimeter: Korea, 1950* (1984), 174.

[195] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 201.

24th ID commander, General Church, hastily ordered the reinforcements into the center of the 24th ID's position while the enemy continued to exploit a vulnerable southern flank.[196] Over the next few days, the 24th ID made repeated attacks along the center of the line. The attempt to drive the NKPA 4th Division back beyond the Naktong River failed because the majority of the 24th ID was "physically and mentally incapable of further offensive action."[197]

Instead, 4th Division continued to expand along the southern sector. The Marines previously a part of Task Force Kean redeployed to the Naktong Bulge. In addition to Marine reinforcements, the 23rd Infantry Regiment of 2nd ID arrived at the Naktong Bulge. On 17 August, backed by Marine close air support, the final attack that would decisively defeat the NKPA 4th Division a day later began. After the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, the NKPA 4th Division had an estimated 3,500 remaining men and was knocked out of the war for several months before it could be reconstituted.[198] Task Force Kean and the First Battle of Naktong Bulge demonstrate the timely arrival of follow-on forces combined with NavFE and FEAF air power possessed the ability to stop the NKPA's advance on Pusan all along the perimeter.

Often overlooked is the United States' air supremacy during the Pusan Perimeter with the focus remaining on ground operations conducted by US infantry formations. While directly contributing in the two highlighted examples, the scale of FEAF and NavFE support goes beyond these two battles. The demand for air support was so great that during daylight hours the Fifth Air Force scheduled "80 flights out of Japan every 20 minutes."[199] For theater perspective, half of the

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[196] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 204; Hoyt, *The Pusan Perimeter: Korea, 1950* (1984), 174-175.

[197] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 206 & 209.

[198] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 210; Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 204.

[199] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 121.

86,000 sorties flown by the end of July by the FEAF were close-support sorties.[200] In August, the FEAF, in close-support sorties alone, flew 7,397, averaging 238 close-support sorties each day.[201] While not singularly decisive, air efforts greatly affected the NKPA's advance.[202]

The inability of NKPA to mass tanks to decisively penetrate the perimeter exemplifies the cumulative effect of simultaneous operations across the depth of the Korean theater. Light infantry that managed to exploit weaknesses in the perimeter were unable to sustain attacks and, eventually, would withdraw. Previously during delaying actions, the NKPA adjusted to moving at night to minimize the impact of US air operations. In August, unhappy with the limited amount of ammunition, motor fuel, and other warfighting materials still reaching the NKPA frontline, the FEAF expanded its night sorties to an average of thirty-five sorties a night for August.[203] Simultaneously, air operations by the FEAF and NavFE kept constant pressure on front-line units of the NKPA along the perimeter while relentlessly attacking the length of enemy supply lines, which stressed the limited logistics network the NKPA possessed and further delayed slowed the NKPA's tempo.[204]

The US defense at the Pusan Perimeter stemmed the NKPA's offensive, and after six weeks, the NKPA offensive action culminated altogether. The Eighth US Army ground forces were able to establish a line of defense behind the Naktong River because of air and sea superiority. Air superiority slowed the rate of the NKPA operations through damaging logistical and transportation assets throughout the depth of the Korean Peninsula. Additionally, timely air support to numerically inferior US ground forces offset limited NKPA advantages. NavFE forces,

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[200] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 122.

[201] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 137.

[202] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 169.

[203] Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (1983), 135.

[204] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 202.

in addition to contributing to air operations, also maintained its maritime operations. From late-July, elements screened the coastline and provided escorts to 10,666 tons a day to Pusan in supplies and equipment.[205] Naval forces assisted in the arrival of forces from the continental United States that were vital to stabilizing the Pusan lodgment. The unquestionable control of the sea allowed for sustained ground operations in a manner that otherwise would have been unattainable.[206] At the end of the six-week defensive, the Eighth US Army continued to conduct operations on the Korean Peninsula due to the supremacy and unending operations of the FEAF and NavFE.

Phase IV—Introduction of Follow-On Forces (JUL–AUG 1950)

By 8 September 1950, General MacArthur messaged Washington and informed them "[t]here is no slightest possibility…of our forces being ejected from the Pusan beachhead."[207] Furthermore, MacArthur was certain that "envelopment from the north [would] instantly relieve the pressure on the south perimeter."[208] Finally, with the addition of 2nd ID, 5th Regimental Combat Team, and 1st Provisional Marine Brigade as follow-on forces, the Eighth US Army secured its position on the Korean Peninsula.[209] At the same time, the remainder of follow-on forces was preparing to enter the Korean Peninsula at Inchon a part of Operation Chromite.

Activated under General Almond, X Corps consisted of the remaining follow-on forces of 7th ID, in addition to reinserting the Marines of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade previously on the perimeter.[210] X Corps' mission was to "seize the port of Inchon, Kimpo Airfield, and Seoul

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[205] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 123.

[206] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 169.

[207] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 495.

[208] Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1992), 495.

[209] Ent, *Fighting on the Brink* (1996), 125; Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951* (2010), 153; Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 47.

[210] Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 54; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 267.

and block the NKPA's major lines of communication.[211] Joint Task Force 7, under Admiral Struble, provided an overall command to "provide air cover, shore bombardment, blockade, minesweeping and logistical support."[212] The 70,000 men sailed from Japan on approximately 260 vessels under the direction of Admiral Doyle.[213] On 15 September, the Marines began execution towards the shore at Wolmi after naval bombardment and 7th ID arrived later at Green Beach and proceeded to link up with the Marines to continue with their mission.[214] Operation Chromite marked the arrival of all follow-on forces and the beginning of the US military's transition to offensive operations.

One day after the Inchon landing, the Eighth US Army began its counterattack in the south along the Pusan Perimeter. The counterattack benefited from FEAF air support and boosted morale as news of the Inchon landing reached the soldiers.[215] On 16 September, the NKPA forces along the perimeter were down to 70,000 men with an estimated fifty percent of their equipment. General Walker had 150,000 men in four US and six ROK divisions excluding the additional 75,000 servicemembers serving in rear area support units.[216] Then on 19 September, after a three-day counteroffensive, NKPA divisions began giving ground.

Phase V—Transition to Offensive Operations (SEP–OCT 1950)

The withdrawal in September led to ground operations transitioning from a general

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[211] Boose, *US Army Forces in the Korean War 1950-53* (2005), 43.

[212] Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 42-43; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 269; Boose, *Over the Beach: US Army Amphibious Operations in the Korean War* (2008), 162.

[213] Isserman, *Korean War* (2003), 54; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 267-269; Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 42-43.

[214] Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 42-43; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 269.

[215] Boose, *Over the Beach: US Army Amphibious Operations in the Korean War* (2008), 168; Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 280.

[216] Blair, *The Forgotten War* (1987), 281.

counteroffensive to offensive operations in the form of pursuit. In withdrawing, the NKPA lost the one last advantage it held, the initiative.[217] The Eighth US Army continued "to launch an offensive, in conjunction with the amphibious attack in the direction of Pusan-Taegu-Taejon-Ascom City-Suwon rail and highway line."[218] The transition to general offensive operations in the last weeks of September thus ended the joint forcible entry onto the Korean Peninsula, and general ground operations commenced from that point onward. Symbolically, on 29 September the United States returned Seoul in a ceremony while drawing up the plans for the general offensive into North Korea to be executed on 7 October when US forces would cross north of the 38th parallel.[219]

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[217] Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (1994), 202.

[218] Boose, *Over the Beach: US Army Amphibious Operations in the Korean War* (2008), 158.

[219] Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War* (2010), 20.

Summarized Analysis

The framework of joint forcible entry operations overlaid on initial entry operations of the United States in the Korean War provides insight into arranging operations. During planning and deployment, the US military began alerting forces and starting necessary movement. The forward positioning of military assets allowed the military to conduct timely and simultaneous operations. Early sea and air operations provided the necessary ammunition to ROK forces and allowed the evacuation of noncombatants from the Korean Peninsula. Disjointed command structures and service roles reduced the tempo of US operations while the NKPA maintained a high tempo in late-June and early-July.

Task Force Smith's introduction into combat against North Korean forces seemed wasteful at the tactical level, but the timing of their introduction early in July boosted the resiliency of ROK defenses while providing momentary pause to the NKPA, shocked to see US ground forces in combat. Further, Task Force Smith sent a strategic message of US commitment to both North and South Korea. The 24th ID's delay operations, supported by the FEAF and NavFE, began to slow the tempo of the NKPA advance. What at the time seemed like unnecessary loses hindered operations long enough for the 25th ID and 1st CD to arrive from Japan. Understanding the purpose of these initial forces as delaying versus defeating the NKPA offensive is critical. Throughout July, the United States violated US military doctrine, as forces were committed as they arrived. This resulted in thirty percent US military casualties in each battle. However, the initial force was not going to stop the NKPA's advance—the follow-on forces would. In committing to battle in piecemeal versus a collective army, Eighth US Army gained enough time for follow-on forces before running out of space to trade. As July wore on, air operations became more coordinated and effective, at both close-ground support and interdiction of the extended logistics lines of North Korean forces. This further slowed the North

Korean tempo.

Eighth US Army stabilized the lodgment when it had enough personnel, equipment, and favorable terrain to do so. However, by this stage of the NKPA's offensive, the cumulative effect of operations emerged. The full impact of simultaneous air, ground, and naval operations were not felt until after the NKPA operations expanded over the vast majority of the Korean Peninsula. It was at this point that it became evident that North Korea could no longer mass tanks or provide food and equipment at the necessary level to continue offensive operations. Compounding the problem for North Korea was that US military forces, through the first month of the war, worked through procedural problems and arranged air, ground, and naval operations more effectively. The FEAF adjusted how it conducted operations to allow for a timely response to close-air support requests by ground forces. Eighth US Army also leveraged the range and capabilities of the FEAF to disrupt the NKPA offensive and soften strongpoints before conducing localized counter-attacks such as those conducted by Task Force Kean.

The introduction of follow-on forces at the Pusan Perimeter turned the tide in the United States' favor. For the first time, not only did the Eighth US Army have defendable terrain and flanks, but a held a reserve capable of influencing front-line operations. Ultimately, the additional ground and uncontested air and sea control caused the culmination of the NKPA offensive. With X Corps arrival on the Korean Peninsula, all follow-on forces had arrived, and the United States shifted its focus. The shift was from slowing the overall tempo of operations to build necessary combat power to speed up the tempo of operations while simultaneously striking the NKPA in an attempt to overwhelm them, causing a state of chaos and confusion. Recognizing the opportunity to exploit advantages gained, the US military transitioned immediately into pursuit operations. US ground forces continued to enjoy unmatched support from FEAF and NavFE. Air strikes continued to extend into North Korea and provided depth to the US offensive.

Conclusion

The Korean War in 1950 provides insights into future conflicts. Modern-day ground operations on the Korean Peninsula, as in 1950, would face the same unforgiving geography and climate that the US Eighth Army experienced. However, examining the Korean War provides additional value beyond the borders of the Korean Peninsula. The Korean War required significant contributions by each service to maintain a lodgment on the Korean Peninsula. In arranging operations across the services, the US military forces in Korea made-up for shortfalls. Early in the war, US ground forces relied heavily on air support and naval bombardment to make up for the lack of artillery and soldier-fired rockets capable of destroying tanks. Additionally, the ROK forces facing the NKPA's advance southward lacked the proper equipment to address the situation. It was critical that the United States acted quickly because time was of the essence.

ROK forces were quickly giving way, and without the timely arrival of US forces, the Korean Peninsula likely falls to the offensive. Timely support to ROK forces required the United States to assume a high degree of risk to the soldiers of the 24th ID during their conduct of a delay. These soldiers were not properly trained, equipped, or in a numerical quantity sufficient to stop the advancing NKPA Divisions. As a result, the 24th ID continued to sustain approximately thirty percent casualties at each engagement with North Korean forces during the fighting in July.

The Eighth US Army would have been unable to establish a lodgment on the Korean Peninsula without the contributions of the other services. The Air Force and Navy created the conditions for the Army to conduct operations. The Eighth US Army arranged land component operations with joint force operations to stabilize the lodgment and transition to offensive operations. To arrange operations in 1950 required aligning air, land, and maritime domains. Today, space and cyberspace have emerged as other contested domains. The recognition of additional domains adds a layer of complexity to operations the US military faced during the

Korean War. However, the process remains the same. To get the most from each domain requires dedicate forethought of how to maximize the capabilities held in each domain to arrange operations in a timely matter. Operations occur throughout the depth of a theater and, increasingly, globally. Planners need to understand how to simultaneously leverage capabilities in each domain to create windows of opportunity that enables action. Eighth US Army utilized air assets to degrade NPKA transportation and logistics assets over time, while providing timely support to on-going operations. Naval operations denied North Korea the use of the maritime domain and allowed for the transportation of land assets to the theater. In future conflicts, the familiar domains may act in similar fashion; however, it is likely that space and cyberspace will be key to creating operational space for air and naval capabilities to operate.

It is important to remember that there were many influences on the outcome of the Korean War and that it was not solely the ability of the US military to arrange operations. A few areas that must be considered when applying the Korean War to future operations are how policymakers prevented escalation early during the war, the proximity of forward US bases in Japan to the conflict in Korea, how all conflict remained confined to the Korean theater, and the efforts by the ROK Defense Forces to defend their country. Applying insights from the Korean War, while not understanding the context of Korean War and the emergence of space, cyberspace, and artificial intelligence among others, risks misemployment that could hinder how to properly arrange operations in future conflict.

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