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A Strategic Analysis of U.S. Special Operations during the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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B.S., United States Military Academy, 1976

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19. ABSTRACT (Continued)

This study analyzes the strategic effectiveness of special operations conducted by the Far East Command (FECOM) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Korea during the Korean Conflict from 1950 to 1953. Each organization's effectiveness is determined by examining the areas of strategy, organization and operations. Special operations as defined in Joint Chiefs of Staff Publication Number 2, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF) was the standard by which operations were selected for examination. The study answers four questions: 1) What were the U.N. Command strategic objectives within the Korean theater, and how did these change?, 2) How these changing strategic objectives development and coordination of special operations objectives, forces and headquarters?, 3) What did U.S. special operations in Korea accomplish strategically? 4) What conclusions can be drawn from U.S. special operations forces' effectiveness or ineffectiveness in Korea?

FECOM special operations were limited to partisan operations and psychological operations. The partisans consisted of anti-communist North Koreans organized and led by U.S. cadre beginning in January, 1951. Psychological operations were conducted continuously from July, 1950 by a separate staff element whose capabilities expanded dramatically during the course of the conflict. CIA operations within Korea consisted of intelligence gathering and special (or covert) activities controlled from headquarters in Japan. CIA operations remained autonomous of FECOM control throughout the conflict. The control issue was the source of bureaucratic conflict that inhibited operational coordination between FECOM and CIA throughout the conflict.

The study concludes that lack of strategic objectives and limited capability rendered FECOM operations in Korea strategically insignificant. CIA operations were well planned and successfully achieved well-defined strategic objectives in support of the war effort in Korea. This experience highlights existing operational coordination problems between military and CIA special operations. Additionally, the use of indigenous forces in Korea foreshadow problems that resurface on larger scale in Viet-Nam, and may apply to current operations in Central America.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

A STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS CONDUCTED DURING THE KOREAN CONFLICT, 1950-1953, by Major Steve A. Fondacaro, USA, 143 pages.

This study analyzes the strategic effectiveness of special operations conducted by the Far East Command (FECOM) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Korea during the Korean Conflict from 1950 to 1953. Each organization's effectiveness is determined by examining the areas of strategy, organization and operations. Special operations as defined in Joint Chiefs of Staff Publication Number 2, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF) was the standard by which operations were selected for examination. The study answers four questions: 1) What were the U.N. Command strategic objectives within the Korean theater, and how did these change?, 2) How these changing strategic objectives development and coordination of special operations objectives, forces and headquarters?, 3) What did U.S. special operations in Korea accomplish strategically? 4) What conclusions can be drawn from U.S. special operations forces' effectiveness or ineffectiveness in Korea?

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Finally, I would like to thank my wife, [redacted] and my son, [redacted] for their patience, understanding and encouragement throughout the year.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Figures (continued)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> We don't need to go back and look at things that happened two years ago.[1]
>
> Gen. David C. Jones
> Chmn, JCS, 1982

The purpose of this study is to analyze the United Nations Command (UNC) strategy for the conduct of special operations and the subsequent creation and use of special operations forces (SOF) during the Korean Conflict from 1950 to 1953.

Research into the subject of special operations is unique for a number of reasons. First, relatively little primary and secondary literature and data was available to researchers until a large scale declassification of Korean Conflict era Far East Command (FECOM) documents took place as a result of the Freedom of Information Act in 1980. Second, though some records, classified or otherwise, do exist, there are relatively few historical works that directly address special operations. Third, the definition of exactly what comprises "special operations" changed continuously over the years after World War II when the term

first appeared officially to describe operations conducted by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). It was then that a need to differentiate between "special" and "conventional" operations first appeared. Finally, from its early beginnings in the OSS, there developed a reluctance on the part of military and political leaders to associate themselves with special, or "black" operations as they were sometimes referred to. This is understandable since these leaders were responsible for explaining these activities, to Congress and the American public if and when exposed. Given the fact that by their very nature, these operations lie well outside the boundaries of public law and the international laws of war, this responsibility is considered political suicide. President Carter is a recent example of this. This discourages study of lessons learned or development of a comphrehensive doctrine for the use of special operations in the future.

This attitude remains prevalent as the quote at the beginning of the chapter reflects. General Jones was responding to a reporter's question concerning the appointment of the Holloway Commission to investigate the planning and conduct of the failed Iran Hostage Rescue attempt in April, 1980. Unlike the former JCS chairman, I

believe that the only way to preclude recurrences of this disaster is to dissect past special operations to a degree at least commensurate to that of conventional operaions. The lessons learned from past U.S. conduct of special operations constitute the foundation of any coherent reform program. Therefore, frank confrontation and resolution of U.S. planning and execution failures must be the objective of any reform-oriented study.

Faced with a future where unlimited use of military power will, for the most part, not be an option, special operations provide leaders with a strategic option whose results are potentially great while expending limited assets. The Korean Conflict was America's first experience with limited war, and as such, is an appropriate vehicle through which to predict what the modern effects of limited war on military operations will be.

During the mobile phase of the Korean Conflict, after the Inchon landing, large guerrilla forces would have been invaluable in ambushing, harrassing and maintaining contact with retreating North Korean forces. An indigenous force would have been in a much better position to detect and pinpoint Chinese concentrations, thereby enabling a slower, more controlled advance by FECOM forces, possibly

avoiding the dramatic defeat of November, 1950. The strategic stalemate that characterized the last two years of the conflict precluded the use of large-scale offensives designed to force a battlefield solution. The contest settled down to one of endurance between the communists and the U.N. forces. A large, well organized guerrilla force operating in the enemy rear area was another means by which the U.N. Command could have harassed the enemy.

This study will focus on the strategy behind the campaign plans in Korea and analyze how this strategy integrated the use of special operations forces (SOF). Accordingly, this paper covers only selected operations conducted by FECOM and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in order to highlight the analysis as appropriate. A detailed study of all the forces involved and all operations conducted is outside the scope of this study. Additionally, this study will analyze how commanders coordinated operations and organizations with strategic objectives throughout the conflict.

U.S. special operations in Korea did not receive wide coverage after the cease-fire went into effect in 1953. Historians and analysts, concentrating on other unique aspects of the war, paid little attention to the role of special operations. However, unit records show that special

operations forces in Korea controlled by Eighth U.S. Army, Korea EUSAK/FECOM claimed they accounted for 69,000 enemy casualties.[2] This total does not include casualties inflicted by similar covert operations controlled by the CIA. Staffs conducting after-action reviews of these units' records question the accuracy of these claims. While attrition alone is not normally not strategically significant, it was the strategy pursued by Eighth Army after January, 1951 when General Ridgway initiated Operation KILLER. Special operations force's ability to inflict casualties made it capable of affecting the military situation to the extent of operational or strategic impact. Location and timing are the determining factors. This is another area worth examination in this study.

As with the OSS in World War II, the effectiveness of these forces is difficult to ascertain. Yet, General Eisenhower described the work of the French Resistance prior to the Normandy landings as "worth 15 divisions to the Allies."[3] It is important to remember that the application of Free French forces at the critical time and place is what made their effort strategically valuable. This highlights the value of coordination. Employed in isolation against large conventional forces, special operations forces are at

a disadvantage, and over time, will be eliminated, all else being equal. But when combined with conventional operations, their impact increases exponentially, dependent upon the level of foresight and skill of the commander applying them. In desperate situations they can make the difference between success or failure. Low cost operations that can degrade enemy forces to this extent are of unquestionable value to future commanders. Especially when leaders are faced with severe limitations on the use of overt conventional military force.

In general, traditional bureaucratic and political mistrust of special operations units by conventional units, contributed to a lack of coordination at the strategic and operational levels. This is exacerbated by an equally traditional misunderstanding, and misuse of these units, dating from World War II.. In the post-World War II era, in the wake of the hasty dismemberment of OSS, its activities received limited coverage in the official histories, further reflecting this disdain.[4] The psychological area of special operations were more popular during the war, but the War Department neglected their development after 1945. At the outbreak of war in 1950, a small Army unit formed at Fort Riley, Kansas, in June, 1947, known as the Tactical Intelligence

Detachment was the only military PSYOP unit in the force structure.[5]

The U.S., and subsequently, the U.N., found itself unprepared to undertake special operations in Korea in 1950. Yet headquarters were formed, forces organized and equipped, and operations undertaken. This study will investigate how well these operations were coordinated with the strategic objectives within the theater. Study will focus on the following questions: 1) What were the U.N. strategic objectives within the Korean theater? How did these change? 2) How did these changing strategic objectives affect development and coordination of special operations objectives, forces and headquarters? 3) What did special operations in Korea achieve strategically? 4) What conclusions can be drawn from their strategic success or failure?

Chapter 2 covers the pertinent literature used in the development of the study. Chapter 3 deals with the development of U.S. strategy toward Korea, and the subsequent evolution of strategic objectives for the U.N. Command. Chapters 4 covers how this strategic guidance led to the development of special operations forces within the theater. Chapter 5 examines selected operations and evaluates SOF strategic impact.

Within the context of this study, special operations are defined as in Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Publication Number 2, Unifed Action Armed Forces (UNAAF) dated 1 December, 1986:

4-53. General

a. Special Operations (SO) are operations conducted by specially trained, equipped, and organized DOD forces against strategic or tactical targets in pursuit of national military, political, economic, or psychological objectives. These operations may be conducted during periods of peace or hostilities. They may support conventional operations, or they may be prosecuted independently when the use of conventional forces is either inappropriate or infeasible. (JCS Pub 1)

b. SO may include unconventional warlfare, counterterrorism, collective security (including foreign internal) defense), psychological operations, deception, direct action missions, and intelligence (strategic and tactical) collection and reporting and, when directed by the NCA, special activities. Special activities (covert operations) are subject to the restrictions outlined in Executive Order 12333.

c. Special operations forces (SOF) provide a versatile military capability to defend vital U.S. national interests and must be capable of conducting missions in pursuit of national military, political, economic or psychological objectives. They are an integral part of the total defense posture of the United States and are a strategic instrument of national policy. Therefore, the United States must maintain

> the capability to conduct SO at all levels in all regions of the world when the use of conventional forces would be undesirable or infeasible, or when SO would substantially enhance other military operations. SO can provide substantial leverage at a reasonable expenditure of resources and effort.[6]

Though lengthy, this definition was an attempt by the JCS to specifically identify exactly what special operations are. Within the government and the military, inconsistent use of terms contributed to the dysfunction caused by the inter-agency struggle for control of special operations, and hindered coordination prior to and throughout the Korean Conflict.[7] Modern day parallels are easily drawn.

CHAPTER 1 ENDNOTES

[1]Scott Armstrong, George C. Wilson and Bob Woodward, "Debate Rekindles on Failed Iran Raid," Washington Post, 25 April, 1982.

[2]Frederick W. Cleaver and others, UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954 (U). (Chevy Chase, Md.: Operations Research Office, The Johns Hopkins University, 1956), ORO-T-64, 4.

Two things are important to note here: 1) Sheer body count as a measure of strategic or operational effectiveness is a questionable technique unless the strategic or operational objective is merely attrition of enemy forces. In Korea, attrition was an operational objective for partisan forces, but against the Chinese who easily replace thousands of casualties, it was strategically insignificant. 2) According to American advisors assigned to lead and train partisan forces, the casualty figures reported were probably inflated by a figure of 3 to 7. (See Military Historical Detachment 3, Army Forces Far East, "UN Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict" January, 1953)

[3]R. Harris Smith, OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 364-65; Corey Ford, Donovan of OSS, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co, 1970), 314, 343; Edward Hymoff, The OSS in World War II, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972), 341-42; Stewart Alsop and Thomas Braden, Sub Rosa: The OSS and American Espionage, (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946), 233; Allen Dulles, The Craft of Intelligence, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 43; OPD Memo No. 6168, 30 September 1945, states that General Magruder (then head of Strategic Services Unit, War Dept) was instructed "to continue liquidation of activities and personnel not needed for peacetime purposes," CCS 385(2-8-42), Section I, PT. 10, box 87, National Archives. A memorandum by the Chief of Staff, US Army, as part of JCS 965/2, 28 August 1945, "Withdrawal of All Service Personnel with OSS," indicated approximately 8,000 US Army officers and enlisted men on duty with OSS in July, 1945, CCS 385 (2-8-42), Section I, PT. 10, box 37, National Archives, quoted

in Alfred H. Paddock, US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins, (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1982), 34, 167.

[4]Paul Linebarger, Psychological Warfare, (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pierce, 1954), 301, quoted in Alfred H. Paddock, US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1982), 59, 163.

[5]Paddock, 94.

[6]Joint Chiefs of Staff, JCS Publication 2 Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF), (Washington D.C.: The Joint Chiefs of Staff 1986), 4-36

[7]Ibid., 4-14

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Sources of literature for this study consist primarily of published secondary sources, accessible official primary sources, and periodical literature. Each will be discussed separately, in some detail.

Published works on the Korean War or Korean Conflict abound and were primarily useful in dealing with strategy. References to U.N. special operations or special operations forces were few but highly valuable. Works produced by the Operations Research Office of the Johns Hopkins University were the best sources of detailed data on the topic. Johns Hopkins conducted these studies under government contract either during or shortly following the conflict. The topics are extremely narrow and the research very detailed. The Combined Arms Research Library (CARL) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas contains a large number of these studies on a wide variety of topics and was the single most utilized research center. Official documents dealing directly with special operations by FECOM were very few and, in the case of the CIA,

nonexistent except in the classsified vaults of the National Archives.

Secondary source references fill these gaps adequately. The library at the Army War College was of great assistance in providing copies of their Oral Histories Collection which included interviews with some of the primary participants. They also were very helpful in providing secondary sources unavailable in CARL.

While published books solely addressing United Nations or United States Forces special operations in Korea, are very limited, a small number of key books address the subject and were a major source of primary material listings. Among the best are A Psychological Warfare Handbook by William E. Daugherty and Morris Janowitz; U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins by Alfred H.Paddock, and Guerrilla Warfare and Airpower in Korea, 1950-53 by Lawrence V. Schuetts. The recent massive declassification of previously restricted FECOM records and cable traffic resulted in new research studies whose quality, readability, and breadth are unprecedented. They include Korea: The Untold Story of the War by Joseph C. Goulden; Perilous Missions: Civil Air Transport and CIA Covert Operations in Asia by William M. Leary, both of which cover CIA operations in the theater.

An even larger number of works address the Korean Conflict, or focus on selected phases of the war. The finest military historians of the last four decades have covered the strategic and tactical aspects of the war in great detail. Among the most valuable works are This Kind of War by T.R. Fehrenbach; The River And the Gauntlet by S.L.A. Marshall; The Korean War by Matthew B. Ridgway; and From the Danube to the Yalu by Mark W. Clark. All contain first hand accounts of the events from a U.S. viewpoint. Less well known but extremely well written foreign policy histories of U.S.-Korea relations were The Reluctant Crusade: American Foreign Policy in Korea, 1941-1950 by James Irving Matray and U.S.-Korea Relations, 1882-1982 edited by Tae-Hwan Kwak. Strategies of Containment by John Lewis Gaddis provides a concise critique of the impact of containment strategy and NSC-68 on U.S. involvement in Korea before and during the conflict.

The services' official histories offer the most comprehensive information available in single volumes. South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu by Roy E. Appleman; Policy and Direction: The First Year by James F. Schnabel; The United States Air Force in Korea by Robert F. Futrell; The Sea War in Korea by Frank A. Manson, United States

Marine Corps Operations in Korea, 1950-1953 in 3 volumes by Lynn Montross and Nicholas A. Canzona are sources that cover the service components' contributions. These volumes detail the development and subsequent changes in strategic objectives throughout the conflict, and the effects these changes had on the units' ability to conduct operations. These works are quite readable and offer the best lists of official primary sources. They are particularly valuable in determining which periodical references to focus upon.

Of the Operations Research Office studies, the single most pertinent title is U.N.Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1950-1954 (U) by Frederick W. Cleaver and others. It is an exhaustive account of the partisan warfare headquarters, forces and operations of Eighth Army/FECOM. It is unsurpassed in detail and includes all pertinent official documents. Others of particular value are FEC Psychological Warfare Operations: Theater Staff Organization; and Eighth Army Psychological Warfare in the Korean War by Willmore Kendall and others; U.S. Psywar Operations in the Korean War by George S. Pettee. Two particularly valuable classified works used sparingly in this study to avoid classification are A Study of Internal Warfare (U) by John H. McGee and Evasion & Escape Reports (U) by the Director of Intelligence, Far Eastern Air Forces. Both

are available in CARL. McGee's work is a personal, unpublished account of the U.N. partisan warfare story by its first commander. It is unsurpassed as a primary source. The FEAF work is a collection of first-hand debriefings of rescued pilots that provides an insight into FECOM-CIA-FEAF coordination that is not covered anywhere else.

Official records make a direct contribution toward answering the thesis questions. Among the most pertinent of these are the State Department Series: Foreign Relations of the United States, East Asia/Korea, 1950-53, Far East Command (FECOM) Daily Intelligence Summaries and Monthly Situation reports of the G2 office. The oral histories conducted by theater historical detachments are valuable first-hand source accounts compiled while the operations were ongoing or shortly thereafter. The most valuable history was U.N. Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict conducted by Military History Detachment Three, Army Forces Far East in the fall of 1952. Primarily statements by the American servicemen and Korean partisans that made up these forces, this project includes a number of pertinent U.S. and Korean Armed Forces documents. It gives an insight into the operations themselves that is not duplicated elsewhere.

Periodical literature of the time reflects civilian impressions about events in Korea. A common characteristic is the general innaccuracy and bias these articles display. Undoubtedly heavily influenced by the War Department Public Information Branch, they are reminiscent of the articles of the World War II era that reflect a positive situation for U.S. forces, when in reality it was quite desperate. As the literature distances itself in time from 1950, the tone becomes more analytical and critical. Articles of any real value to the study are very few. Colonel Rod Paschall's article in Conflict (Volume 7,Number 2,1987), "Special Operations in Korea" remains one of the most valuable contributions. Shaun M. Darraugh's article in Army (34, 11 November, 1984), "Hwanghae-do: The War of the Donkeys" deals specifically with FECOM partisan effort and is particularly relavant to the thesis questions.

Published secondary works supported by a number of pertinent official primary sources make up the bulk of the literature upon which the study is built. It is more than sufficient to deal with the thesis questions as long as the focus remains at the strategic level. Given more time and access to the appropriate archival files, and access to the few key individuals from the era still alive, a much more comprehensive and in-depth study can be conducted.

CHAPTER 3

STRATEGY

> International Arbitration does not differentiate between the source or origin of all wars, and their precipitating causes...Disputes or disagreements between nations, instead of being the source or cause of war, are nothing more than the first manifestations of approaching combat... To remove them by arbitration, or any other means, is at best but procrastination.
>
> Homer Lea, 1909[1]

This chapter examines the development of U.S. strategic objectives in Korea and how they changed during the conflict. It covers the development of U.S. national strategy after World War II, and examines its application in Korea prior to hostilities. Finally, it contrasts the special operations objectives that guided the theater special operations organizations during the conflict. As will be shown in chapters 4 and 5, strategic objectives significantly affected the eventual development of special operations forces in Korea and the operations they undertook. This chapter identifies the strategic situation from which these organizations and their operations emerged.

U.S. strategy toward Korea during the first half of this century, evolved from virtual indifference until the 1943 Cairo Conference, to reluctant involvement through to the end of the Korean Conflict in 1953. Prior to 1943, America saw Korea as relevant only to the struggle between Russia, China, and Japan in Northeast Asia. Following the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, the resulting power vacuum renewed the balance of power struggle in Northeast Asia. Korea was, once again, a pivot point, in spite of the Allied declaration in Cairo that affirmed a free and independent Korean Nation "in due course."[2] The situation in Asia paralleled that in Europe as the Soviets consolidated their hold over the Eastern European countries. The U.S. perceived itself confronting a broad, post-war front of world communist expansion. For the first time, the U.S. defined global defense against communism as one of its primary strategic goals. How the U.S. policy makers interpreted the communist threat determined the strategy the country adopted. It was this historically new policy of global defense that produced the postwar containment strategy of the Truman Doctrine and NSC-68, and led the U.S. into the Korean Conflict in 1950.

The foundation of the Truman Doctrine was George F. Kennan's containment strategy.[3] It formed the basis of U.S. foreign policy in the 1950's. It pursued national security by carefully balancing international power, fears, and interests. It consisted of three stages: 1) restoring a stable balance of power in the vacuums created by the defeats of Germany and Japan, and by the rapid expansion of Soviet influence, 2) attempting to create fragmentation within the communist movement, and 3) attempting to change the Soviet concept of international relations, i.e. to accept the viability of peaceful coexistence in a diverse world as opposed to remaking it on the communist model.[4] This approach outlined a strategic effort on a broad front using economic, diplomatic, and military measures. The focus was on the development of self-sufficient, strong, non-communist nations, independently capable of withstanding Soviet infiltration and subversion. The primary means was U.S. diplomatic influence and economic aid. Kennan's strategy to counter Soviet expansion, in an environment of limited resources, was meant to eliminate the need for a large, prohibitively expensive U.S. military force capable of meeting multiple threats worldwide simultaneously. Kennan hoped the U.S. could selectively apply its limited assets to a broad

front strategy designed to achieve the most economic, yet, most efficient solution.

In contrast to Kennan's approach, the Policy Planning Staff of the NSC under Paul Nitze, who replaced Kennan as director in 1949, produced NSC-68 in 1950, as a comprehensive statement of U.S. containment strategy for the 1950's. NSC-68 drew a worldwide perimeter around communism, and viewed a threat anywhere along this perimeter as a threat to U.S. vital interests that required a U.S. military response, or the credible threat of it. Instead of generating additional means to economically defend these interests, this policy, in effect, expanded U.S. commitments by defining them in terms of perceived communist threats.[5] At the same time, it limited the U.S. strategic response to communist expansion to the military arena. As a result, an emergency in Korea, or anywhere else in 1950, presumed a U.S. military response. Unfortunately, it was the military option that the U.S. was least prepared to execute in 1950.

In order to understand the reasons behind the deterioration of U.S. military capability by 1950, it is necessary to review events beginning prior to the end of World War II. Late 1943 found the Allies looking ahead to the defeat of the

Axis powers and the redesign of the world balance of power. President Roosevelt was intent upon raising the issue of trusteeship for former colonial nations, including Korea, with a view toward eventual independence. Britain, China and the U.S. issued a declaration during a conference in Cairo that November affirming Chinese sovereignty over Formosa and Manchuria, and declaring that Korea would become a free and independent nation.[6] This represented the first genuine commitment by the Allies to Korea's post-war independence. Though avoiding specific reference to trusteeship, it is clear that this was always the Allied intent. Not until the Yalta Conference in February, 1945 was a formal Allied proposal for a joint trusteeship under Allied (British, Russian, Chinese and U.S.) control made.

Suspicious of Soviet intentions after their failure to honor the Yalta agreements in Eastern Europe, Truman wanted to assume a hard line with the Soviets after he became president in April, 1945. However, when approving plans for the invasion of Japan, he found that the U.S. had insufficient troops to occupy Korea. Russian assistance in accepting the Japanese surrender in Korea was a necessity. Additionally, the War Department, General MacArthur and the JCS felt that Soviet

control of Manchuria and Korea was a post-war inevitability, and commitment of U.S. forces there would only prolong the war.[7] The State Department strongly disagreed, predicting Soviet domination of Asia if the U.S. did not militarily control strategic Asian areas by the end of the war.[8] Trusteeship appeared the only viable solution to the problem without losing Korea to the Soviets. An unknown factor at the time was the atomic bomb. It opened a possibility that the U.S. could force an early surrender of Japan and avoid an invasion, enabling a preemptive Allied occupation of Korea before Russia could react. The Soviet announcement that it could not declare war prior to August 15, 1945 supported this assumption.[9] It also caused the U.S. to delay production of detailed plans for joint Soviet-U.S. occupation of Korea. The explosion of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, respectively, led to the expected early Japanese surrender in August. The U.S. scheme for occupying Korea, however, backfired badly when the Soviets declared war on Japan on August 8, forcing the U.S. to produce a joint occupation plan that the Soviets would agree to.[10] As Soviet troops poured into Korea, the State-War-Navy-Coordinating Committee (SWNNC) produced General Order Number One late on August 10, dividing Korea at the 38th parallel.[11]

The U.S. transmitted the plan to Moscow on August 15, where, after some anxious moments in Washington, Stalin agreed to all provisions, including the concept of trusteeship.[12] Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, commander of the 24th Corps on Okinawa, arrived at Inchon with the 7th Division on September 8, and accepted the surrender of Japanese forces south of the 38th parallel from Governor General Nobuyuki Abe on September 9, 1945.[13] General Hodge's immediate task was to maintain order in South Korea until the U.S. and the Soviets developed detailed plans for creating a Korean government.

This planning took place during the Moscow Conference of December, 1945 which established a Joint U.S.-Soviet Commission "to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government."[14] The Commission consisted of members of the U.S. and Soviet military commands in Korea. The participation of Korean parties in the formation of the new government was the key U.S.-Soviet point of disagreement, and remained so throughout 1946. The Soviets refused to accept the participation of any party in public opposition to trusteeship, which, by late 1945, was every organized Korean political group in existence. However, communist organizations quickly reversed their positions, and enthusiastically supported the trustee-

ship plan. This issue caused the complete breakdown of talks by late 1946. Meanwhile, the Soviets consolidated a strong, central government, and equipped and trained a powerful army in North Korea. By 1947, the U.S. realized progress toward a unified Korea was at a standstill and sought a political solution that would enable an honorable U.S. withdrawal.

Following the breakdown of Joint Commission talks, a State Department proposal recommended holding elections in the South and turning the reunification question over to the United Nations. Approved by the SWNCC and the Policy Planning Staff, Secretary of State, George C. Marshall addressed the U.N. General Assembly in September, 1947 and added the Korean question to the agenda.

On November 14, 1947, the U.N. General Assembly established the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) to supervise general elections and the establishment of a new government.[15] The Soviets rejected the commission and denied it permission to pass north of the 38th parallel, blocking the participation of North Korea in any U.N. sponsored general election. UNTCOK organized elections in the south in May, 1948.[16] The Synghman Rhee faction won a landslide victory, and established the Republic of Korea

(ROK). Foundation of the ROK in July, 1948 was quickly followed by the proclamation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in Pyongyang, by Kim Il-Sung. Both republics claimed jurisdiction over the entire peninsula. For Truman, the ROK represented a foreign policy success in which the United Nations fully supported U.S. objectives, and set the stage for an honorable U.S. withdrawal, the ultimate policy objective. By March, 1949, Truman approved NSC-8/2, a definitive plan for U.S. support for, and disengagement from, the ROK. It called for the removal of all U.S. forces by June, 1949.[17] Despite efforts by the ROK to delay this timetable, U.S. troops departed Korea on June 29, 1949. UNCOK remained in Korea to observe the American departure, and maintain the international presence the U.S. sought as assurance against DPRK aggression.

Korea was supposed to be the U.S. example to Asian nations that communist aggression could be prevented without a guarantee of U.S. military support. The communists viewed the departure as a U.S. distancing itself from Korea. Dean Acheson's celebrated National Press Club speech in January, 1950 followed closely by Congressional defeat of the Korea aid bill for fiscal 1950 supported this impression. Though

the aid bill eventually passed, it caused much turmoil in the shaky, repressive government of Synghman Rhee, transmitting indications of instability to the North. Rhee's supporters suffered major losses in the national assembly election of May, 1950, and a prominent U.S. senator publicly stated that loss of Formosa and Korea to the communists was inevitable and could occur at the Soviets' convenience.[18] These events suggested to the DPRK the feasibility of a surprise attack in great strength designed to shatter the ROK in a brief campaign.

The North Korean attack on the ROK, on June 25, 1950 was a direct challenge to the Truman Doctrine. It was also the first test of the effectiveness of the United Nations in resolving hostilities through a collective military response. The swiftness of the initial strike, and its rapid progress necessitated an equally swift answer. General MacArthur went as far as his authority allowed, while the U.N. Security Council convened. U.S. influence in the Council coupled with the convenient absence of the Soviet representative enabled the hasty passage of resolutions that sanctioned a collective U.N. military response.[19] The U.N. resolution of June 27, 1950 is important as it sanctioned the initial military action by U.N. forces. Its final paragraph stated:

> Recommends that Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security to the area.[20]

This last sentence enabled U.N. Command to interpret what constituted "...peace and security..." as being anywhere along a broad spectrum of situations from simple cessation of hostilities in place to military reunification of Korea under the U.N. This broad statement contributed to a series of strategy shifts on the part of U.N. Command during the first year of the war.

FECOM strategy in Korea underwent four major shifts during the conflict. In the initial phase, U.N. forces conducted an active defense on the Korean Peninsula until they built up sufficient combat power to initiate offensive operations. The objective was restoration of the border at the 38th parallel. This phase lasted from June 25 to September 11, 1950. The second phase began when the U.S. and U.N. sanctioned the crossing of the 38th parallel by U.N. forces to continue offensive operations and effect the reunification of Korea under the Rhee government. This lasted from September 11 to November 29, 1950. The third phase began with the intervention of the Communist Chinese and the defeat of

Eighth Army and X Corps. The U.N. conducted retrograde operations to defensible terrain to save the force from decisive defeat. Maintaining a foothold on the peninsula and avoiding annihilation was the primary objective. U.N. Command seriously considered evacuation to Japan as defense of Japan was the overriding regional objective. This phase covered the period from November 29, 1950 to January 25, 1951. The final phase began with the resumption of offensive operations that eventually established a line of resistance north of the 38th parallel. This line remained fairly static throughout the remainder of the conflict. The ultimate objective of the U.S. became a negotiated end to hostilities that restored the pre-conflict border. Reunification of Korea by military means was no longer part of U.N. strategy.

The U.N. resolution of June 27, 1950, initiated the first phase of U.S. strategy to restore the 38th parallel in Korea. On June 30, Truman authorized the employment of a U.S. regimental combat team from Japan. On July 5, Task Force Smith was the first U.S. unit to engage North Korean People's Army (NKPA) forces. On July 7, 1950, the Security Council passed a resolution creating the U.N. Command under U.S. executive control.[21] ROK forces, though not members of the

U.N., were under Eighth Army control. The U.S. now had U.N. sanction and support to undertake military operations to restore the 38th parallel. The U.N. Command's desperate, but successful, defense of the Pusan Perimeter through August, 1950 forced the NKPA past its culminating point. The successful U.N. amphibious landing at Inchon in September shattered the existing NKPA structure. This dramatic success led the Truman administration to a significant strategic decision, and initiated the second strategic phase.

Military success offered the White House an opportunity to resolve the reunification problem permanently. Advisors informed the President that the U.N. resolutions provided the legal basis for attacking North Korea.[22] Truman did not want to widen the war to involve either Russia or China. Assured that Chinese or Soviet intervention was improbable, on September 11, 1950, Truman approved NSC 81/1 giving MacArthur freedom to pursue the NKPA north of the 38th parallel, as long as no Chinese or Soviet intervention appeared.[23] The U.N. General Assembly resolution of October 7, further authorized the operation of U.N. forces "...throughout Korea..." and specifically called for the reunification of Korea under U.N. auspices.[24] U.N. forces moved rapidly north throughout Sep-

tember and October, 1950, dangerously extending their lines of communications, reflecting the desire of the U.N. to reach the Yalu River and end the war before the end of the year. In this atmosphere of anticipation, it may have been easy for FECOM to conclude that CIA reports of Chinese troop concentrations along the border were isolated and uncorroborated. The information provided by Chinese prisoners captured in early November validated FECOM's conclusion.[25]

The intervention of Chinese "volunteers" in November initiated the third strategic phase of the conflict. It marked a major U.S. shift in strategic direction from military reunification to maintaining a foothold in Korea, and avoiding decisve defeat. The regional priority remained the defense of Japan. MacArthur reported to the JCS that "...We face an entirely new war."[26] He saw a U.N. evacuation of Korea as disastrous to the future of Japan, Formosa and the Philippines. Additionally, MacArthur personally desired retaliation for the U.N. defeat at the hands of the Chinese. MacArthur saw the Chinese attack as formal entry into the war, fully opening the mainland to U.N. attack. He favored blockade, strategic bombing and use of Nationalist Chinese troops to open second front against the communists. These concerns are key to un-

derstanding what initiated the rift between MacArthur and Truman.[27] MacArthur's proposals for widening the war caused rising concern among the Allies whose enthusiasm for the conflict waned after Chinese intervention.[28]

The possibility of evacuation of Korea appeared as a strategic option in late November.[29] On December 16, Truman declared a national emergency. His concern after Chinese intervention was the survival of U.N. forces while maintaining a foothold in Korea and limiting the conflict to the Korean peninsula. This involved a public retreat from the objectives of the U.N. resolution of October 7, 1950.[30] By early January, 1951, the criteria to begin evacuation of Korea was when the U.N. Command was pushed back into the original Pusan Perimeter area. The overwhelming pessimism surrounding this period is reflected in the tone of MacArthur's correspondence to the JCS.[31] However, the death of General Walker and assumption of command of Eighth Army by General Matthew B. Ridgway had a major impact on the conduct of operations, and ushered in the fourth strategic phase of the conflict.

January, 1951, marked the final shift in strategic direction for the U.S. and the U.N. Command. The survival of his forces no longer threatened, Ridgway undertook offen-

sive operations to restore the 38th parallel and set the stage for a negotiated settlement. By March, Eighth Army reoccupied Seoul and in April, it reached the 38th parallel, badly mauling the Chinese forces enroute. Reorienting operations from terrain objectives to the destruction of Chinese forces, General Ridgway initiated an attrition strategy in Eighth Army with "Operation KILLER." Coming straight from Washington where he was the Army Deputy Chief of Staff, Ridgway probably knew that military reunification of Korea was incompatible with the Truman Administration's policy objectives.[32] Restoration of the original border while breaking the enemy's will to continue fighting became Ridgway's primary emphasis. At this point, General MacArthur's concentration on offensive operations to reunify Korea came into direct conflict with Truman's desire to seek a negotiated peace. Upstaging Truman's imminent offer to the Chinese of settlement talks, MacArthur delivered an ultimatum to the Chinese Army on March 24, 1951 in direct opposition to Truman's intentions, and set the stage for his relief in April.[33]

Between March 27 and April 1, U.N. forces forced the communists back across 38th parallel, and in two weeks had secured a line several miles north of it. Deviation from

this line was minimal for the next two years. Military re-unification of Korea was no longer an objective of the U.N.

It was during the third and fourth strategic phases of the conflict, that organized special operations within Korea expanded. Organization and expansion of partisan forces, PSYOPS units, direct action and reconnaissance units occurred both in FECOM and the CIA. Until this point FECOM limited its special operations to psychological warfare. Its intelligence gathering activities were strictly conventional in nature, and limited to interrogation of line crossers and refugees, aerial and ground reconnaissance, reports from units in contact, and shared ROK Army intelligence.[34] The strategic objective of interdicting the enemy rear area did not appear in FECOM planning until January, 1951.[35] The CIA maintained its passive intelligence gathering capabilities throughout Asia after 1948. In conjunction with the conflict in Korea, it added capabilities designed to attack communist targets throughout Asia [36]

The overlapping strategic guidance they received from their respective headquarters, hindered the coordination of CIA and FECOM efforts in Korea. FECOM focused on hostilities inside Korea and could not conduct operations outside of that

geographic area. Its responsibility was the prosecution of hostlities on the peninsula, and specifically precluded widening the conflict. The CIA conducted its operations in support of a national intelligence policy that transcended FECOM's boundaries. It operated throughout Eastern Asia, with virtually no geographic or functional limitation.[37] Operating under the authority of NSC 10/2, CIA strategic direction reflected the national view of Korea as a sideshow, and focused on intelligence gathering, guerrilla warfare, sabotage, and espionage in China, Russia, and Indochina, as well as Korea.[38] CIA operations in Korea were only part of the larger strategic effort in Asia and beyond the purview and, hence, control of FECOM. FECOM, while attempting to establish control over the CIA, failed to establish clear strategic goals for its own special operations units. FECOM psychological warfare units reported "a lack of logic for the conduct of the war" as a limiting factor in its operations.[39]

FECOM developed partisan forces to conduct interdiction and attrition operations in the enemy rear area in support of an anticipated U.N. offensive into North Korea. As the probability of this event waned and disappeared, FECOM undertook no reappraisal of the guerrilla forces' objectives.[40]

This failure contributed to the overall ineffectiveness of the FECOM partisan warfare program. FECOM's own internal strategic uncertainty, and its strategic incompatibility with the CIA, doomed its attempts to coordinate the special operations effort in Korea under its control. The organization of these special operations forces and how they were employed in conjunction with the theater strategy will be covered in Chapters 4 and 5.

U.S. strategic goals in Korea transitioned from restoration of the 38th Parallel, to military reunification, to preserving the U.N. forces and a foothold on the peninsula, and back to restoration of the border. It is important to keep Korea in proper perspective for this time period. The Truman Administration was strategically focused on the Soviet threat in Europe. It considered a communist threat to Japan a regional sideshow. To the U.S. Korea was always a sideshow within that sideshow. This attitude contributed to the strategic shifts that took place in Korea. While containment of the communist threat was critical, the U.S. could not afford to widen a war in Northeast Asia it was ill-prepared to fight at the expense of Europe.

These shifting objectives illustrated the U.S.'s difficulty in assuming its new role of superpower and its un-

familiarity with limited war. The shifts had a marked effect upon the forces actually conducting the fight. The strategic confusion of 1950-51 had a ripple effect upon the fighting units, especially the FECOM special operations units, most of which were North Korean partisan units seeking reunification of Korea. Policy changes deeply affected their strategic effectiveness. In Korea, the U.S. military attempted, under emergency conditions to relearn the lessons of the World War II special operations forces. It forgot them again before Viet-Nam. As the following chapters show, lack of coordinated strategic objectives robbed the special operations program in Korea of direction, coordination, and coherence.

CHAPTER 3 ENDNOTES

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[18]Ibid., 221-235.

[19]Department of State, FRUS-1950 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 155.

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[22]Joseph C. Goulden, Korea: The Untold Story of the War, (New York: MacMillan, 1982), 234.

[23]FRUS-1950, 712-721.

[24]Ibid., 904-906.

[25]Goulden, 287.

[26]Ibid., 382.

[27]James F. Schnabel, "Policy and Direction: The First Year." U.S. Army in the Korean War. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), 365-377.

[28]Martin Lichterman, "To the Yalu and Back" In American Civil-Military Decisions, ed Harold Stein (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1963),618. Goulden, 398.

[29]FRUS-1950, 211.

[30]Ibid., 1361. On December 4, 1950, during a meeting with Prime Minister Atlee (Britain), Truman first discussed objectives short of military reunification. It is important to remember here that the U.S. strategic focus is on Europe first and Japan second. Preserving forces to defend these areas are more important than Korea. The U.S. would evacuate its forces before it would accept a defeat in Korea.

[31]Goulden, 430-432, 441-447.

[32]Ibid. 432, 459-462.

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CHAPTER 4

ORGANIZATION

> An elite group has always appeared within the Army during every war in which the United States has been engaged...As surely as such groups arose, there arose also the grievances of the normally conservative military men who rejected whatever was distinctive or different or special.[1]
>
> COL Francis J. Kelly
> 1973

This chapter examines the organization of U.S. special operations forces (SOF) in Korea from 1950 to 1953. Its purpose is to analyze how strategic objectives affected the development and coordination of the SOF that operated in Korea during the conflict. Initially, the history of the development of U.S. SOF highlights certain bureaucratic and organizational problems that originated in the World War II and postwar period, and that resurfaced to affect the development of SOF during the Korean Conflict. Next, the CIA organization that operated in Korea is examined against its strategic focus as outlined in NSC 4/A and 10/2.[2] Finally, the organization of FECOM's organic SOF in Korea is examined against the four strategic phases of the Korean Conflict covered in Chapter 3.

FECOM created several organizations to coordinate all special operations in Korea, yet the CIA remained autonomous of FECOM control throughout the conflict. The primary reason was that the CIA pursued a broad national intelligence policy under NSC charter that encompassed functional and geographic areas that were beyond the purview of FECOM. FECOM's area of responsibility was limited to the Korean peninsula and within one years' time pursued strategic objectives that changed significantly four times. The strategy that initiated the creation and organization of its guerrilla forces, changed by the time they were ready to begin operations. Within the four phase strategic framework of the conflict constructed in Chapter 3, FECOM special operations forces only became available at the end of the third and throughout the fourth phase when stalemate was the strategic situation. Once created, the purpose of these forces were not reappraised and the initial strategic guidance they received in early 1951 guided their operations through 1953. These operations, as well as those of the CIA are the theme of Chapter 5.

The first, true U.S. special operations capability began with the creation of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) on June 13, 1942. Its architect, and only director was William J. Donovan.[3] Two years prior, in 1940, President

Roosevelt sent Donovan to conduct a series of sensitive meetings with the British government. His primary mission was to become intimately familiar with the capabilities of the British intelligence services, specifically the Special Operations Executive (SOE), and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), with a view toward creating similar capabilities within the U.S. government.[4] This experience exposed Donovan to agencies organized to provide a broad spectrum of services that included psychological operations, direct action operations, guerrilla warfare, and deep reconnaissance. Additionally, all were coordinated to support conventional theater operations. With a mental blueprint for a similar American organization, and the enthusiastic support of President Roosevelt, Donovan organized the OSS in 1942, under the newly created Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).[5] OSS remained a "civilian" government agency in that most of its operations fell outside the boundaries of the international laws of war. OSS's clandestine activities precluded agents' ability to claim combatant status in the event of capture. This necessarily prohibited its control by conventional military theater commands. Its strategic objectives were determined at national level and beyond the purview of the military theater commanders.[6] This important characteristic was directly applicable

to the CIA in 1950 in East Asia. This lack of control by the theater commander, of a civilian agency conducting clandestine, paramilitary operations within the theater could not help but breed mistrust and suspicion within the military.

Despite its remarkable accomplishments during the war, this mistrust chracterized the U.S. military's view of the OSS, and led to bureaucratic conflicts with the military services throughout the war. Because of Donovan's direct access channel to the President, Roosevelt consistently aided the OSS in maintaining its bureacratic and operational freedom of action.[7] President Harry S. Truman was not of like mind, and following the war, he dissolved OSS on October 1, 1945.[8] Donovan retired, and the OSS secret intelligence and special operations functions tranferred to the War Department Strategic Services Unit (SSU), "a caretaker body formed to preside over the liquidation of the OSS espionage network."[9] Truman transferred research and analysis functions to the State Department. Highly trained experts drifted away with little effort to retain or record any OSS history or operational procedures.[10] However, a few key members of the remarkably talented group of people that made up the OSS provided a valuable repository of experience to draw upon for leadership when Congress created the CIA.

OSS was the first and last U.S. agency organized with an exclusive and complete charter for special operations. OSS operated under the JCS, when the JCS performed most of the current NSC function, but maintained direct access to the President. It represented a merging of civilian and military capabilities that would never be duplicated. With the creation of the OSS, a government organization assumed, for the first time, "operational responsibility in a field...ignored and scorned by many diplomats and military professionals."[11] This event was significant for two reasons: 1) it was the only unified special operations command in U.S. history. (The present day USSOCOM created by Congress through the DOD Reorganization Act will never encompass CIA operations thereby never becoming completly unified.) and 2) the U.S. government authorized the creation of an agency chartered to conduct activities that were clearly outside the boundaries of its own national laws and those of the international community.

Military commanders or political leaders linked to these activities jeopardize not only their careers, but the organizations and nations they represent. Public exposure could result in the fall of a government and corresponding worldwide loss of national prestige and credibility, threaten theater relations with Allies, and cause deterioration of the

treatment of military prisoners. Military and political leaders did not look favorably upon these activities and agencies for logical, realistic reasons; not irrationality, jealousy or stupidity. In most instances, special activities represent a grave national risk, and require direct Presidential authorization.

President Roosevelt decided they were necessary during World War II. President Truman did not, at least, immediately following the war. The realities of the "Cold War" changed his mind resulting in the creation of the CIA. Against communist adversaries whose ideology sanctioned all activities, Truman saw that U.S. restraint only served the communist cause. The grave resposibility for such operations necessarily lay at Presidential level, and, as a result precluded control by any lower governmental level.

Following the dissolution of the OSS in October, 1945, the myriad of intelligence requirements generated by the developing confrontation with Soviets, caused President Truman to centralize U.S. covert capabilities by creating the Central Intelligence Group (CIG) on January 22, 1946 under the War Department.[12] In 1947, the National Security Act created the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as a separate governmental agency. Also created was the National Security

Council (NSC) which played a major role in the control of the CIA. The NSC replaced the JCS as the principal advisory agency with direct access to the President. At this point the JCS lost its ability to control CIA operations. The scope of JCS responsibility narrowed to strictly military matters, while the NSC covered the full spectrum of national policy, foreign and domestic. In late 1947 and 1948 the NSC codified two major decisions: NSC 4/A and 10/2. The former gave the CIA responsibility for covert psychological operations and the latter broadened these responsibilities to include all covert operations, to include preventitive direct action, political, economic, and paramilitary warfare.[13] As a separate government agency, the CIA undertook these responsibilities under the strategic guidance of the Truman Doctrine, and later NSC-68. To conduct these activities, the CIA formed the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). Headed by Frank Wisner, a highly successful former OSS operative in Europe, it represented the total U.S. covert operations capability from 1948 through 1950.[14]

Just prior to hostilities, in May, 1950, the CIA Director of Far East Operations, Colonel Richard G. Stilwell, succeeded, with difficulty, in gaining General MacArthur's approval for the CIA/OPC operation in Japan.[15] The

suspicion of FECOM for the CIA can be attributed to the historic mistrust of MacArthur for OSS-type organizations operating in his theater, but not under his control. The Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) under MacArthur's direction in World War II conducted clandestine operations throughout the Southwest Pacific that duplicated those of the OSS in Europe. The difference was that special operations other than psychological operations were run primarily by the Australians in a small agency known as the Inter Allied Services Depart-mentment (ISD). The AIB focus was intelligence gathering, not special activities, and completely under MacArthur's control.[16] He had no need of OSS, partly because he had his own clandestine capability, and partly because OSS answered to General Marshall, not MacArthur. In Korea, this situation was recreated except that MacArthur no longer had the AIB or any other duplicate capability to hold out the CIA. By NSC charter, CIA conducted worldwide special activities, and operated routinely in Russia, China and elsewhere in the Far East. These areas were clearly outside of FECOM authority and precluded the superior-subordinate relationship MacArthur sought to establish, severely inhibiting operational coordi-nation.

In 1950, the CIA, functioned through two subordinate organizations: the Office of Special Operations (OSO) and the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). OSO was responsible for passive intelligence gathering activities, i.e. espionage/ counterespionage operations. OPC was responsible for all covert activities authorized by NSC 4/A and 10/2 including preventitive direct action, guerrilla operations, and subversion against hostile states.[17] In 1952, these two organizations merged to form the Directorate of Plans with Wisner as Director.[18] Under Wisner, was Colonel Stilwell as director of Far East operations, who established a Far East OPC element in Japan under the control of Hans V. Tofte, in July, 1950 (Fig. 4-1). Tofte was, like Wisner and Stilwell, a former OSS operative, with experience in Manchuria and North Korea. The undisguised mistrust and suspicion of the CIA by General MacArthur's headquarters, took on a personal dimension between Tofte and General Charles A. Willoughby, the FECOM G-2.[20] This personal conflict, however, lasted only until May, 1951, and the departure of MacArthur and Willoughby, and did little to inhibit the growth of Tofte's agency. The CIA was represented on the FECOM Special Staff by the Documents Research Division (DRD).[22] To specifically control operations in Korea, CIA established the Joint Activities Commission, Korea (JACK). JACK was part of

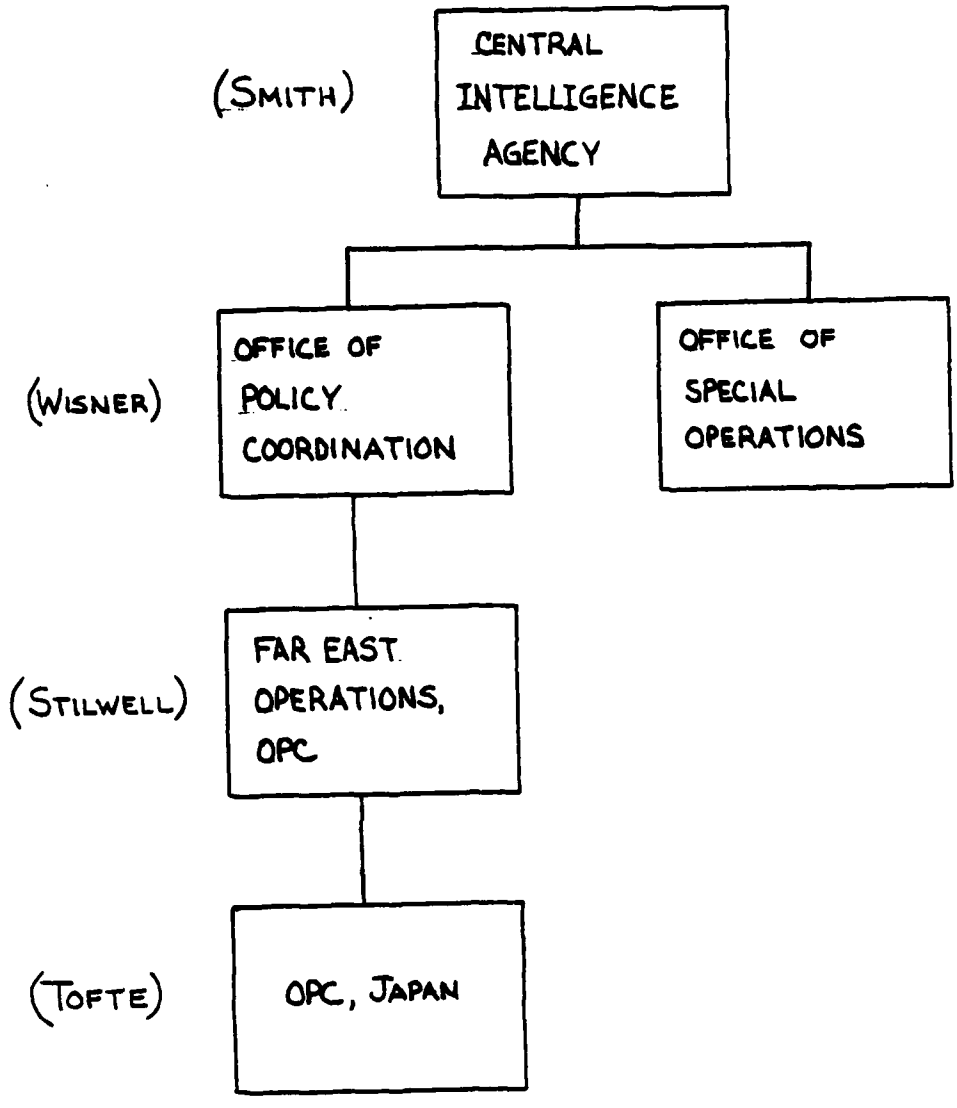

Fig. 4-1 Central Intelligence Agency Organization, 1948[23]

another FECOM agency, the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK), which will be discussed later (Fig. 4-2). Throughout the conflict, these agencies remained autonomous from FECOM. Though its operations extended throughout the Far East, CIA interests in Korea from late 1950 onward, centered around guerrilla operations, intelligence gathering and establishing a viable escape and evasion (E&E) agent network for recovery of downed Air Force fliers. By early 1951, Tofte established a headquarters near Atsugi Air Force Base, just south of Tokyo.[24] His staff included members of all the military services on "detached duty", making it easier to access military assets if needed, and to provide training cadre for CIA guerrilla forces, and E&E briefing teams. Eventually, the CIA employed a force of over 1,200 Korean guerrillas, trained by U.S. military cadre on Yong-do Island, in Pusan Bay.[25] Guerrilla leaders received special training at sites near CIA/OPC headquarters in Chigasaki, Japan. Although the CIA, theoretically, coordinated Air Force support through FECOM, Tofte regularly utilized assets of the Civil Air Transport (CAT) organization. CAT was a civilian commercial airline utilized by the CIA throughout Asia. Made up of veterans of General Claire Chennault's "Flying Tigers" of World War II, they were among the most capable and daring flyers available.[26] Tofte also created

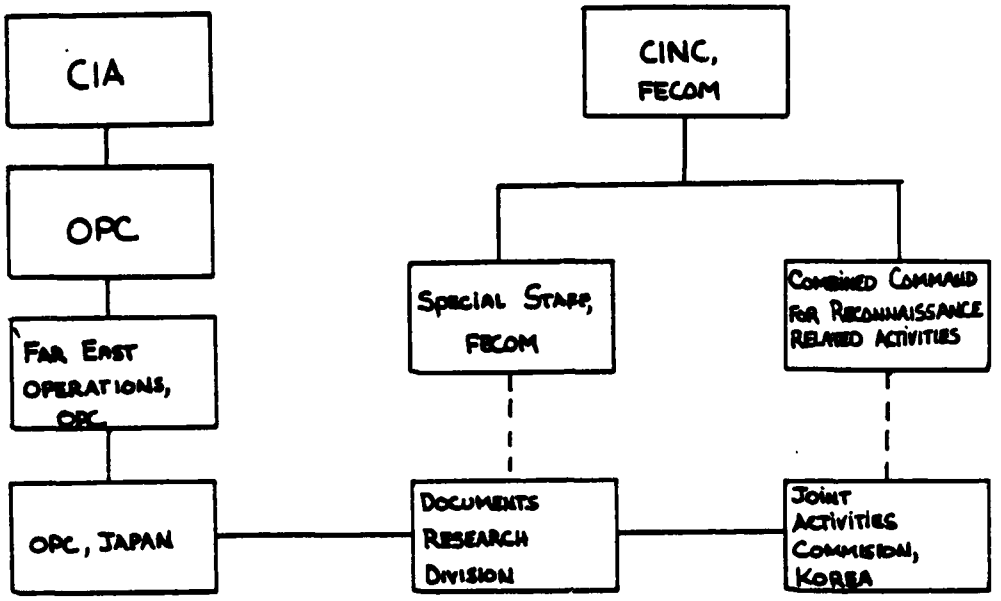

Fig. 4-2 CIA-FECOM Special Operations Relationship, 1951[27]

two separate indigenous fishing fleets as cover for CIA operations throughout Korea.[28] These fleets were a collection of Korean junks and fishing boats manned by hired Korean fishermen who conducted a bona fide fishing business for a market profit. Agents operated within the fleet, using its operations as a cover for missions above the 38th parallel in Korea, or elsewhere in Asia. CIA was well funded, well organized and diversified in its special operations capabilities. Though technically part of the FECOM special staff as the Documents Research Division, its instructions came from CIA headquarters in Washington, through the director of Far East operations. DRD then provided instructions to its operating agents through JACK, for CIA operations in Korea.[29] CIA participation on the FECOM staff was probably more for the purpose of staying informed of FECOM operations than anything else. The bureaucratic animosity between FECOM and the CIA quieted following the Chinese intervention in late 1950. A visit to MacArthur by General Walter Bedall Smith, the newly appointed CIA Director, in January, 1951, marked the almost total cessation of attempts by FECOM to assume control of CIA operations for the duration of the conflict.[30] MacArthur's intelligence failure in light of a CIA report that warned of the Chinese buildup, coupled with the appointment of Smith, spelled the end of the FECOM intelligence dominance in the

Far East. MacArthur's departure in April, and Willoughby's in May, completed this cycle of events. This did not usher in a new CIA monopoly, however. Military special operations were under way by this time and continued throughout the conflict. It did establish the CIA's autonomy in the Far East for the remainder of the conflict. CIA growth continued unimpeded. Both Generals Ridgway and Clark supported this autonomy undoubtedly understanding the world wide scope of the CIA mission.

Apart from the OSS, the Army created and employed its own psychological warfare capability during World War II.[31] The first real attempt at creating a capability did not occur until 1941, when Assistant Secretary of War, John McCloy, pushed the Army staff into creating the Psychologic Branch in the War Department G-2 on June 25, 1941.[32] The Joint Psychological Warfare Committee (JPWC) appeared in 1942, ostensibly to plan psychological warfare operations directed against the enemy.[33] Due to continual bureaucratic in-fighting, primarily resulting from resentment of the OSS by the military departments, the JCS dissolved the JPWC and the Psychologic Branch in 1942, and OSS became solely responsible for the psychological warfare program.[34] This resulted in the dissolution of all remaining redundant agencies

within the military departments. This assumption of the psychological warfare function by the OSS contributed to the growing bureaucratic animosity between OSS and the military departments throughout the war, and resurfaced during the Korean Conflict.[35]

The use of organic psychological warfare units by theater commanders during World War II, was unaffected by these events and highly successful. The largest was the Psychological Warfare Branch at Allied Forces Headquarters in North Africa. This later became the Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces (PWD/SHAEF) under Brigadier General Robert A. McClure.[36] Under McClure, PWD successfully joined the efforts of the Army, the OSS, the Office of War Information (OWI), the Political Intelligence Department of the British Foreign Office and the British Ministry of Information in Europe, creating a truly coordinated strategic capability.[37]

In the Pacific theater, psychological operations in MacArthur's Southwestern Pacific Area/Far Eastern Command (SWPA/FEC) was conducted by the Far Eastern Liaison Office (FELO), an Australian agency under the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) which controlled all clandestine activities in the theater. Formed in June, 1942, FELO primarily conducted

leaflet drops and radio broadcasts up until the SWPA/FEC assault upon the Philippines. In June, 1944, MacArthur formed the Psychological Warfare Branch (PWB), a primarily American unit, under FELO. It focused on leaflet drops, artillery delivered leaflets, newspaper drops and radio broadcasts to the Philippines and, later, Japan. An Allied effort from the beginning, SWPA/FEC enjoyed great success from FELO/PWB operations as prisoner interrogations attested.[38]

As a result of the success of such efforts, the need for an organization in the War Department resurfaced, resulting in the creation of the Propaganda Branch, G-2, on November 12, 1943.[39] This branch survived the post-war demobilization and was in existence when hostilities broke out in Korea, making the difficult task of restoring the Department of the Army level staff agency easier. The Propaganda Branch moved to the Policy Section of G-3, Plans and Operations, in November, 1946, transferring to the G-3, responsibility for psychological operations.[40] Still merely a planning staff, no real capability existed until June, 1947, when the Army activated its first operational unit since the war, the experimental Tactical Information Detachment. Consisting of a total of 20 personnel, its loudspeaker and leaflet teams participated in Army training throughout the U.S. over

the next three years.[41] In the wake of hostilities in Korea, the Army created the Psychological Warfare Division within the Special Staff with General McClure as director. Within four months, McClure expanded his organization's responsibilities to encompass all psychological warfare, cover and deception operations, and guerrilla warfare, becoming the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare (OCPW) on January 15, 1951. Its three subdivisions, Psychological Operations, Requirements, and Special Operations, created a coordinated special operations agency at Department of the Army level for the first time.[42] McClure hoped that the staff organization at DA level would be the model for the theater level organizations. In Korea, he was disappointed.

The OCPW exercised no formal organizational or supervisory control over the psychological warfare organizations within FECOM. However, beginning in early 1951, General McClure aggressively pursued a campaign to induce FECOM to organize its special operations capabilities simililarly to the model established by OCPW.[43] His purpose regarding FECOM was fourfold: 1) to establish psychological operations under a separate staff section, 2) to transfer unconventional warfare operations from G-2 control to this new staff section's control, 3) to create a separate air section, dedicated to aerial psywar under

the psywar section, and 4) to place CIA operations in Korea under FECOM operational control.[44] Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, Jr. aided him in this effort. An enthusiastic supporter of psychological warfare, Secretary Pace joined General McClure in the effort to influence the situation in FECOM. General Ridgway received Pace's detailed memoranda favorably and in June, 1951 created the Psychological Warfare Section as a separate special staff section.[45] However, FECOM successfully resisted McClure's efforts to include unconventional warfare under the psywar staff section, to create a dedicated psywar air section, and after April, 1951, supported CIA's position that it maintain its organizational integrity and operational independence. General McClure remained critical of the FECOM guerrilla warfare program results throughout the conflict noting a lack of organizational coordination.[46] Both General Ridgway and later, General Clark supported CIA autonomy in the Far East. OCPW had no formal control over special operations in Korea. However, primarily through the aggressive personality of General McClure, it influenced the organization and conduct of psychological operations in Korea.

The Psychological Warfare Branch was part of the Military Intelligence Services Division of FECOM at the outbreak of hostilities. Consisting of a handful of officers and

men, it conducted the first leaflet drop on North Korean forces on June 29, 1950. This element represented the total FECOM special operations effort during the first and second strategic phases of the conflict.

It was not until November, 1950 that the first psychological operations unit to conduct missions in Korea, the Tactical Information Detachment from Fort Riley, arrived in Korea. Responsible for tactical level propaganda, it was redesignated the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company and assigned to the Psychological Warfare Branch, G-2, FECOM to begin tactical operations.[47] FECOM reassigned the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company to Eighth Army upon creation of the Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) in the EUSAK G-3 in January, 1951 (Fig. 4-3). The Psychological Warfare Section, FECOM, created in June, 1951 was a special staff section of the General Headquarters, and focused on theater-level, strategic operations.(Fig. 4-4)[48] Not until the arrival of the 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group from Fort Riley in August, 1951, did full-scale strategic operations take place. This unit had the capability for large scale production of newspapers and leaflets, as well as radio broadcasting. It also produced the Voice of the United Nations throughout the conflict.[49] The arrival of these units, caused both EUSAK and FECOM to create

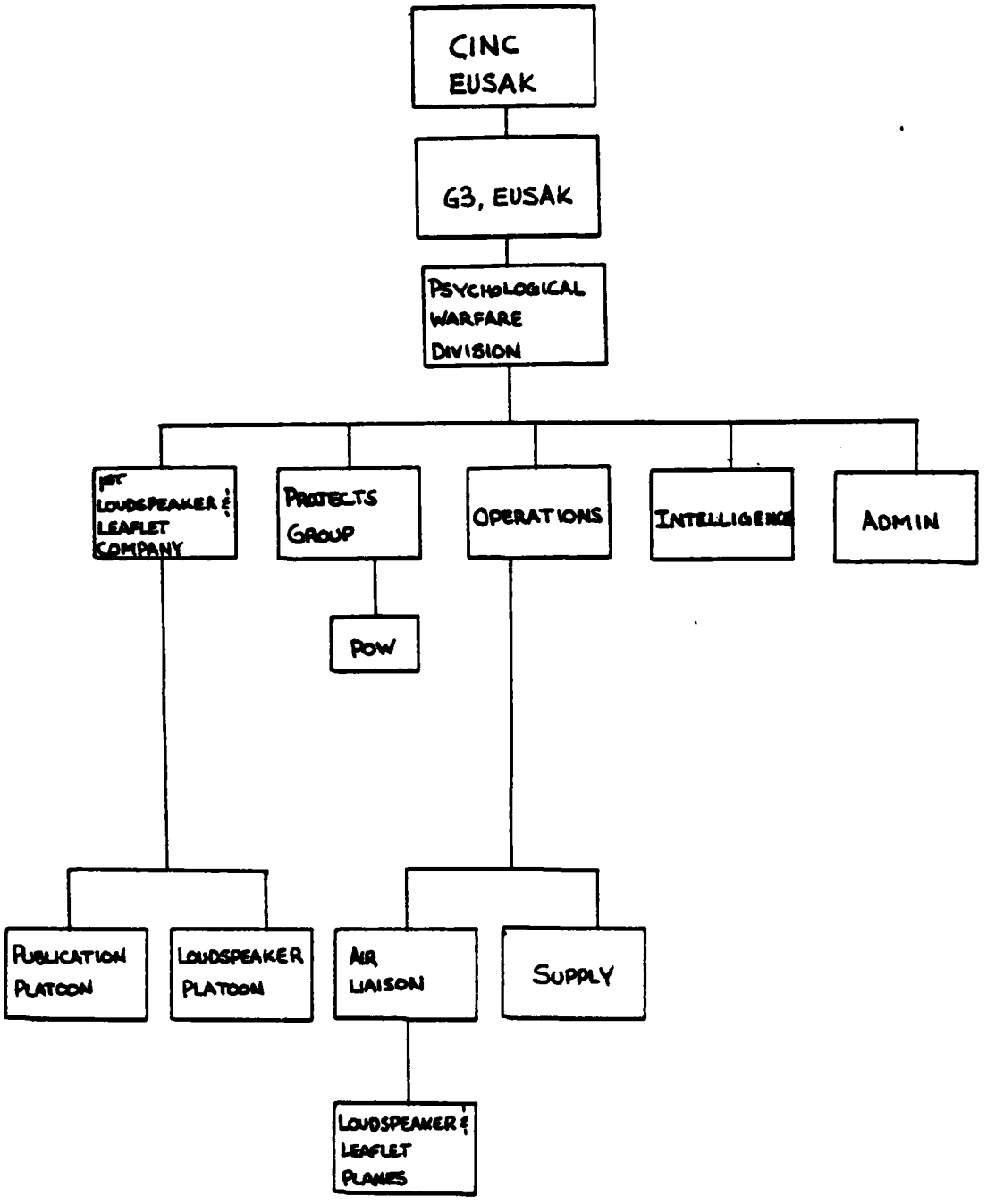

Fig. 4-3 Psychological Warfare Division (EUSAK), January, 1951[50]

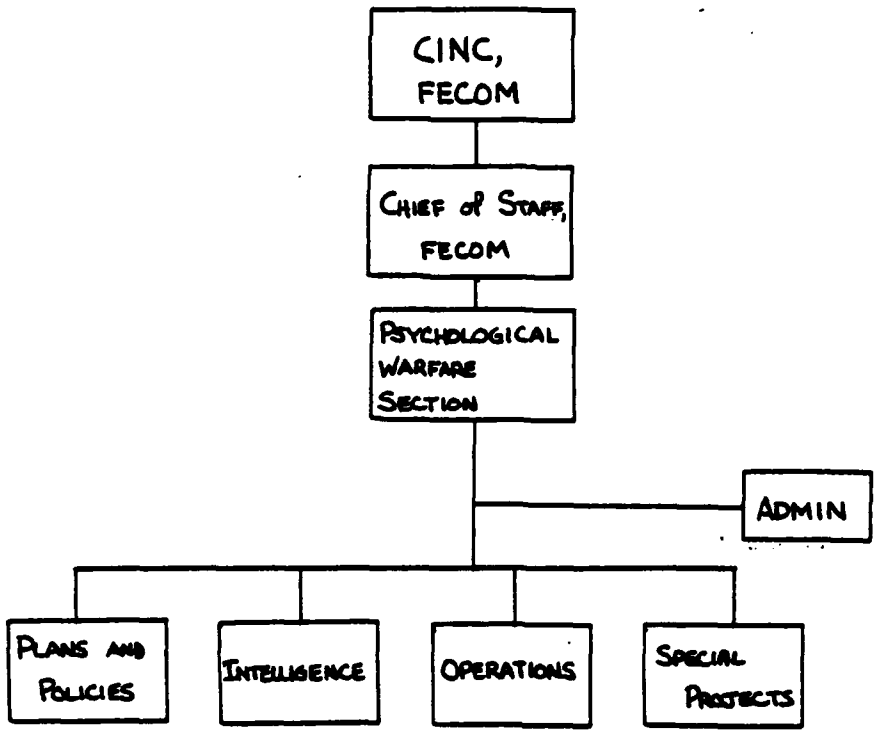

Fig. 4-4 Psychological Warfare Section (FECOM), June, 1951[51]

air liaison sections within PWD and PWS to coordinate the Air Force assets needed for increasingly larger aerial propaganda operations, both leaflet and loudspeaker. Though no direct organizational command relationship existed between the two headquarters, PWD/EUSAK technically functioned as a subordinate agency under PWS/FECOM. The FECOM Weekly Plan for Psychological Warfare Operations was a detailed directive that included leaflet delivery schedules which EUSAK adhered to routinely.[52]

It is important to note that the creation of PWD/EUSAK in January, 1951 and PWS/FECOM in June, 1951 coincides with the assumption of command of these two senior headquarters by General Ridgway. With his recent experience as the Army Deputy Chief of Staff, General Ridgway undoubtedly had an appreciation for the value of psychological warfare. At the time he left Washington, psychological warfare on the Army Staff was organized under the G-3. This probably explains why the PWD was created under EUSAK G-3 instead of the G-2. Additionally, upon assuming command of FECOM in April, 1951, Ridgway was probably the catalyst behind creating PWS as a special staff section, again mirroring OCPW on the Army Staff. As will be seen later, Ridgway's appearence is also coincidental with the creation of the FECOM partisan effort.

Not until the end of the third strategic phase did EUSAK become aware of large numbers of anti-communist guerrillas operating in the Western province of Hwanghae-do. ROK patrol boat forces witnessed a series of battles involving large bands of guerrillas resisting communist forces sweeping south following the retreating U.N. forces.[53] Unable to maintain bases on the mainland, the guerrillas evacuated to new bases off-shore on the western islands. The guerrillas were armed primarily with old Japanese and captured Russian weapons. The ROK Navy requested assistance from EUSAK to resupply and sustain these elements in their resistance against the communists.[54] The strategic reversal suffered by the U.N. forces in November-December, 1950, caused planners to take advantage of the opportunity this ready-made guerrilla force offered to harass enemy forces from the rear.

Throughout the conflict, the guerrilla or "partisan" operations command relationships within FECOM underwent a confusing series of changes. The following chronology covers the evolution of these headquarters:

a) <u>January, 1951 to May, 1951</u>

With FECOM approval, EUSAK established the Attrition Section, Miscellaneous Division, G-3, on January 15,

1951, with primary planning responsibility for partisan activities. Two days later the new section commander, Colonel John H. McGee, arrived in Tokyo to coordinate with FECOM for joint service support of partisan operations.[55] McGee sought to conduct operations under the FECOM G-3 or under the separate special staff division for Psychological Operations.[56] He wanted the partisans to operate under a joint headquarters outside of FECOM G-2 control. This arrangement would enable the partisans to access joint military assets and avoid having intelligence gathering tasks take priority over their operations. His efforts did not succeed. The Attrition Section, though part of the EUSAK G-3, coordinated its operations with the Far East Command Liaison Group (FEC/LG), G-2, GHQ (Fig. 4-5). By February, 1951, the partisans organized three operational units: WILLIAM ABLE BASE (later known as LEOPARD BASE) headquartered at Paengnyong-do Island but occupying numerous islands along the Korean west coast as far north as the Yalu River Estuary, BAKER SECTION located near Pusan primarily a training and staging base for airborne/ special missions, and later in April, TASK FORCE KIRKLAND, operating on islands off the east coast, near Wonsan.[57] The decision to organize these guerrilla forces came at a time when the major emphasis at EUSAK was on mounting a counterattack in support of a general U.N. offensive. As noted previously,

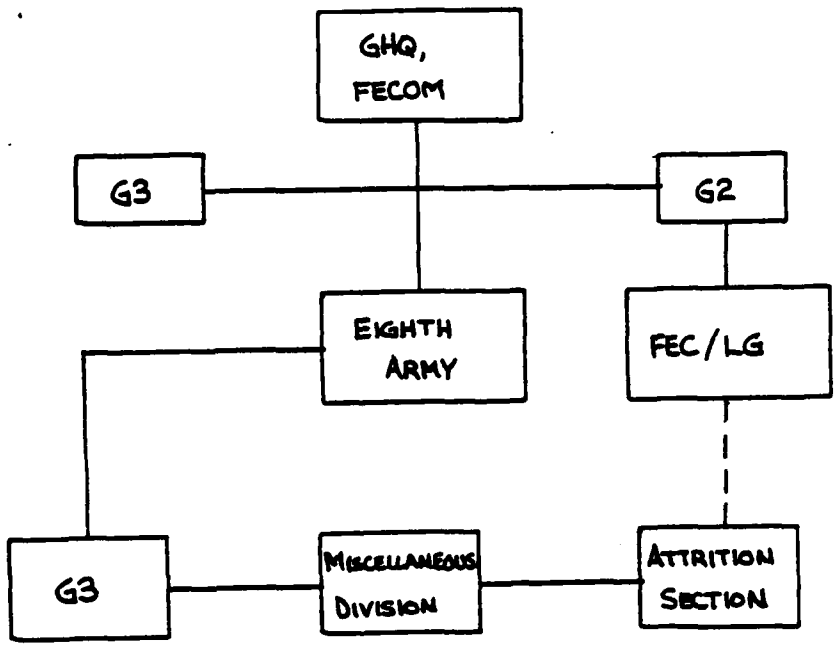

Fig. 4-5 Attrition Section, Miscellaneous Division, G-3, EUSAK (January, 1951)[58]

General Ridgway was the new EUSAK commander at this time. His focus was on attrition of communist forces, hence the creation of the "Attrition" Section. The fact this section remained under G-3 control reflected Ridgway's familiarity with the special operations control structure on the Army Staff as previously discussed. Control of special operations under the G-2 at FECOM during this period reflects the personal preferences of General Willoughby, and General MacArthur. The guerrillas undoubtedly were an additional means by which Ridgway could increase enemy attrition with rear actions, while Eighth Army attrited the enemy head-on in the conduct of a limited offensive (Operation KILLER) to restore the 38th parallel. Not until May, however, were partisan forces prepared to undertake operations.

By this time, however, Eighth Army retook Seoul and restored the 38th parallel at great expense to the enemy. Armistice talks, which began in July, were imminent and the major focus shifted to maintaining the status quo while awaiting a negotiated settlement. The strategic conditions that caused the creation of the partisans had changed. However, the strategic guidance they received in January, 1951, continued to guide their operations until the end of the conflict.

b) May, 1951 to December, 1951

General Ridgway became the new FECOM commander and General Van Fleet assumed command of Eighth Army in April. On May 5, 1951, Van Fleet dissolved the Attrition Section and reorganized it as the Miscellaneous Group, 8086 Army Unit (AU). This was primarily due to a EUSAK SOP which prohibited staff agencies from conducting operations. As a numbered Army Unit, the Miscellaneous Group was authorized a Table of Distribution and Equipment (TDE) which provided badly needed equipment and personnel. In July, armistice talks began at Kaesong while hostilities continued along a stabilized line of resistance. On July 26, 1951, Ridgway redesignated FEC/LG as FEC/LG, 8240 AU. On the same date, he created the Far East Command/Liaison Detachment, Korea [FEC/LD (K)], 8240 AU, under FEC/LG control to conduct intelligence operations separate from partisan operations (Fig. 4-6). Control of special operations still remained under G-3 supervision at Eighth Army, and under G-2 supervision at FECOM.

c) December, 1951, to October, 1952

On December 10, 1951, FECOM assumed direct control of all partisan activity from EUSAK. Under FEC/LG, 8240 AU,

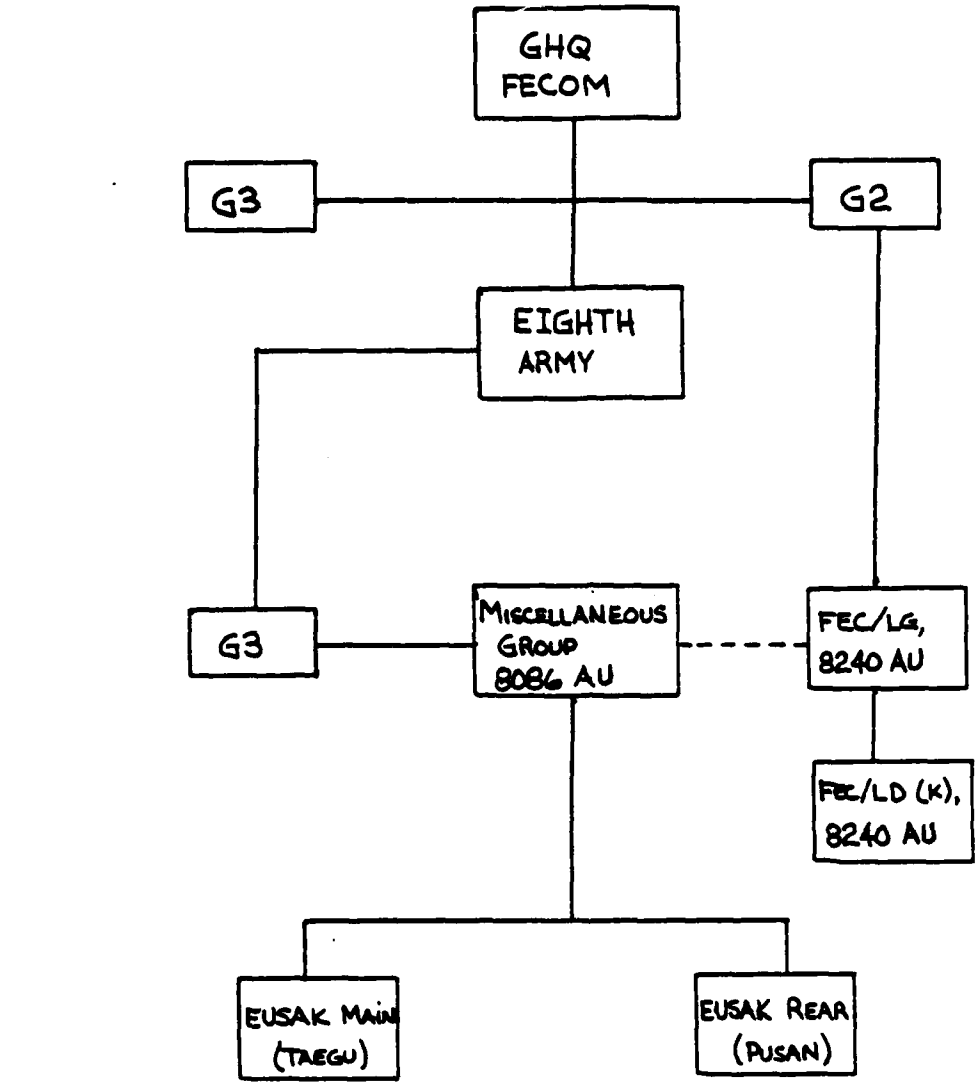

Fig. 4-6 Miscellaneous Group, 8240 AU, G-3, EUSAK[59] (May, 1951)

FEC/LD (K), 8240 AU, absorbed the 8086 AU, assuming control of guerrilla activity in Korea as well as retaining its original intelligence function. A new organization, the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK), 8240 AU, was created and assigned to FEC/LG. Ostensibly, CCRAK coordinated the covert activities of all agencies operating in Korea. FEC/LG and CCRAK remained under the staff supervision of the G-2, FECOM (Fig. 4-7). Also, part of CCRAK was JACK (CIA) and the Air Force Air-Sea Rescue Service who focused on the rescue of downed fliers. CCRAK was FECOM's answer to the problem of coordinating special operations in Korea. Every agency conducting operations in Korea was represented. However, CCRAK had no explicit command authority over JACK. JACK was expected, but not required, to coordinate CIA operations. FECOM appointed the CCRAK director, and the Document Research Division appointed the deputy director. In fact, both took instructions from their own parent headquarters. While CCRAK provided the structure for coordination, it did not provide the motivation, and in fact, did not result in coordination except where and when the CIA desired to do so.[60] By this time, it was apparent that the armistice talks were not going to lead to a rapid settlement. General Mark Clark replaced General Ridgway as Commander in Chief, Far East (CINCFE) in June, 1952, and asked FEC/LG for comprehensive

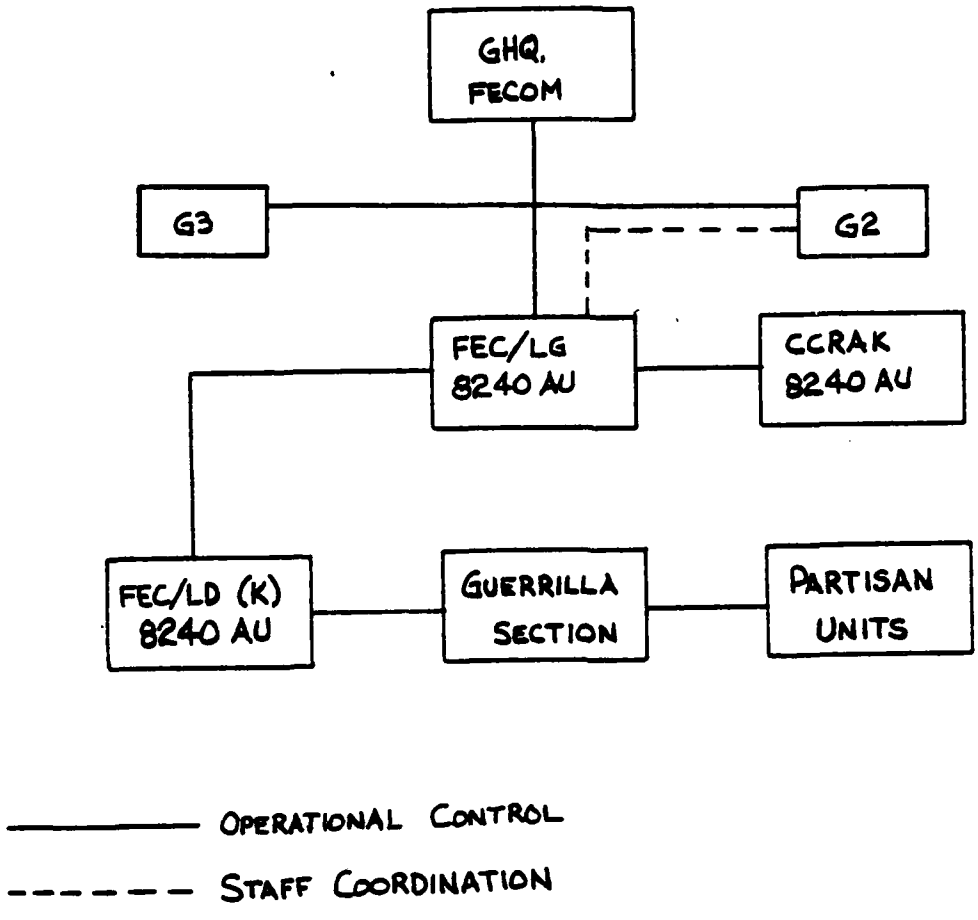

Fig. 4-7 Far East Command Liaison Detachment, Korea[61]
FEC/LD (K), 8240 AU (December, 1951)

plans for the use of guerrilla forces on a broad front in 1953, including support of a major U.N. offensive.[62]

Partisan strength was just over 7,000 men by this time. CCRAK planned to double this strength by March, 1953 and redouble it to 40,000 men by July, 1953, through intensive recruiting.[63] From the records available, it is not possible to determine clearly what FECOM's immediate objectives were at the time it ordered the recruiting drive, but they can be surmised from the plans that appeared in early 1953.[64] Briefly, the objective was to build a large enough guerrilla force by mid-1953 to significantly push the communists toward an armistice agreement. The FECOM recruiting goals were not be achieved, however, before another change in direction for guerrilla forces occured.

d) October, 1952 to July, 1953

In an attempt to establish a single, controlling headquarters for all special operations units in Korea, General Clark redesignated CCRAK, 8240 AU, the 8242 AU and gave it operational control of FEC/LD (K) in September, 1952. FEC/LG reverted back to a staff agency of FECOM, G-2 providing staff supervision and administrative support for CCRAK (Fig. 4-8).[65] In December, 1952, FECOM became a joint

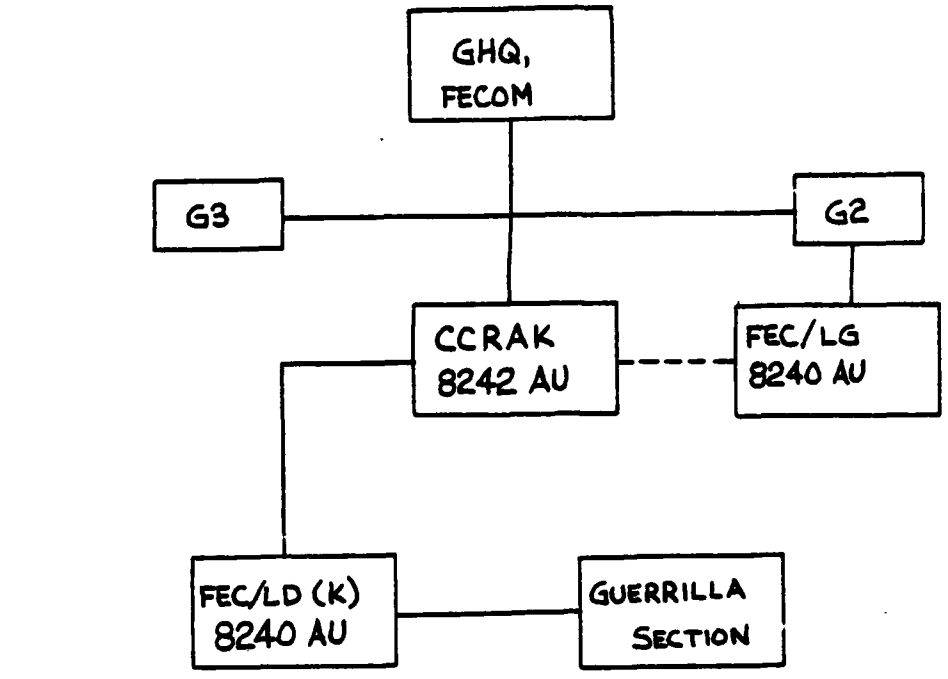

Fig. 4-8 Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities[66]
CCRAK, 8242 AU, FECOM (October, 1952)

headquarters, and Army Forces, Far East (AFFE) became the Army component command. CINCFE, General Clark designated the CG, AFFE, Major General Thomas S. Harrold, the executive agent for all covert, clandestine, and related activities in support of combat operations in Korea. This precipitated the redesignation of FEC/LG to Support Group, 8240 AU, and a Special Operations Division (SOD) was formed in AFFE, G-2 to provide administrative and logistical support, and assume staff responsibility for CCRAK (Fig. 4-9).[67] Partisan units were redesignated United Nations Partisan Forces, Korea (UNPFK) and all the area commands renamed as regiments. This caused no actual reconstruction of the operational units. By December partisan strength was over 16,000 men.[68] By April, 1953, this strength reached its highest point at 22,227 men.[69]

The final rearrangement of the military special operations command and control structure took place in August, 1953. This was done primarily to assist in a smooth transition of the partisans into the ROK Army. The ROK government was extremely suspicious of the partisans' North Korean origin and wartime activity. Though fighting for the U.N. Command, the partisans were considered "stateless" individuals of dubious loyalty by the Rhee government. Through U.S. influence, the partisans were accepted into the ROK Army shortly after the armistice was signed. Recruiting terminated in April, 1953

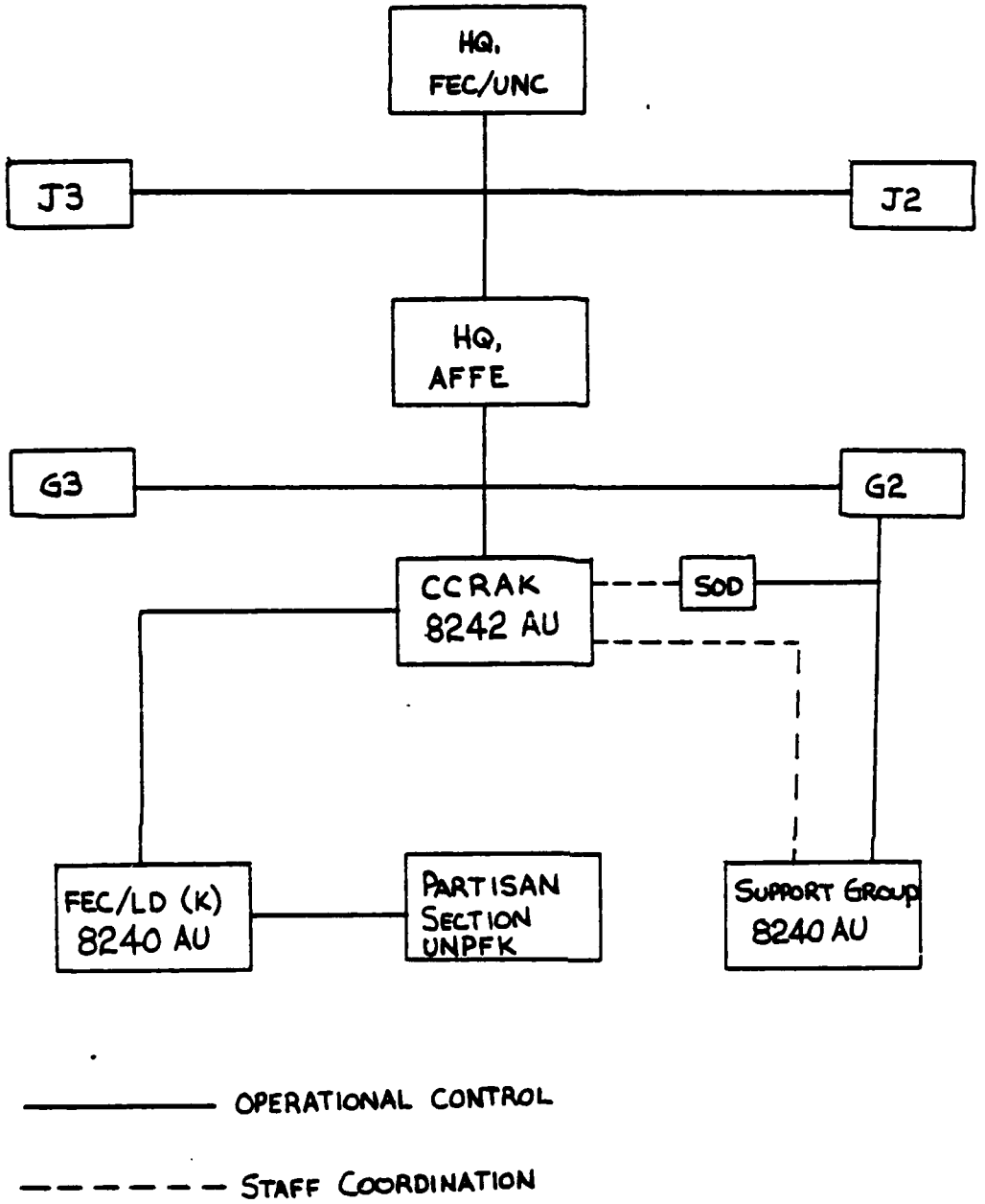

Fig. 4-9 CCRAK, 8242 AU, Army Forces, Far East (AFFE)[70]
Far East Command/United Nations Command (FEC/UNC)
(December, 1952)

due to the imminent armistice and pressure from the ROK government.[71]

In addition to the struggle with the CIA, FECOM was involved in an inter-Army conflict with General McClure, Chief of OCPW in Washington. General Willoughby steadfastly maintained control over all military special operations in Korea, in opposition to pressure from General McClure to place them under the G-3 or under PWS, on the Special Staff. This concept of staff control, endorsed by Donovan, was based upon OSS World War II experience. General McClure strongly asserted that special operations in Korea would be subordinated to intelligence activities under G-2 control. This command relationship with a staff agency exacerbated the operational problems symptomatic of FECOM special operations units.

CIA and FECOM special operations forces were organized along parallel lines toward overlapping, though not totally identical objectives. FECOM objectives developed with a view toward supporting a general U.N. offensive in early 1951 that never materialized. The need for these guerrilla forces disappeared with the planned offensive, but the organization, once created, survived, and continued to justify its existence as long as the conflict continued. Bureaucratic survival, self-justification and interagency competition played

as much a part in its development and survival as anything else. This is especially reflected in FECOM's year long struggle to settle upon a command and control structure. The quality of the partisan training and leadership also was questionable. The loss of reunification as a motivating factor, reduced incentives from political to material, i.e. managing rice rations. The ability of partisans to provide their own operational assessments since U.S. personnel rarely accompanied them on missions, combined with the obvious geographical focus on Hwanghae Province, raises questions concerning the motivation of the partisan organization.[72]

The CIA always maintained its organizational autonomy from FECOM, and its immunity from whatever pressure General McClure brought to bear. Its charter was from the president and its mission to lead the cold war campaign against worldwide communist expansion. By NSC charter, it was subordinate to none but the President in the conduct of its mission. The CIA matured during the Korean Conflict into an agency of formidable influence and capability. The CIA operations in Korea from 1950 to 1953 were part of its larger, worldwide mission in support of U.S. national policy. NSC-68 stated that policy, and NSC-4/A and 10/2 authorized the means through which the CIA pursued the policy objectives, i.e. special activities.

Pursuing clear and unchanging strategic goals, with responsibilities that were worldwide in scope, the CIA necessarily remained autonomous of FECOM control in its operations in Korea. It was an effective special operations agency during the conflict, whose contributions measurably aided the war effort.

Increased coordination between CIA and FECOM forces could have enhanced the effectiveness of partisan operations within the theater. This is not to say coordinated operations did not take place. The rescue of downed pilots that took place throughout the war utlized FECOM partisans, CIA agents, Air Force Air-Sea rescue service elements and Navy assets. This was a truly coordinated effort that performed a critically valuable service. Also, CIA agents routinely operated among the FECOM partisans to provide training in downed pilot rescue procedures. But in light of the organizational structure of the command and control headquarters designed to conduct coordination on a routine basis, no single authority controlled the assets and the forces. Nevertheless, the operational units worked this problem out on the ground. Mutual mistrust and suspicion, both bureaucratic and personal, permeated both organizations at the headquarters level, and prevented the creation of any true operational coordination of effort until

after April, 1951. From this point onward, CIA and FECOM operations coexisted and occasionally coordinated. The arrival of General Ridgway and the departure of Generals MacArthur and Willoughby played a key part in this change. These events will be covered in more depth in Chapter 5.

Probably the most important difference between the military and the CIA is the legitimacy of their actions under the laws of war. The limited nature of the Korean Conflict blurred this aspect to a greater degree than any previous conflict. The military, by joining the CIA in an openly co-ordinated effort, left itself open to losing its Geneva Convention protections. Of all the factors inhibiting coordination, this is one of the most important, as well as overlooked. With explicit instructions to confine operations to the geographic limits of Korea, FECOM could hardly afford to become involved in the numerous CIA operations ongoing in Russia, China, and Indochina. This inhibited plausible denial if the operations were compromised, risking an expansion of the war. Operation of the FECOM partisan effort as a cover for CIA operations was certainly feasible and possible. When examined against the sure knowledge of General Ridgway that the U.N. forces would not undertake a general offensive again in Korea, it makes the continued

operation of the partisans much more logical. This aspect will be considered further in Chapter 5 which will focus on the effects of strategy, organization and operations on the special operations effort during the conflict in Korea.

CHAPTER 4 ENDNOTES

[1]Francis J. Kelly, U.S. Special Forces, 1961-1971, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1973), 160.

[2]Alfred H. Paddock, U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1982), 72-76.

[3]William R. Corson, The Armies of Ignorance (New York: The Dial Press, 1977), 183-187.

[4]Ibid., 187.

[5]Ibid. Donovan organized his agency into three main branches: intelligence, special operations and training. The training branch handled the preparation of new personnel and assisted in their placement. Intelligence branch performed research and analysis, secret intelligence (espionage), and counterespionage, while the special operations branch performed psychological warfare, guerrilla warfare, and direct action operations.

[6]Dr. Jack J. Gifford, of Combat Studies Institute, USACGSOC, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, interview by the author, April 18, 1988.

[7]Paddock, 32.

[8]Ibid., 34. Corson, 245-247.

[9]Ibid.

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[11]Harry Rowe Ransom,Central Intelligence and National Security (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 64-65.

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[13]Ibid, 295, 303-305.

[14]Ibid., 306.

[15]William M. Leary, Perilous Missions: CAT Transport and CIA Covert Operations in Asia (University: University of Alabama Press, 1984), 124.

[16]Charles A. Willoughby, ed. Operations of the Military Intelligence Section, GHQ, SWPA/FEC/SCAP. Volume III. (Seoul: General Headquarters, Far East Command, 1950), 45-59.

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[19]Joseph C. Goulden, Korea: The Untold Story of the War (New York: MacGraw-Hill, 1982), 467-468. Paddock, 40-42, 75-77.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Paddock, 103.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Paddock, 103.

[24]Goulden, 469.

[25]Goulden, 470. Leary, 113-126.

[26]Leary, 113-126.

[27]Paddock, 103.

[28]Goulden, 469.

[29]Paddock, 103.

[30]Corson, 319-320.

[31]Paddock, 8-9.

[32]Ibid., 9.

[33]Ibid., 10.

[34]Ibid., 11-12.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., 14. The PWD fielded a self-contained unit known as a Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (MRBC). It had a multitude of capabilities covering the full spectrum of radio and loudspeaker broadcasting to leaflet production and distribution. Five MRBC's were fielded during World War II, and developed the doctrinal procedures that would speed the hasty reconstruction of this capability during the Korean Conflict.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Willoughby, 45-59.

[39]Paddock, 15.

[40]Ibid., 17-18.

[41]Ibid., 59.

[42]Ibid., 88-90.

[43]Ibid., 93-94. Corson, 303.

[44]Ibid., 93-107.

[45]Ibid., 92-93.

[46]Ibid., 108.

[47]Willmoore Kendall, FEC Psychological Warfare Operations: Theater Staff Organization (Washington D.C.: The Johns Hopkins University/ORO-T-27, 1952), 31-48.

[48]Ibid., 31-48.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Willmoore Kendall, Eighth Army Psychological Warfare in the Korean War (Washington D.C.: The Johns Hopkins University/ORO-T-17, 1951), 12-13.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Rod Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," Conflict, 7, no.2, (1987): 157.

[54]Ibid.

[55]Ibid., 158.

[56]Shaun M. Darraugh, "Hwanghae-do:The War of the Donkeys," Army, 34, no. 11, (November, 1984), 72. General McClure, Chief of OCPW within Department of the Army was campaigning unsuccessfully toward the same goal in Washington.

[57]Frederick W. Cleaver and others, U.N. Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954 (U), (Washington D.C.:The Johns Hopkins University/ORO-T-64, 1956), 32.

[58]Ibid., 36.

[59]Ibid., 38.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Paddock, 103.

[62]Cleaver, 62-63.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Ibid., 64.

[65]Ibid., 66.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid., 67.

[68]Ibid., 77.

[69]Ibid., 116.

[70]Ibid., 67.

[71]Ibid., 116-118.

[72]Ibid., 44, 51, 54-55, 76, 96, 103, 134-135.

CHAPTER 5

OPERATIONS

"...The road to special operations development in the U.S. armed forces led through a minefield. Experience with OSS revealed that many senior military commanders considered the 'dirty' tactics as practiced by special operations units as simply not part of the military arsenal. Vestiges of that attitude still exist today."[1]

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J-3, JCS, 1983

This chapter examines the effect of strategy and organization upon selected special operations conducted during the Korean Conflict by the CIA and FECOM. This examination sets the stage for determining what these special operations organizations achieved during the conflict, after which, conclusions can be drawn as to whether these operations were strategically effective or not. Having identified the strategy in Korea, and the organizations derived from this strategy, examination of the operations conducted by these organizations is the final phase of analysis.

Before discussing operations, it is necessary to refer back to the definition of special operations covered in

Chapter 1, pages 8-9. Although this lengthy definition was developed for application to the modern international environment, it covers the entire spectrum of operations undertaken in Korea from 1950 to 1953. The only area that does not apply is counterterrorism. While terrorism was certainly a threat during the Korean Conflict, counterterrorism as a special operation in today's context refers to the specialized forces and techniques employed against the modern-day terrorist threat. This modern threat is a sophisticated, well trained, and internationally organized paramilitary force and is fundamentally different from the local guerrilla threat of the 1950's faced by U.N. forces in Korea.

NSC 4/A and 10/2 authorized the full spectrum of special operations and activities contained in this definition.[2] U.S. strategic concerns were primarily Europe-oriented. The government viewed any communist move in Asia only as a strategic distractor aimed at Japan, and designed to set up a decisive Soviet move in Europe. Operations in Korea, though important, were a sideshow, in terms of relative worldwide strategic importance. After the Chinese intervention in November, 1950, conventional operations in Korea soon assumed the strategic focus they would maintain until 1953, i.e. leading to a negotiated cease-fire at the

pre-conflict borders. While this did not significantly affect the direction of CIA special operations, it did affect the FECOM partisan campaign which was initiated to support a possible general U.N. offensive in early 1951. When this posibility disappeared, FECOM did not reappraise its guidance to the partisans preventing the partisans from achieving any degree of strategic success.[3] Examination of these operations in detail allows some conclusions to be drawn about how and why this situation occurred.

CIA operations in the Far East were underway long before the outbreak of hostilities in Korea. As brought out in Chapter 4, since its creation in 1947, the CIA conducted clandestine operations against communist expansion around the world. By 1950, the CIA was a key participant in the "Cold War" against what the U.S. viewed as an expanding bloc of Soviet-controlled communist nations. In Asia, CIA conducted activities in Russia, China, Indochina and Burma as well as Korea. Just prior to the outbreak of hostilities, CIA activity in and around China continued following the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists. The consolidation of the Chinese communist government was far from complete in 1950 and the CIA devoted much attention to the conduct of a secret

war to create an opportunity for the Nationalists or a democratic alternative to take power.[4]

As part of the dramatic CIA growth from 1948 onward, OPC director, Frank Wisner requested Army support in the development of a CIA guerrilla warfare capability. In response, the Secretary of the Army authorized the G-3 to conduct direct liaison with OPC to determine the ground rules governing CIA conduct of para-military activities within an active theater. Records show considerable agreement between Army and CIA representatives that special operations in wartime would be best conducted under a single military command, such as the JCS. With the CIA becoming preeminent in this area, the need for the Army to develop such forces was considered unnecessary, and peacetime training assistance to the CIA laid the groundwork for wartime cooperation.[5] The Secretary of the Army approved space at Fort Benning, Georgia in 1949 for the OPC to establish its own guerrilla training base. Despite this atmosphere of cooperation, Colonel Richard G. Stilwell, director of Far East Operations, avoided committing the CIA to any permanent command or control relationship with the military. He only stated that he was "reasonably certain" that military theater commanders would be in-

formed of and could approve covert operations carried out in their theaters.[6] The JCS informed its unified commands that the CIA agreed to make liaison officers available to coordinate unconventional warfare activities in-theater if desired.[7] The Korean Conflict tested the operational relationship of the CIA with the military within a wartime theater.

The pre-war relationship between the CIA and the Army provides a backdrop against which special operations conducted in Korea can be evaluated. The only difference the conflict made to the CIA was that the opportunity to coordinate their operations with a conventional military effort, albeit one of limited scope, presented itself. Since 1948, at Yokosuka Naval Base near Yokohama, William Duggan conducted intelligence-gathering tasks for the Office of Special Operations (OSO) branch of the CIA.[8] Hans V. Tofte arrived in Japan in July of 1950 to establish the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). At Atsugi Air Base, south of Tokyo, Tofte created the CIA special activities capability in Northeast Asia.[9]

One of the first operations undertaken in late 1950 was Operation BLUEBELL.[10] This was essentially an effort to reinsert large number of CIA-trained, North Korean refugees

into the North to gather intelligence on Chinese and North Korean troop movements. The refugees then made their way South as best they could. Once in the South, the refugees contacted CIA agents who conducted their debriefing. The exact number of recruits is not available but references are made to "thousands."[11]

In conjunction with the recruitment program for BLUEBELL, Tofte recruited qualified refugees to make up what eventually became a separate 1,200 man guerrilla force under OPC control. A Marine officer on detached duty with the CIA, Lieutenant Colonel "Dutch" Kraemer, trained them at a base on Yong-do Island in Pusan Bay. The OPC utilized these forces for raids, reconnaissance, ambushes and other special activities throughout the conflict, both in and out of Korea. CIA inserted these elements either by amphibious landing or airborne drop.[12] Between April and December, 1951, OPC inserted 44 guerrilla teams with intelligence attachments into North Korea by parachute and amphibious landing. These teams operated just south of the Yalu River sabotaging trains and ambushing truck convoys, disrupting the flow of supplies from Manchuria and eastern Siberia. Tofte worked in this area throughout the 1930's for the Danish East Asiatic Company and was intimately familiar with the terrain. This experience

enabled Tofte to place his units in the best positions to inflict maximum damage. Tofte considered this program "highly successful" citing intercepted Chinese messages claiming 50,000 insurgents operating in their rear areas from the operations of his 1,200 guerrillas.[13] Tofte failed to mention that FECOM guerrilla activity, in strength of up to 20,000, undoubtedly contributed to this Chinese assessment, placing the ability of his small CIA guerrilla force to simulate 50,000 active insurgents in clearer perspective.

The CIA's infiltration, sustainment and exfiltration operations required the support of a modern, trained amphibious force, whose main focus was special operations support. To this end, CIA often used a FECOM unit, the Allied Special Operations Group (SOG) formed in August, 1950. It consisted of a Navy fast transport, the Horace C. Bass, modified to transport 162 commandoes, and a submarine transport, the Perch, modified to carry 160 commandoes. These craft were augmented by U.S. Marine reconnaissance troops, Navy underwater demolition teams and a squad of British Royal Marines. This element provided most of the covert amphibious insertion and extraction support for the CIA.[14] Together with his Civil Air Transport (CAT) air capability, Tofte created an independent air-sea transport capability. CAT also played a major role in the

conduct of CIA psychological warfare leaflet drops.[15] OPC had its own independent printing capability, and developed its own themes separately from those of FECOM. OPC's psywar objectives were primarily outside of Korea: China, Japan, and Indochina in particular. Numerous detailed studies of the FECOM psywar effort at FECOM and EUSAK indicate no interference with, or by, CIA psywar operations. This lack of interference was a function of the different psywar targets the organizations were operating against, not coordination. These were similar capabilities, with different missions, employed against different targets.

Another major project of OPC was the establishment of an Escape and Evasion (E&E) network for downed U.N. fliers and POWs. This involved the recruiting and training of indigenous Korean agents seeded throughout the North to establish safehouses. Fliers bailing out inland, and successfully avoiding capture, made contact with local agents. The downed pilots were guided through a series of these safehouses, handed off from agent to agent, and eventually reached an offshore island, where one of the two indigenous, CIA-hired fishing fleets made the pick up.[16] If the pilot could reach the coast before bailing out, CIA agents or CIA-trained FECOM partisans based on the off-shore islands, pro-

vided assistance while guiding in elements of the FEAF Air-Sea Rescue Service by radio to make the pick up. The usual FEAF package consisted of 2 to 4 fighter aircraft to engage enemy ground elements, and a helicopter or seaplane to actually rescue the pilot. They usually completed the rescue in a couple of hours.

An example of the type of mission carried out by OPC occurred in late 1950. In response to a query from the National Security Agency (NSA), OPC agents tracked down the whereabouts of the ocean cable that carried the majority of Chinese High Command secure traffic between Peking and Korea. One of the fishing fleets sent to the area in the Yellow Sea, cut the cable and carried the severed ends many miles in opposite directions. This caused a dramatic increase in radio traffic which the NSA monitored with ease. The overall impact of the wire cutting was to significantly enhance the ability of the U.N. Command to predict enemy military intentions on the peninsula.[17]

Another significant declassified CIA operation was Operation STOLE. A CIA agent, highly placed in the Indian government reported in early 1951 that the Nehru government was preparing to clandestinely ship critically needed medical

supplies and personnel to the Communist Chinese Forces in Korea. The cover was a Norwegian freighter. The aid package amounted to more than three full field hospitals, tons of drugs, and a full staff of doctors, nurses and technicians. OPC, under Tofte's guidance, intercepted the freighter, assisted by elements of the Nationalist Chinese Navy posing as renegade Chinese pirates. Supplies and personnel were turned over to the Nationalists and were never heard from again.[18] This non-delivery resulted in literally thousands of Chinese casualties.

The CIA, a civilian agency, conducted these operations under its fully enabling special operations charter, and consistently developed its operational objectives from the strategic guidance received from the NSC. In the context of the conflict in Korea, these objectives were rarely, if ever, at odds with those of the military forces. It is important to note that CIA operations during this period are not as subject to detailed scrutiny and analysis as are those of FECOM. But the few operations outlined above indicate a highly expert and efficient organization following a clear strategic direction. Planning took place at the very top, while execution was decentralized to highly trained, well-led, expert units. Lines of responsibility were clear and all activities con-

tained within a centralized organizational structure. No sub-agency operated independently even though strictly compartmentalized.

The first special operations actually conducted by FECOM in Korea took place on June 28, 1950 when the handful of people comprising the Psychological Warfare Branch, G-2, FECOM in Tokyo began leaflet airdrops and radio broadcasts in Korea.[19] FECOM conducted psychological operations (PSYOPS) throughout the conflict, as functionally independent from the rest of its special operations effort. This independence is reflected in the organizational separation of these functions previously covered in Chapter 4.

From June 28 through December 28. 1950, over 50% of all leaflet drops were against friendly civilian populations and troop target audiences. The primary concern of the ROK government during the initial months of the conflict was bolstering the morale of the South Korean people and soldiers. Only in September and November, after the defeat of the North Korean Army, did the enemy soldiers become the chief psywar target. From January through September, 1951, FECOM and Eighth Army air delivered 48 million leaflets a month. By this time, along a stabilized front, enemy front line and reserve troops became the chief target audience.[20]

EUSAK flew airborne loudspeaker missions beginning in January, 1951 and continuing through July, 1951, when the loudspeakers went unserviceable after a total of 231 missions. The overall impression of EUSAK psywar personnel was that loudspeaker operations were highly effective in operations against enemy personnel. Loudspeaker operations reached 100% of the target area at once, and could not be blocked by enemy action. Enemy soldiers did not need to read to receive the message. If illiterate, the enemy soldier was not subjected to the danger of possessing a U.N. leaflet and then asking a comrade to read it to him. Newly adapted speakers enabled clear tranmissions at altitudes of 7,000 feet, rendering aircraft relatively free of antiaircraft fire.[21]

Later in the war, the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, PWD, furnished ground loudspeaker teams to each field division. Audible at a range of up to one mile under good conditions, these teams required sufficient protective cover, a sufficiently quiet environment, and a relatively static situation in order to be effective. The difficulty in identifying targets and creating the proper conditions for the teams to operate resulted in an extremely low broadcast rate: less than

one per team per week from June through August, 1951.[22] The ideal targets were hard-hit, isolated enemy soldiers under continuous pressure. The stabilized conditions along the military line of resistance produced few such targets and contributed to the low broadcast rate.

In 1951, FECOM and EUSAK undertook a substantial effort to evaluate the effectiveness of these operations. Seven separate studies of the psywar effort were produced by the Operations Research Office of the Johns Hopkins University in January-February, 1951. These studies examined staff organization, prisoner of war interrogations, and surrenders, and evaluated the impact of operations in each category. One study estimated that the U.N. leaflet campaign prior to November, 1950 saved 1,200 U.N. lives and resulted in 12,000 North Korean surrenders. The studies reported air mounted loudspeaker operations were superior to leaflets, because of their ability to cover 100% of the target area and comparative ease of delivery.[23] This study made extensive recommendations to improve the psywar program. In all cases, they based their evaluation of operations effectiveness on extensive prisoner interrogation.

The Attrition Section, Miscellaneous Division, G-3, EUSAK produced the first plans to use guerrilla forces in January, 1951, which focused upon the training of guerrilla cadres for later insertion into the enemy rear.[24] These cadres were capable of organizing a cellular resistance movement which could later be employed in conjunction with a general U.N. offensive planned for the spring of 1951. In January, 1951, this cadre training program formed the basis of Operational Plan Number One (Fig. 5-1).[25] The plan assumed an enemy fallback to a defensive line along the 39th parallel, after attack by I (U.S.) Corps. Partisan elements would seize control of the Hwanghae Peninsula in the west while other elements would mass south of Pyongyang and north west of Hamhung to interdict enemy troop movements.[26] The U.N. offensive upon which the plan was based never materialized, and partisan activity settled into a two-year routine of intermittent harrassment operations on the mainland that sometimes lasted for thirty days. The guerrillas never established a permanent guerrilla base on the mainland. This was a combined result of tight communist rear area control measures and the loss of a fluid military environment once the line of resistance stabilized in mid-1951. The guerrillas staged all operations from islands off the east and west coasts.

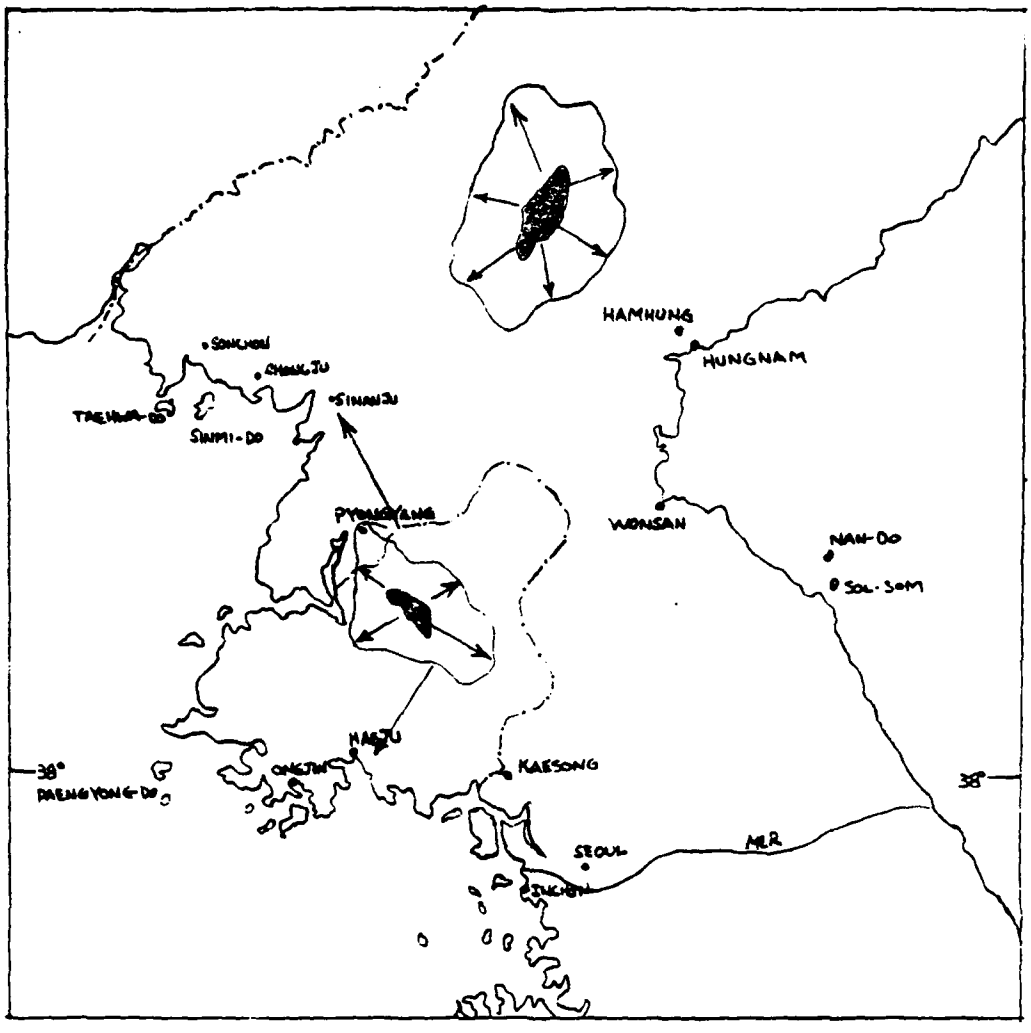

Fig. 5-1 Operational Plan One (ABLE)[27]
(January, 1951)

Large shaded areas represent proposed areas from which partisans were to stage guerrilla operations when the general offensive occurred.

—·—·—·—·— outlines the boundary of Hwanghae-do Province

The preponderance of all actions from 1951 through 1953 took place in Hwanghae Province (Fig. 5-2).[28] This was because most of the guerrillas on the west coast were originally from this area and this province was the closest to their operating bases. Since operational planning was left mostly up to the units themselves, it is not surprising that they focused on the areas with which they were most familiar. Over 50% of all operations were directed against enemy troops. Guerrillas claimed over 15,000 enemy casualties by December, 1951. The next most frequent operation was direction of naval gunfire.[29] These were pre-planned operations against known enemy target within range of naval batteries. Other missions were intelligence gathering, raids against tactical installations, supply and transport depots, and sabotage of the civil administration. The British Navy provided the majority of the gunfire support. In 1952, over 93% of guerrilla actions took place in Hwanghae Province, a little over 1% on the east coast and the remaining 5% throughout the rest of North Korea.[30]

Psychological warfare was integrated into partisan action early in 1951. Guerrillas dropped what they called "Leopard's Claw" leaflets on their objectives following raids

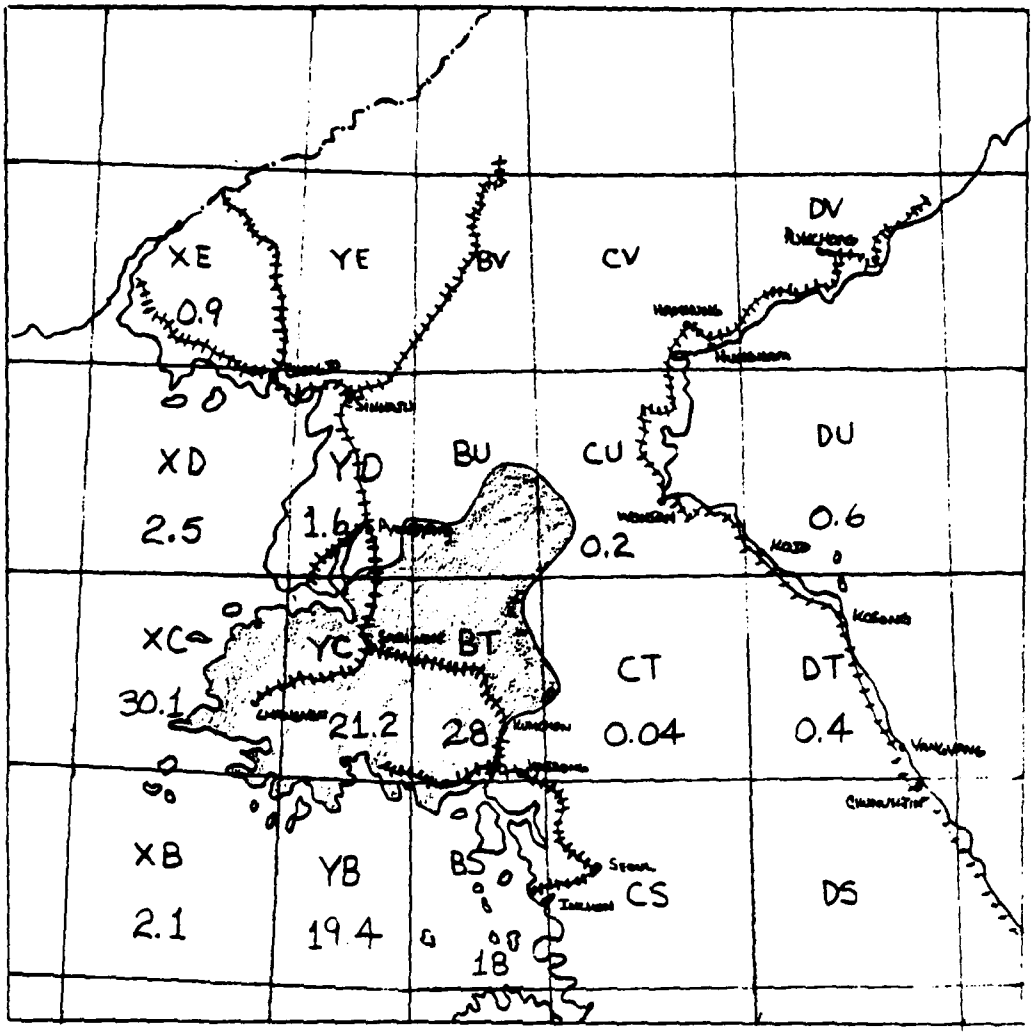

Fig. 5-2 Percentages of Partisan Actions by Grid Squares: May, 1951 thru July, 1953[31]

that identified the responsible guerrilla element with the purpose of terrorizing the enemy. Later, they utilized "black" propaganda cards in much the same way. These were printed to look as if produced by the DPRK, and blamed the Chinese for acts of wanton collateral damage.[32] Hwanghae Province, outside of the Kaesong-Pyong-yang railway and highway which ran through it, did not present targets of military significance to the U.N. Command forces. Planners assumed the ability of the partisans to operate in large numbers for long periods deep in central North Korea in the initial operations plans. The FECOM partisans never developed this capability. The stabilization of the front enabled the communists to concentrate on rear area control. The rigid rear area control measures they applied, combined with increased rear area troop units, and the unfamiliarity of the partisans with the internal areas, rendered their ability to establish even temporary interior bases extremly difficult. There was no marked change in enemy activity during this period. The lack of major targets in the area of operations indicate little, if any, strategic or operational effect by guerrilla activity.[33]

In December, 1951, when FECOM assumed direct control of operations from EUSAK, even though the possibility of a

renewed U.N. offensive was remote, no major review of strategic direction for the partisans took place.[34] Operations continued as they had under EUSAK. During 1952, the improbability of achieving a reunified Korea permeated the partisan command and may have affected their incentive for the rest of the conflict.[35] As indigenous North Koreans, the ROK government was not about to accept the partisans as citizens or even as members of a legitimate fighting organization. The Rhee government opposed the idea of accepting thousands of trained North Korean guerrillas as members of the ROK Army.[36] However, under U.S. pressure, the ROK government accepted the partisans into the ROK Army shortly after the armistice.

In June, 1952, General Mark Clark assumed command of FECOM from General Ridgway. He foresaw the possibility of a major U.N. offensive in the summer of 1953. In conjunction with this, FECOM increased partisan recruiting with a view of reaching a manpower goal of 40,000 by mid-1953.[37] In January, 1953 General Clark directed planning for the use of partisan forces on a broad front later that year. The plans covered two phases, the first, from January 28 to March 15 and the second, from March 15 to September 15. Phase I of the plan essentially instructed the partisans to insert cadres into the interior who would organize individual cellular

resistance groups in Hwanghae Province. These groups would conduct harrassment operations designed to cause the enemy to employ increasing numbers of troops in counterpartisan operations. Phase IIA merely expanded the general area of operations as outlined in Phase I, emphasizing an increased effort from the interior of North Korea, and greatly increased the area of operations on the east coast.[38] Both Phase I and IIA assumed that Eighth Army would maintain an active defense role (Fig. 5-3). Phase IIB assumed an Eighth Army general offensive. However, regardless of the Eighth Army mission, the missions assigned the partisans were no different than those in Phases I and IIA. The plan also included, for the first time, POW camp penetrations, assassinations of Communist officials, use of Chinese partisans along the Yalu, and the capture of MIG aircraft. Never executed, FECOM dropped these plans by April, 1953 as either unrealistically conceived or lacking necessary intelligence.[39] These proposed missions were highly sophisticated operations. At this time, OPC was the only agency trained, equipped and authorized to carry out such ambitious operations. The ability of the partisans to carry off this type of operation, and the ability of FECOM intelligence to produce target data in sufficient detail did not warrant the risks involved. The requirements of the plan simply surpassed the partisans' abilities.

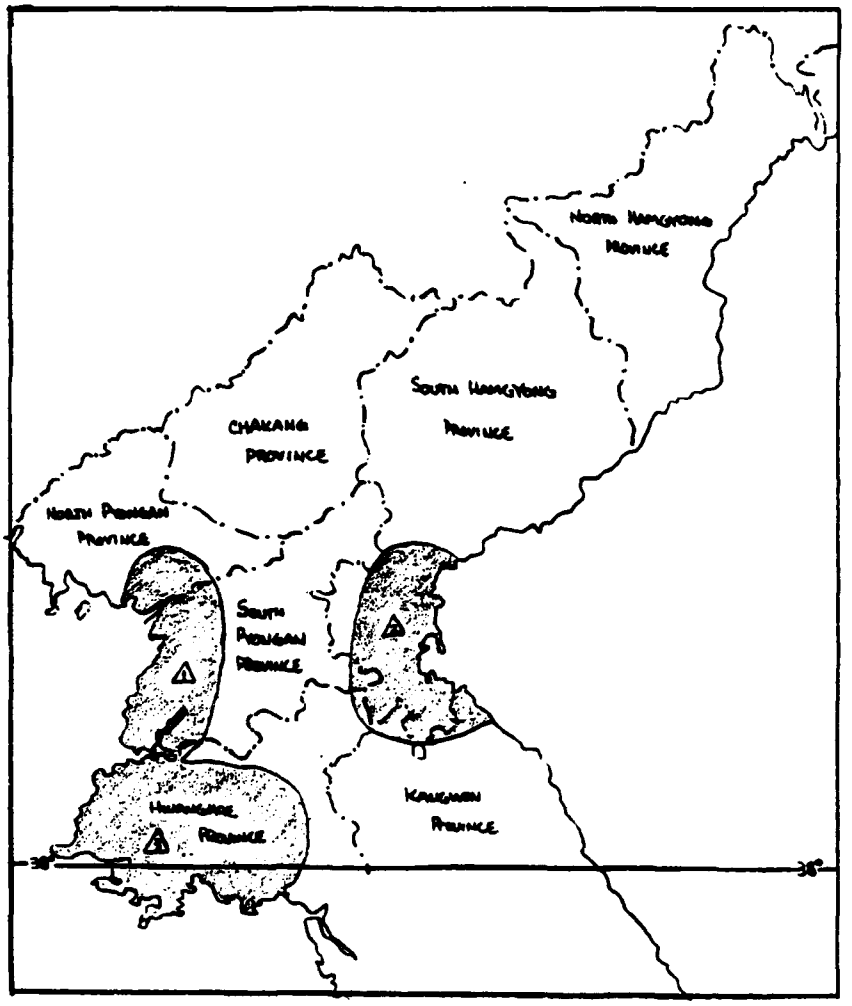

Fig. 5-3 Operational Areas Planned for Phase IIA[40] (February, 1953)

1 West Coast: Circular area from CHONJU (XD9095) on the North, to KANGDONG (BU4837) on the East, to KYOMIPO (YC3090) on the South.

2 East Coast: The HUNGNAM-PANDOK-KOJO complex, extending in a circular area from HONGWON (DV1032) on the North, to YANGDOK (BU9744) on th West, to the coastline ten (10) miles south of KOTO (DU0311) on the South.

3 HWANGHAE Province: East to line SINGYE (BT8664)-KUMCHON (BT8026).

It is difficult to assess the planners' intent at the time these plans were developed and approved. It appears that whatever the scenario at theater level, FECOM planners tacitly accepted the pattern of partisan activity established in 1951. The ability of the partisans to establish interior bases and organize cellular interior resistance in early 1953 was much less than it was in early 1951, due to increased enemy rear troops and control measures employed over the two year interim. The fact that the armistice talks were near completion, as well as a general lack of command interest may have contributed to FECOM's inability to effectively organize the activities of these forces.

While planning and recruiting took place in anticipation of major operations in early 1953, partisan actions in 1952 more than doubled. Conducting an average of over 220 actions monthly, partisans claimed over 40,000 enemy casualties during the period from January, 1952 to June, 1953.[41] The casualties claimed by the partisans consisted of rear area military, quasi-military and large numbers of civilians. From March, 1951, to April, 1953, U.N. partisans mounted 19 airborne operations (Fig. 5-4). Most were against major enemy railways and enemy troop concentrations. Except

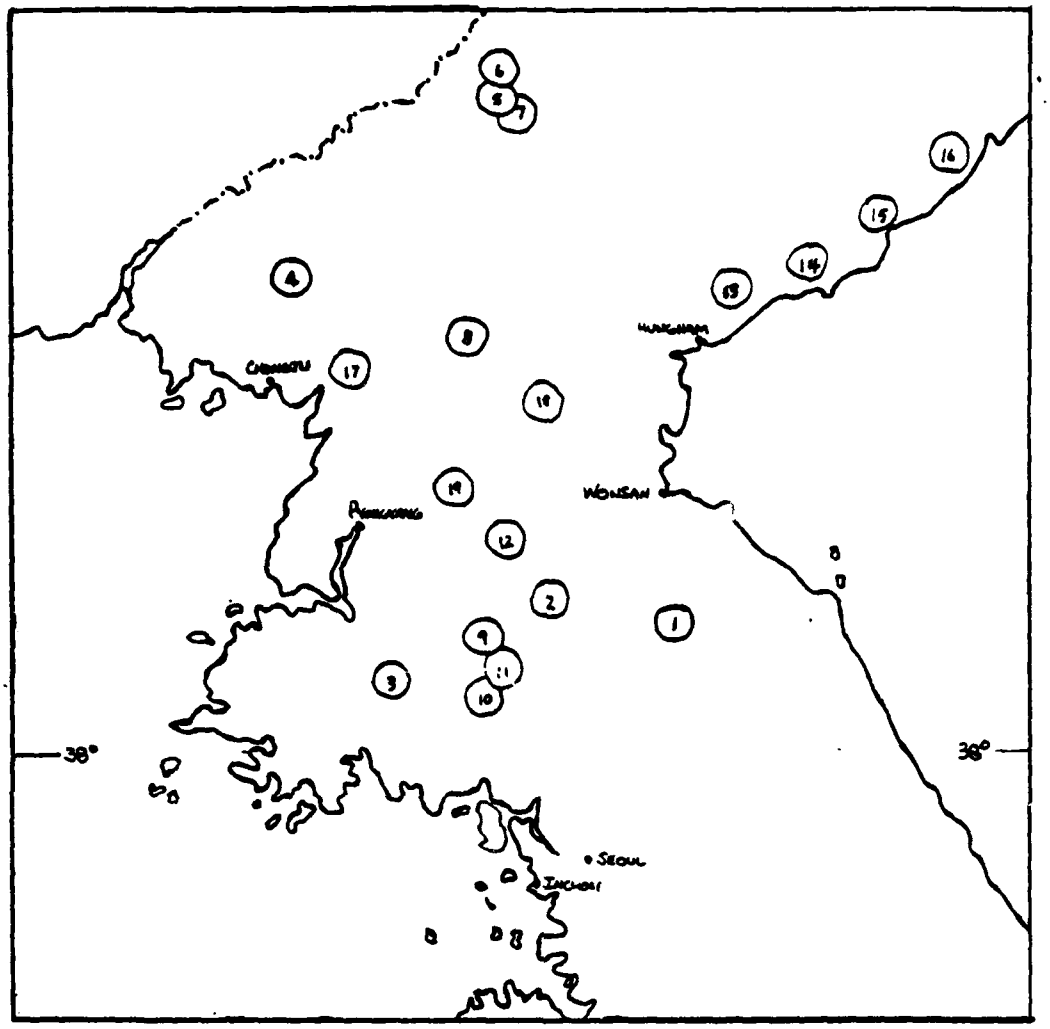

Fig. 5-4 FECOM Partisan Airborne Operations, 1951-53[42]

KEY TO NUMBERED POINTS ON FIG. 5-4

Point	Code name	Date	No. of Men	Mission
1	Virginia I	15 Mar 51	24	Sabotage of rail/ highway traffic
2	Spitfire	18 Jun 51	16	Establish a guerrilla base
3	Mustang III	22 Jan 52	19	Sabotage of rail traffic
4	Mustang IV	16 Mar 52	16	Sabotage of rail traffic
5	Mustang V	14 May 52	20	Sabotage of rail and highway traffic
6	Mustang VI			
7	Mustang VII	31 Oct 52	5	Sabotage of rail and highway traffic
8	Mustang VIII	31 Oct 52	6	Sabotage of rail and highway traffic
9	Jesse James I	30 Dec 52	10	Sabotage of rail
10	Jesse James II	28 Dec 52	10	and highway
11	Jesse James III	28 Dec 52	10	traffic
12	Green Dragon	25 Jan 53	97	Establish a guerrilla base from which to stage interior operations
13	Boxer I	7 Feb 53	12	Sabotage of rail
14	Boxer II	7 Feb 53	12	traffic on east
15	Boxer II	9 Feb 53	12	coast in conjunction
16	Boxer IV	11 Feb 53	12	with TF 95.2
17	Hurricane	31 Mar 53	5	Establish a guerrilla base
18	Rabbit I	1 Apr 53	40	Sabotage rail
19	Rabbit II	6 Apr 53	6	traffic
		Total	389	

in two cases, however, the missions were never accomplished, the elements compromised and never heard from again, presumably lost to enemy action. In one instance, a partisan element reported linking up with 5 downed U.S. fliers. An attempt to pick up the fliers was aborted after rescue aircraft received heavy enemy ground fire. Contact with the element was lost and never reestablished. The American fliers never appeared in any later prisoner exchanges.[43] Partisan airborne operations were ineffective and insignificant to the overall U.N. effort. Targeted against major enemy lines of communication, FECOM employed its partisans against targets that the entire Far East Air Force had failed to successfully interdict. Planners grossly miscalculated the ability of the partisans to deal with these targets, setting them up for failure. Inadequate training may have been an underlying cause, as all elements routinely had to conduct long-range ground extraction on their own. This meant escape and evasion for up to a month or longer in an attempt to reach the east or west coast where a rescue could be attempted.

The partisan operations conducted in 1953 continued to harrass enemy rear area troops. However, due to stabilization of the front during the armistice talks the enemy

devoted more troops to rear area protection, increasing partisan losses. The partisans were never able to interdict the Kaesong-Pyongyang line of communication as specifically called for in Phases I and IIA.[44] Throughout this period the partisan activities had little military significance, other than to inflict enemy casualties and cause the employment of greater numbers of enemy units in the rear areas for counter partisan operations. The overall effect on the manpower-rich CCF was minimal, and did not effect operations along the main military line of resistance.

The scope of FECOM's operations were self-limited to psychological operations and guerrilla warfare. Intelligence gathering within FECOM was limited to prisoner/refugee interrogation, ROK Army intelligence, aerial photo reconnaissance, and unit battlefield reports collected by the Military Intelligence Services Division of the G-2. FECOM did not develop an agent capability during the Korean Conflict. Between the CIA and the ROK Army intelligence, this capability was thoroughly developed elsewhere. FECOM special operations were controlled by separate staff elements, as evidenced by PWD/PWS and CCRAK. The command and control structure diffused authority and blurred lines of responsibility, rather than centralizing it.

With CCRAK, the organizational ability existed for FECOM to coordinate its special operations along a unified strategic direction. However strategic direction was not forthcoming.

Without coordination with theater operations and support by theater assets, FECOM partisan units could not successfully mount anything but harrassment operations. The risk entailed rendered deep insertion, prohibitivly expensive, as shown by the partisan airborne operations.

FECOM's initial efforts in 1951 to control the entire special operations effort in Korea did not succeed for several reasons. First, FECOM attempted to control the sophisticated operations of the CIA with a staff which had virtually no expertise. FECOM could not comprehend the complexity and sensitivity of the CIA mission, much less command and control it. Second, CIA operations routinely transcended the FECOM area of responsibility, both operationally and geographically. Korea was a small strategic sideshow, within a larger strategic sideshow, the communist threat to Japan, while the strategic main event was the communist threat to Europe, as far as the CIA was concerned. This accurately reflects the view of the national leadership at the time as expressed in NSC-68. FECOM focused much too narrowly

on its "minor" conflict in Korea to exercise any accurate perspective in the control of strategic special operations. Third, the bureaucratic and personal biases that permeated both agencies during that period assumed an adversarial nature, precluding the development of a substantive degree of mutual coordination and cooperation. The mistrust MacArthur and Willoughby had for special units operating in their theater but not under their exclusive control caused FECOM and CIA units to initially develop along separate organizational lines.

MacArthur's strategy for the conflict, at odds with that of the national leadership, guided FECOM, and alienated the CIA. After MacArthur's departure, the complaints of General McClure about FECOM's lack of control over CIA operations fueled this conflict and maintained the bureaucratic rift. General Ridgway centralized the military's control over its own special operations while recognizing the autonomy of the CIA. In the absence of any corroborating evidence, it is interesting to speculate whether, considering Ridgway's familiarity with the strategic orientation of the national leadership and the CIA's strategic role, he operated the FECOM partisan program as a cover for CIA operations. The creation of CCRAK enabled the CIA to coordinate its operations

where it needed to with no binding relationships. Also worth considering is the dilemma faced by military leaders who formed a North Korean partisan force of thousands, armed and trained it, but no longer had a mission for it. Turning these men loose in South Korea was certainly not an option that the Rhee government supported. In this situation, providing a cover for CIA operations, while taking advantage of a training opportunity for U.S. special operations personnel, does not seem at all infeasible. In this somewhat far-fetched scenario, it is quite possible that the FECOM special operations program was designed to be no more than it was.

Outside of this possibility, the U.S. military's first experience in limited warfare highlighted new lessons it attempted to forget, but was forced to learn again in Viet-Nam. The deactivation of OSS following World War II represented a significant loss of special operations experience and doctrinal procedures. Distancing itself from special operations during the inter war years, the U.S. military could not hope to rebuild that knowledge in time to apply it effectively in Korea.

The FECOM partisan program was more a result of circumstances than of deliberate planning. The offensive stra-

tegy that resulted in the creation of FECOM partisan forces, changed by the time partisan units were ready for operations. As a result, in early 1951, fully knowing no general U.N. offensive to unite Korea would take place, FECOM found itself with thousands of armed, trained and organized North Korean guerrillas recruited to militarily reunify Korea. While anticommunist, these elements were not necessarily supporters of the Rhee government, and were not trusted by him. This prevented FECOM from disbanding the units in South Korea. Disbanding them in the North would either provide trained replacements to the already massive communist manpower pool, or subject them to capture by communist forces. FECOM was forced to keep the partisans organized and occupied with meaningful tasks until their future could be negotiated. Therefore these forces remained focused on harrassment operations of tactical impact designed in conjunction with a general U.N. offensive that FECOM knew would never take place. The stated mission of causing the enemy to employ troops to the maximum in counterpartisan operations, was probably accomplished since the term "maximum" is difficult to quantify. The secondary mission of interdicting military supply routes was not accomplished due not only to a lack of operational concentration far enough inland, but more

probably because the mission was unrealistic. FECOM had focused its air forces against these routes in a massive effort that dwarfed any the partisans could mount. It is difficult to understand how planners felt the partisans could succeed where the Far East Air Force had not. It is understandable how this environment led to operational neglect at FECOM level.

The resulting operational planning at partisan unit level led to a heavy concentration of actions in strategically insignificant Hwanghae Province since it was the home area of most of the partisans. This made operations easier, less risky, and more likely to result in minimum friendly casualties. In addition, these operations did not interfere with CIA activities that may have been taking place. Furthermore, they provided an effective cover CIA could take advantage of. CIA representation, (Documents Research Division, JACK, Deputy Director of CCRAK, as well the agents co-located on the off-shore islands) lent itself to this arrangement. The ambushes, raids, intelligence-gathering, and downed pilot support all had tactical value, but were strategically insignificant to the U.N. effort. Neither FECOM's psychological operations nor its guerrilla warfare efforts can be correllated with any strategic effect, favorable or otherwise, upon the military situation in Korea.

FECOM psychological operations were focused upon surrender of enemy troops, and the creation of conflict between North Koreans and Chinese. Though somewhat effective, the massive manpower pool available to the communists and the rigid rear area control, both physical and ideological, precluded any appreciable strategic impact of this effort. The available evidence suggests that neither the Chinese nor the North Korean governments ever considered their strategic objectives threatened in any way by the FECOM special operations effort. The gradual acceptance by the communists of the strategic stalemate situation in 1951 was clearly a result of the FECOM conventional effort beginning in January of that year. The communist final agreement to an armistice in 1953 was due more to the cumulative effect of this same conventional effort over two years combined with the death of Josef Stalin that year than anything else. The FECOM special operations effort was never targeted against an enemy strategic center of gravity. Furthermore, the efforts of the FECOM planners indicates that little effort was made to identify an enemy center of gravity commensurate with the partisans' capabilities.

In simple terms, the FECOM special operations program during the Korean Conflict was strategically insignificant.

Though tactically effective, i.e. they inflicted casualties, damaged or destroyed assets, induced surrenders and rescued downed airmen, the effect of these operations at the operational or strategic level was nonexistent. FECOM SOF in no way degraded the enemy's ability or will to continue the war. The reason for this is that FECOM chose to attack the enemy's greatest strength at the least effective time. FECOM PSYOPS were directed against a massive military organization, tightly controlled and indoctrinated on a constant basis. Though causing some surrenders, the numbers were relatively minimal. FECOM partisans attempted to cause significant attrition against a military force of over a million troops and at a time when the nature of the war shifted from fluid to static. Guerrilla inflicted casualties never affected the enemy ability to operate along the military line of resistance. Guerrilla operations were effectivelly restricted to Hwanghae-do province by tight enemy rear area control and the static military situation enabling counter-partisan forces to increasingly inhibit guerrilla effectiveness over time. The environment favored the communists, at moment the guerrillas became operational.

There is one caveat I would like to make to this assessment that is dependent upon the intent of General

Ridgway in early 1951. If Ridgway consciously intended that the FECOM partisan program exist as a cover for CIA operations, then by their very existence, the partsan effort could be said to been strategically effective. It is impossible at this point to confirm Ridgway's intent and whether CIA operations covered by the partisans that were strategically significant. However, it remains a remote possibility worthy of consideration as more information is declassified and becomes available.

CIA operations, at times coordinated with FECOM, were well planned and executed. CIA planned its operations in line with a broad national strategy for Northeast Asia, which included significantly enhancing the U.N. military posture with respect to the enemy. Operation STOLE is particularly indicative of this orientation. Though it is impossible to determine any kind of success rate for CIA operations, it is clear their organization for operations was sound. The creation of this organization was made easier by the broad charter provided them by NSC directives which provided a liberal budget, established CIA's bureaucratic priority over other governmental agencies, and authorized the CIA to conduct activities outside limits imposed on other organizations. In particular, the presence of General Ridgway from 1951 on,

significantly improved the working relationship between the CIA and the theater military command. Ridgway's thorough knowledge of the strategic priorities of the national command authority, as well as the CIA mission, was undoubtedly responsible for this development. In view of their particular mission in the Far East, CIA operations were designed to, and in fact did, achieve favorable strategic impact on U.N. operations during the Korean Conflict.

Though an obscure chapter in the history of special operations, the U.S. experience in Korea is significant in that it highlights several issues key to the conduct of special operations in a limited war scenario. Most significant historically, is the fact that Korea marked the first U.S. experience with limited war. It was in the "Cold War" environment that special operations became recognized as a necessary tool of international relations. The geographic, operational and political limitations of the environment forced planners to develop additional means to attack the enemy. This caused the U.S. to develop covert units which could operate outside these new limitations, and not suffer the political consequences as long as its operations were not compromised. Once convinced the communists would not hesitate to operate covertly, the U.S. exhumed the old OSS organization and created the CIA. However, the U.S. military had distanced

itself so far from special operations after 1945, that it was bankrupt by 1950. As a result of the Korea experience the Army made efforts to recreate a special operations capability in the early 50's resulting in the Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg and the creation of Special Forces.

The competition in late 1950 and early 1951 between General MacArthur and the CIA raises an issue pertinent to today's environment: control of CIA operations by military theater commanders. MacArthur had successfully run his own clandestine operations in World War II and did not trust organizations which answered to another commander. His conflict with Truman's strategic focus eventually led to his dismissal and replacement by General Ridgway. Ridgway understood the worldwide focus of CIA and accommodated its operations as needed. This worldwide focus is no different today, even with the creation of USSOCOM. CIA strategic objectives still transcend those of all military commanders in chief (CINC), and preclude their control of CIA operations even within their theater. USSOCOM is still a military command and as such is also limited in its legal span of control. The CIA conducts activities only the President can authorize, and therefore, must be controlled at that level. However, the military SOF additionally have a requirement to perform special activities with NCA approval. This is an overlap of

requirements that can only be coordinated at NSC level. A coordinating agency within the NSC representing the CIA, DOD, the State Department and USSOCOM is necessary to resolve any conflict.

An effective agency at NSC level could turn special operations into a coordinated government effort; something they have rarely been. Additionally, its existence would create a higher degree of vertical organizational contact between these organizations to ensure coordinated execution and feedback. It is not enough for DOD alone to reorganize by creating a joint special operations command if its operations are not part of a coordinated governmental effort commensurate with the high degree of strategic sensitivity and risk these operations involve. Personality and bureaucratic competition plays a critical part in this arrangement. The competition between strong willed leaders competing in a turf battle can easily override common objectives. Willoughby's competition with Tofte in late 1950 illustrates this point. The confrontation that developed between General McClure and Frank Wisner over the development of Army special operations capabilities in the early 1950's as a result of Korea is also pertinent.[45] The type of individuals that make up these organizations is a factor that leaders must remain cognizant of if progress is to be made.

The American experience in Korea pointed out the critical importance of maintaining ready special operations forces that can conduct operation prior to as well as after the initiation of hostilities. Strategy has to drive the design of SOF units, capabilities, and operational planning that enable a nation to effectively protect its interests in war or peace. SOF are strategic forces which can be critically important, if they are a logical product of a clear national strategy. This was not the case in Korea. Both FECOM and CIA had to build capabilities during the conflict. FECOM strategic goals shifted several times prior to creation of its partisan forces. In the end FECOM created a force it did not need, but could not disband.

This is a significant lesson in the use of indigenous forces, particularly in ensuring that U.S. and indigenous force objectives are, and remain, in alignment. Organizing and training an armed force that has different objectives can be an extremely dangerous undertaking and must be thoroughly considered prior to their creation. Even more important, is a thorough appreciation for the investment being made by these indigenous forces. More often than not, these soldiers gamble their lives and those of their family, on the success or failure of these programs. From the standpoint of credibility alone, this type of program must provide for the indigenous

soldier and his family in any eventuality. The U.S. failure to grasp this issue based on its experience in Korea helped precipitate a particularly bitter end to U.S. trained indigenous forces in Viet-Nam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Along with the development of special operations capabilities based upon strategic objectives identified early on, the construction of the necessary joint/combined command and control structure for these forces is also critical. This structure defines the relationship between organizations in theater and is key to preventing duplication of effort or independent efforts toward differing objectives. FECOM struggled over two years from 1951 to 1953 attempting to design a structure that would effectively coordinate its efforts. This resulted in a lack of coordination for a time, although General Ridgway improved this condition as previously discussed. This problem potentially exists today between the CIA and each military CINC, and between U.S. SOF and allied nations with which the U.S. may have to operate. For example, the 1985 U.S. forcedown in Italy of the airliner carrying the Achille Lauro hijackers, and the confrontation on the ground between U.S. SOF and Italian authorities resulted in the escape of the hijackers. Since the force-down in Italy was uncoordinated, Italy demanded jurisdiction of the hijackers. This is a modern example of the negative impact which a lack of this

coordination can have. It is a coordination issue that is dynamic and must be monitored constantly by SOF operations and plans officers.

While Korea is not normally associated with the conduct of U.S. special operations, this study has highlighted key issues and events that impact upon today's special operations forces. Korea was an early example of many lessons that would be applied, misapplied and not applied in Viet-Nam. Hopefully, this study will provide the catalyst for further study in any one of many SOF related areas by other researchers. Special operations is the fastest growing, but probably the least understood area in the military today. The key to understanding and appreciating its full potential lies in careful study of its history as a basis for internal critique, review and reform.

CHAPTER 5 ENDNOTES

[1]Frank R. Barnett, ed. and others, Special Operations in U.S. Strategy (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1984) "Military Capabilities and Special Operations in the 1980's" by Roger M. Pezzelle, 149.

[2]Alfred H. Paddock, U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1982), 73.

[3]Frederick W. Cleaver, and others, U.N. Partisan Wafare in Korea, 1951-1954 (U),(Washington, D.C.: The Johns Hopkins University/ORO-T-64, 1956), 32.

[4]John Prados, Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations Since World War II (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1986), 62-65

[5]Paddock, 77-81. In developing the theme of Army/CIA discussion of JCS control of CIA operations during wartime, Colonel Paddock references: Department of the Army, Plans and Operations Division, Washington, D.C., Memorandum for Record, subject: Department of the Army Assistance to the CIA in the Field of Guerrilla Warfare, 21 November, 1949, and Notes on Meeting of Representatives of CIA and NME Joint CIA/NME Tarining Program, Record Group 319, Army Operations, 1949-52, box 10, Hot Files, P & O 370.64 TS (21 November, 1949), National Archives.

[6]Prados, 65-66.

[7]Paddock, 77-78.

[8]Joseph C. Goulden, Korea: The Untold Story of the War (New York: MacMillan, 1982), 467.

[9]Prados, 69. Special Activities as defined under NSC 10/2 were conducted by the OPC branch, which was not established in Northeast Asia until 1950 when Tofte arrived.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]William M. Leary, Perilous Missions: Civil Air Transport and CIA Covert Operations in Asia (University: University of Alabama Press, 1984), 125.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Prados, 68.

[15]Leary, 72.

[16]Goulden, 468-469.

[17]Ibid,, 473-474.

[18]Ibid., 462-464, 474; Prados, 69-70..

[19]Paddock, 34.

[20]Willmoore Kendall, and others, Eighth Army Psychological Warfare in the Korean War (Washington D.C.: The Johns Hopkins University/ORO-T-17 FEC, 1951), 1.

[21]Ibid., 107-115.

[22]Ibid., 119-129.

[23]Kilchoon Kim, Evaluation of Effects of Leaflets on Early North Korean Prisoners of War (Washington D.C: The Johns Hopkins University/ORO-T-4 EUSAK, 1951), 8.

[24]Cleaver, 64.

[25]Ibid., 32-33.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.,

[28]Ibid., 46, 82.

[29]Ibid., 86, 124. American advisors attached to the partisans admitted that the accuracy of these reports amounted to approximatly one-third of that reported at best.

[30]Ibid., 82-84.

[31]Ibid., 47.

[32]Ibid., 54-55, 99-103, 134-135, 146.

[33]Ibid., 62-64.

[34]Ibid., 76.

[35]Ibid., 110.

[36]Ibid., 123.

[37]Ibid., 62.

[38]Ibid., 62-63.

[39]Ibid., 64.

[40]Ibid., 65.

[41]Ibid., 95.

[42]Ibid., 92-93.

[43]Ibid., 91.

[44]Ibid., 102-103, 134-135.

[45]Paddock, 129-142.

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