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Counterattack on the Naktong, 1950

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Symbols

U.S. Army

	1950	1985
Signal	S	
Engineer	E	
Ordnance-Maintenance		
Quartermaster	Q	
Antiaircraft Artillery		
A Displacing Unit		
Friendly Axis of Advance		
Enemy Axis of Advance		
Friendly Units		
Enemy Units		

Note: The unit symbology adopted for maps in this paper conforms to that in use in 1950. Elevations are in meters. Contour interval is twenty meters.

Preface

One characteristic of virtually all large military establishments in the twentieth century has been their creation of a body of doctrinal material that in theory regulates the conduct of their future combat operations. Two sources, past experience and theoretical concepts, account for most of the intellectual underpinnings of this mass of military doctrine. Of great importance in the development of this doctrine is the analysis of actual operations that occurred during previous conflicts. This systematic analysis of past events usually results in the identification of doctrinal principles having potential validity in future wars. Military history, therefore, represents the raw material from which much doctrine is crafted.

The relationship between military history and military doctrine, however, extends beyond that of simply source and product. Military history also provides a methodology for determining the validity of a particular military doctrine in a particular situation. By critically examining specific historical data from a battle, campaign, or series of operations, the military historian can discover the answers to a series of pertinent questions: What was the prevailing doctrine at the time? Was the doctrine applied? What was the effect of application or nonapplication? As with all historical questions, definitive answers may not be available, making the historian's conclusions tentative at best. Yet even tentative conclusions may provide useful guidance to soldiers struggling with the age-old problems of doctrine writing and force development for future conflicts. If battle is the true test of doctrine, then military history is the means by which that truth may be discovered.

Of all the forms military history may take, operational accounts are among the most difficult to write successfully. First, there is the problem of focus. Does one concentrate upon the highest levels of command where the major decisions are made, upon the intermediate levels where the decisions are implemented, or upon the lowest levels where the cost of the decisions is exacted in lives and treasure? A complete account of a battle must encompass all of these areas in some way, but a successful mix is often elusive. Compounding the difficulty is a second problem—that of order. The nearer one approaches the top of the chain of command, the greater one finds a sense of order and rationality, or at least the appearance of such. But at the bottom of the chain, the entire world seems to be irrational and

utterly chaotic. An accurate representation of these opposing states is difficult to achieve in a coherent narrative.

The genesis of this paper was the decision by the Combat Studies Institute to study counterattack doctrine and operations in the Pusan Perimeter campaign that occurred in Korea during the summer of 1950. Preliminary investigation showed that the most concentrated series of American counterattacks during the perimeter fighting occurred during the action known as the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, 6—19 August 1950. Prior to August, American and South Korean forces had been too pressed by the North Korean invaders to mount a coherent defense, much less initiate counterattacks. Withdrawal behind the Naktong River permitted both armies a brief respite from combat and the opportunity to establish a conventional line of defense with relatively secure flanks. When the North Korean 4th Division breached the Pusan Perimeter in the sector of the U.S. 24th Infantry Division on 6 August, it triggered an extensive series of counterattacks that lasted for the next two weeks. Those counterattacks and the doctrinal foundation supporting them are the subject of this paper.

From beginning to end, no matter how many units joined the fight, the 24th Division was the headquarters responsible for directing the counterattacks in the Naktong Bulge. Official division records are voluminous, though occasional gaps appear in the files of subordinate components. In contrast, personal accounts at the small-unit or individual levels are minuscule in number. No doubt a major effort to locate survivors would generate an inspiring and instructive tale of the courage, heroism, and suffering of the men who fought in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge. Yet such is not the primary purpose of this paper. Rather, it focuses upon the levels of command that directed the battle—division, task force, and regiment. Only occasionally does the focus drop to the levels of battalion, company, and platoon—and then only to illuminate the problems encountered in executing decisions made at higher levels.

In order to analyze critically the actions of division and regimental commanders, the operations of battalions and companies must be studied in detail, because it was there, at the sharp end, that battle plans either succeeded or failed. Therefore, a concerted effort was made to determine the location of all company- or battery-size units for every day of the fight. Although little documentation exists below the regimental level, company-level location plotting proved feasible through the use of surviving documents and map overlays found in division files. Thus, the American troop dispositions for each day of the battle have been recreated from the division's own records, using information available to the division staff at the time. Similarly, depiction of North Korean troop movements is also derived from reports received by the division staff. The result of this process was a reconstruction of the divisional situation map at 2400 on each day of the battle, using only information available to the division staff by that hour. What the actual situation maps at division headquarters looked like is impossible to know at this date, but all of the information utilized in the

reconstructions was known by the hour in question. Many of these reconstructions have been included in this paper, both to facilitate understanding of the complex battle situation and to shorten the narrative.

Admittedly, use of official documents and situation maps to reconstruct an action omits much of the human element of battle and imposes an order on the proceedings quite invisible from the frontline positions. Nevertheless, contemporaneous official records, such as journals, messages, and especially situation maps (but not war diaries prepared after the fact) are crucial to reconstructing the progress of a battle from the perspective of a division headquarters and analyzing decisions of the higher commanders. Such is the purpose of this paper, and it is left to others to cover in full detail the story of the men in the rifle squads, both soldiers and marines. Their story merits telling, but it must be in a forum other than this.

Chapter 1 of this study describes the counterattack doctrine existing in 1950 and provides a brief summary of how the 24th Division came to be behind the Naktong in August. Chapters 2 through 7 describe the American operations in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, beginning with the initial battalion-size counterattack and concluding with the final coordinated push that erased the North Korean gains and restored the original defensive positions along the river line. Chapter 8 reviews the course of the operations in light of the prevailing doctrine on counterattack and suggests tentative conclusions.

The careful study of any battle or campaign yields lessons from the past that can light our way, however dimly, into the future. The First Battle of the Naktong Bulge is no exception to this rule and, indeed, is especially rich in historical examples relevant to current doctrine. This study, while primarily an analysis of counterattack doctrine from a divisional perspective, incidentally raises other important issues as well. Foremost among them are a wide range of questions concerning the employment of light infantry. On paper, the 24th Division was in August 1950 a heavy infantry division; in reality, it had been reduced by peacetime belt-tightening and operational losses to approximately the size of today's new light divisions, with a similar mix of weapons. Forced to fight in prime light infantry terrain, the division continued to operate with the mind-set of a road-bound heavy force. In contrast, the North Korean 4th Division, equally light, maneuvered freely through the roadless area. In addition to light infantry, other relevant issues raised by the study include the potential responses available to encircled forces, the use of ad hoc forces to protect a division's rear, and the lack of existing doctrine for skeletonized units. All of these issues represent fruitful areas of investigation and deserve studies of their own.

Retreat to the Perimeter

1

Military theorists have long considered the offensive to be the decisive and, therefore, the most favored form of warfare. Only through offensive operations, it is argued, can the goals of a warring state be attained. Yet for every attacker, there must be a defender, if resistance is to be made. This defensive role is usually adopted reluctantly, since it represents most often a condition of weakness, either permanent or temporary. If the weakness is permanent, the defender seeks only to damage and delay the attacker's forces as much as possible in hopes of raising the cost of success beyond limits acceptable to the attacker. In such situations, the defensive stance becomes simply a means of self-preservation. If the defender's weakness is only temporary, however, the defensive form of warfare can serve a much greater end. Once again, the defender seeks to delay the attacker, but the time gained is utilized to accumulate reserves of troops and materiel that will ultimately be unleashed against the original attacker in a counteroffensive. Seen in this light, the defensive is the prelude to the offensive action believed necessary to achieve a decisive victory.[1]

Before any counteroffensive can be undertaken, the defensive battle must be won. On the tactical level, the defender must deploy his forces on critical terrain in such a way that the attacker's thrust is parried and hurled back, leaving defensive positions intact. But all too frequently, the determined attacker succeeds in penetrating the defender's position. Left unchecked, this penetration may grow rapidly in size and threaten not only adjacent units but also the entire scheme of defense. Defenders faced with such penetrations usually attempt counterattacks, either to eject the attacker from the defensive position or, at worst, to contain the penetration. The timing of such counterattacks is one of the most difficult decisions a commander must make. If made either too soon or too late, the counterattack may fail to check the enemy's momentum, and the defensive position will be lost. If made at just the right moment, when the attacker has lost momentum and is disorganized, the counterattack may succeed in restoring the integrity of the defensive position without undue loss. In this sense, counterattack may indeed be "the decisive element of defensive operations."[2]

U.S. Army defensive doctrine in 1950 clearly reflected the idea that defensive operations should have a greater end in view than simply parrying

enemy blows. In the opening sentence of chapter 9, "The Defensive," the Army's Field Manual 100—5, *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, stated: "The general object of defensive combat is to gain time pending the development of more favorable conditions for undertaking the offensive, or to economize forces on one front for the purpose of concentrating superior forces for a decisive action elsewhere." Once the defensive battle was concluded successfully, U.S. forces would assume the offensive in order to render the enemy's units ineffective and destroy his will to resist. In operational terms, therefore, the successful defensive operation would lead inevitably to a counteroffensive.[3]

The edition of FM 100—5 published in 1949 outlined specific recommendations for the defender. First, the defensive position should be selected and organized so as to be held at all costs. Next, the main battle position should be screened by a covering force and supported by strong mobile reserves that could be made available instantly for a counterattack. When battle was joined, the covering force would confuse, delay, and disorganize the attacker prior to his reaching the main battle position. Once there, the attacker would be met by the maximum firepower available to the defender, who would use terrain to assist the defense. Yet even if all these steps were executed perfectly, the manual recognized that the defender's best efforts might be insufficient to prevent hostile forces from entering the defensive position.[4]

In case a penetration occurred, the alert defender should have a series of counterattack plans readily available, although FM 100—5 acknowledged that such plans could not be minutely detailed. A limited infiltration by relatively weak forces that had not occupied critical terrain could be isolated and easily destroyed by fire. A penetration by somewhat larger units that had seized critical terrain should be met by a counterattack force consisting of local reserves. A more serious penetration would have to be referred to a higher echelon, where a more elaborate counterattack plan would be prepared. Although the timing of the counterattack could not be predetermined, it should be implemented at that critical moment when the enemy was in greatest disarray, when his momentum had lessened, and when his units and fire support had become disorganized.

In theory, the counterattack force should consist of all combat arms. If armor were available, it should lead the counterattack and be supported by infantry, which would exploit any success gained. No matter what forces were utilized, they should be controlled by a single counterattack commander. Simply stated, his goal was to "close the gap created by the hostile force and to isolate and destroy the enemy's advanced elements." This result could be achieved in two basic ways. In the more common type of counterattack, the enemy would be struck in the flank, causing him to withdraw from his lodgment or be destroyed. A favorable axis of advance would be required for this type of counterattack to be successful. The second type of counterattack would be applicable to a more fluid defensive scheme, in which units would maneuver "to trap and destroy the penetration at a point particularly favorable to the counterattack." While a greater degree of prior planning

would be required in this case, the counterattack itself would be more limited in character. No matter which type of response was chosen, the counterattack was seen as a "vital element of defensive action."[5]

The doctrine published in FM 100—5 was essentially a digest of lessons derived from American combat experience in World War II. It was tailored to the standard triangular divisional system of that conflict, in which three infantry regiments, each consisting of three battalions, constituted the primary fighting power of an infantry division. The war had also shown that certain supporting units normally controlled by higher echelons profitably could be attached directly to a division. As a consequence, revised tables of organization and equipment (TOE) were published in 1947—48 that significantly strengthened the basic infantry division in terms of firepower. Under the new TOE, each infantry regiment received a heavy mortar company (twelve 4.2-inch mortars) and a tank company (twenty-two tanks), while the division as a whole was augmented by a heavy tank battalion (seventy-one tanks). Supporting the infantry and armor were four field artillery battalions (each with three firing batteries), along with an antiaircraft artillery battalion, an engineer combat battalion, a medical battalion, and various other support units and detachments. The aggregate strength of this reorganized infantry division stood at 18,804 officers and men, an increase of over 4,500 troops from the infantry division of World War II.[6]

Unfortunately, the new TOEs represented an ideal unattainable in the peacetime climate of the late 1940s. The complacent national mood, budget restrictions, and low enlistment rates had combined to lower Army strength by June 1950 to only 591,487 troops, barely one-tenth of the World War II total. Of these troops, ten combat divisions provided most of the Army's war-fighting capacity, but only one of them, the 1st Infantry Division in Germany, had its full complement of soldiers. All of the other divisions were organized under a skeletonized system that omitted up to one-third of a division's maneuver elements and much of its supporting firepower. Infantry divisions lacked one battalion in each regiment, and each field artillery battalion had only two firing batteries. Instead of a heavy tank battalion and three regimental tank companies, infantry divisions contained only one tank company. The antiaircraft battalion was also represented by only one battery.[7]

Strength was not the only shortcoming evident in the U.S. Army of 1950. Weapons development had been slow since 1945 and procurement even slower. Units in the field, therefore, were armed with the same basic weapons used to fight World War II: M-1 rifles; BARs (Browning Automatic Rifles); .30- and .50-caliber machine guns; 2.36-inch rocket launchers; mortars of 60-mm, 81-mm, and 4.2-inch caliber; and howitzers of 105-mm and 155-mm. Although the new M-26 Pershing tank had appeared in limited quantities as early as 1945, most tanks in service were either variants of the M-4 Sherman medium tank or the M-24 Chaffee light tank. Food, clothing, and medical supplies were available in adequate quantities, but stocks of spare parts and ammunition had reached dangerously low levels.[8]

As might be expected, equipment and ammunition shortages had a detrimental impact upon training, which suffered from other maladies as well. In order to entice into the service enough young men to maintain even its reduced strength, the Army had attempted to make a military career more attractive. This was partially accomplished by permitting recruits wide latitude in the choice of a branch or specialty. Such a policy, however, inevitably led to reduced numbers of recruits in the less desirable combat arms, such as infantry. Moreover, many of the rigors of traditional army training and conditioning exercises were reduced or eliminated. Combat simulation was seldom attempted, since it was potentially dangerous to those involved, and accidents would adversely affect public opinion. In addition, most of the units stationed overseas were engaged in occupation duties not requiring a high degree of combat proficiency.[9]

The four infantry divisions in the Far East Command that garrisoned Japan mirrored the Army's state of unreadiness in all respects. The authorized peacetime strength for each of these divisions was 12,500 men, leaving each division short over 6,000 men, 1,500 rifles, three rifle battalions, six heavy tank companies, and four field artillery batteries. As a result, each division could deploy no more than two-thirds of its wartime infantry and artillery firepower and only 14 percent of its tank firepower. Since no new equipment had been received by Far East Command since World War II, the equipment available was warworn and, in many cases, maintained only with the greatest difficulty. In fact, 90 percent of the weapons and 75 percent of the vehicles in Japan had been salvaged from materiel left on Pacific battlefields at the end of the war. Ammunition stocks in Japan amounted to no more than a forty-five-day supply. Training had been hindered by administrative duties incident to occupation, the lack of adequate training areas in Japan, inadequate leadership among battalion- and company-level officers, and the low quality of recruits received from the United States. Although a more realistic combat training program was underway by the spring of 1950, the units of the Far East Command were "flabby and soft, still hampered by an infectious lassitude, unready to respond swiftly and decisively to a full-scale military emergency."[10]

Such an emergency would be thrust upon the United States and its military forces in June of 1950. The crisis occurred in Korea, which long had been a pawn of its larger and more powerful neighbors. Controlled by Japan since the early days of the twentieth century, Korea had been divided into occupation zones by the victorious Allies in 1945. North of the 38th Parallel, the Soviet Union disarmed Japanese troops and established order, while south of that line, the United States did the same. As tensions grew between the occupying powers, American efforts to establish a united Korea failed. In 1947, the United States sought a solution in the United Nations that established a temporary commission to oversee free elections in both zones of occupation. When the Soviet Union denied the UN Commission entry into its zone, elections were conducted only in the south. The balloting resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Korea (ROK) under the leadership of President Syngman Rhee in August 1948. The United States

then sent economic, technical, and military aid, turning Rhee's government into a protégé, but not an ally. American military units departed Korea in 1949, leaving only a small military advisory group to supervise the aid program.[11]

North of the 38th Parallel, the Soviet Union was instrumental in the formation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with Kim Il Sung installed as premier in September 1948. Although Soviet combat units were withdrawn from Korea, the Soviet aid program focused on creating a strong North Korean military capability. As that capability grew, North Korea in late 1948 began to foment internal disorder in South Korea. Friction between the two Koreas intensified, and clashes along the 38th Parallel became commonplace in 1949. By June 1950, a North Korean People's Army of ten infantry divisions, two independent infantry regiments, and an armored brigade was poised on the border of South Korea. Trained and equipped by the Soviet Union, this powerful force contained large numbers of combat hardened Koreans who had recently been released from service with the Chinese Communist Forces. This force was supported by a five-brigade Border Constabulary of 18,000 men. All told, North Korea could deploy approximately 135,000 ground troops against its neighbor to the south.[12]

Opposing the North Korean People's Army was the Republic of Korea Army of approximately 98,000 men organized in eight divisions, half of which were understrength. While the North Koreans could deploy 150 T-34 tanks and considerable quantities of medium artillery, South Korean forces had no tanks or medium artillery whatsoever. Nor could South Korea field any fighter or bomber aircraft to counter the 110 combat planes available to support the North Korean ground forces. Although outfitted with the same infantry weapons as U.S. forces in Japan and trained by the small U.S. Military Advisory Group, the ROK Army was by no means ready to repel an invasion across the 38th Parallel in the summer of 1950. Unfortunately, American military authorities at the time did not recognize this and generally believed that South Korea's armed forces were adequate to meet any conceivable threat from North Korea.[13]

When the North Korean People's Army stormed across the 38th Parallel on 25 June 1950, it soon became apparent that the ROK Army was woefully unprepared to resist a full-scale invasion. Although some ROK units fought well with the limited equipment available to them, others withdrew in disorder, opening wide gaps in the defensive line. The U.S. Military Advisory Group barely escaped the capital city of Seoul before it fell on 28 June. When the Han River line was breached two days later, there seemed to be little hope of halting the invasion before most of the country was lost.[14]

The United States government was totally unprepared for the disaster befalling the Republic of Korea. For some time, it had assumed that the only possible conflict would be a global war, and most planning had been devoted to that single contingency. Western Europe had received first priority in both personnel and equipment, leaving the Far East with lower levels of both. Nevertheless, General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief, Far

East Command, was willing to use the limited means at his disposal to assist the South Korean government in repelling the invasion. American air and naval units were immediately thrown into the fight, but they soon proved insufficient to halt the North Korean drive. On 30 June, President Harry Truman authorized MacArthur to commit U.S. ground forces to the struggle, a move that MacArthur had recommended earlier. As a result, at 0315 on 1 July, Eighth Army ordered the 24th Infantry Division to Korea.[15]

In some respects, the 24th Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. William F. Dean, was an unfortunate choice. Of the four divisions in Japan, it had both the lowest aggregate strength (12,197 men on 30 June) and the lowest combat effectiveness rating (65 percent on 30 May). Like the other units in MacArthur's Far East Command, its troops were not trained and equipped for sustained combat, nor even conditioned for rigorous physical activity. Only about 15 percent of its officers and men were combat veterans. Moreover, the division lacked three infantry battalions and four field artillery batteries. A single company of M-24 Chaffee light tanks served as its only armor. Since similar shortcomings were present in all of his divisions, MacArthur chose the 24th Division solely on the basis of its location. Stationed in southern Japan, the 24th was the nearest division to Korea and, thus, could be deployed rapidly to that country. Several thousand men were transferred to the 24th Division from other units, raising its strength to 15,965 men by the time of its departure (see figure 1).[16]

The order committing the 24th Division to action provided initially for the deployment of a small combat force by air, while the remainder of the division followed by water. The initial force of two reinforced companies, known as Task Force Smith, arrived at Pusan on 2 July and moved north in an effort to delay the enemy's advance. By 5 July, most of the 24th Division had reached Korea. On the same day, North Korean armor crushed Task Force Smith north of Osan. Realizing the gravity of the situation, General Dean rushed his 19th, 21st, and 34th Infantry regiments forward to establish a series of blocking positions. One by one, these positions—at Ch'onan, Chonui, and Choch'iwon—were outflanked or overrun, and the 24th Division reeled backward in retreat. After one week of fighting, the division had suffered heavy casualties, including 1,500 men missing in action. The 21st Infantry numbered only 1,100 men, less than 50 percent of its authorized strength, and the 34th Infantry was operating under its third commander. Division strength on 14 July stood at 11,440 men (see map 1).[17]

As July progressed, disasters continued to strike Dean's command. In a series of actions at the Kum River on 14—16 July, the North Korean 3d and 4th Divisions again outflanked the defenders. The 63d Field Artillery Battalion supporting the 34th Infantry was destroyed, while the 52d Field Artillery Battalion supporting the 19th Infantry lost eight howitzers. The 19th Infantry lost two commanders before escaping from the trap. Several days later, a similar debacle occurred when the same two regiments were routed at Taejon. In that action, the 24th Division lost 1,150 men out of 3,933 engaged, including General Dean, who was taken prisoner. In some units, the losses were staggering: Company L of the 34th Infantry lost 107

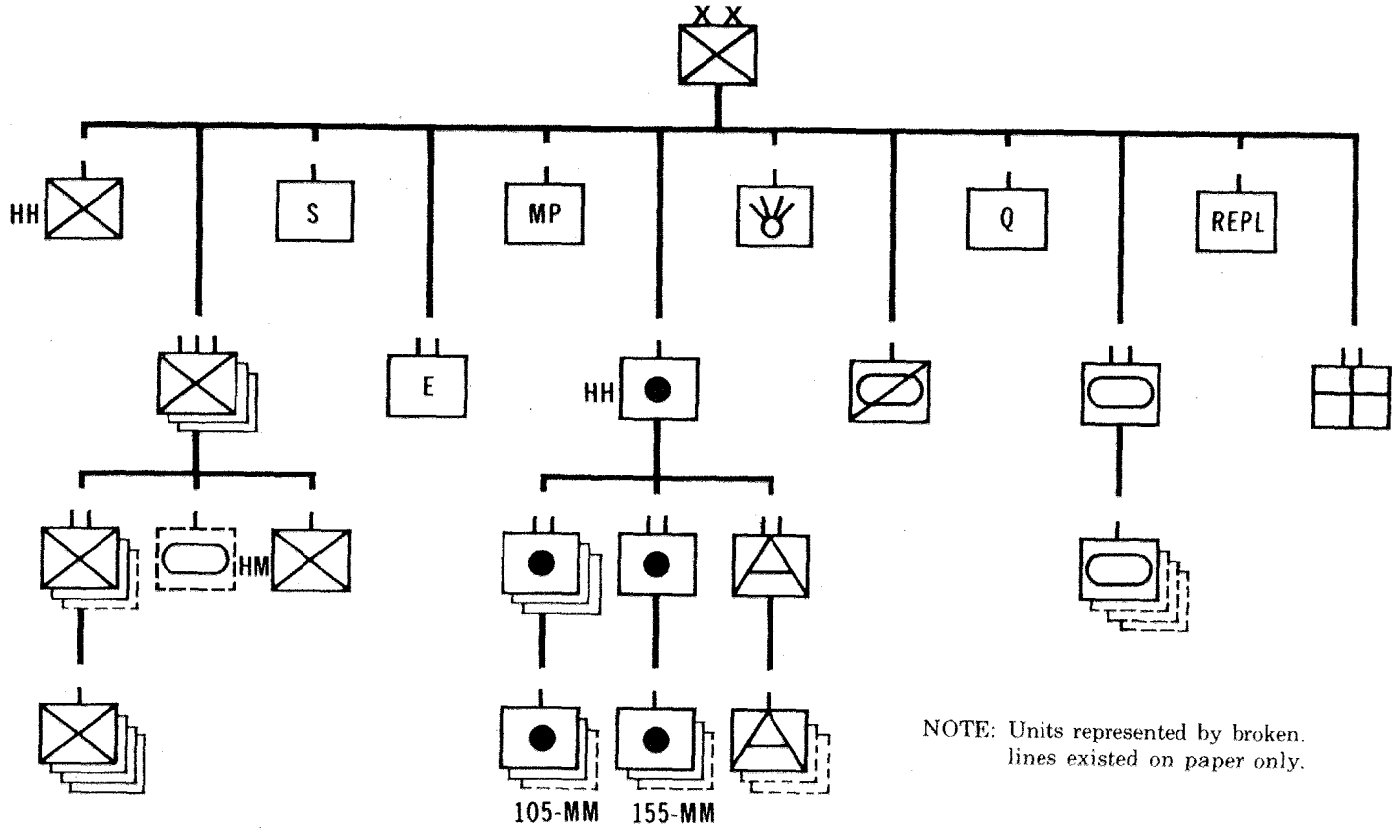


Figure 1. U.S. Army infantry division (TOE No. 7N, July 1948)

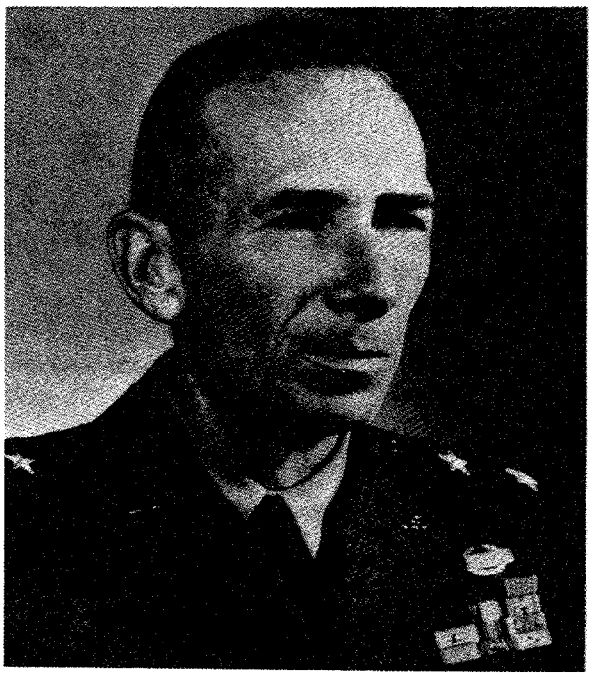
men out of 153 engaged, Battery A of the 11th Field Artillery Battalion lost all of its 155-mm howitzers, and the 24th Quartermaster Company lost thirty out of thirty-four trucks.[18]

By the time the 24th Division was relieved by the 1st Cavalry Division on 22 July, its strength had been reduced to 8,660 men. During the previous seventeen days, it had been driven back 100 miles by elements of two North Korean divisions. It had suffered over 30 percent casualties, including an especially heavy toll of field grade officers. In addition, more than 2,400 men were missing in action, among them the division commander. During the long retreat, most of the division's equipment had been destroyed or abandoned. Their morale weakened by constant retreats, their strength sapped by dysentery and the heat of the Korean summer, the men of the 24th Division badly needed time to rest and refit before again entering the fight.

The ordeal suffered by the 24th Division brought to light many problems that had been minimized or overlooked in the relative complacency of peacetime. Equipment shortages that had not seemed serious for a division on occupation duty—the lack of telephone wire, radio batteries, and mortar ammunition—proved to be critical. The available maps frequently proved to be inaccurate, an especially serious problem when plotting artillery fire. Furthermore, garrison duty in Japan had not physically conditioned troops for operations in a mountainous terrain in midsummer. The large number of officer casualties also exposed the Army's lack of depth in seasoned combat commanders, and inexperienced replacements had to learn their trade under fire.[19]

Of even greater importance than the Army's physical deficiencies was the fact that Army tactical doctrine was based upon full-strength units organized under a triangular system of maneuver elements. The doctrine manuals presupposed that each regimental commander would be able to deploy three battalions, the normal configuration being two battalions in the line, while one remained in reserve. With only two battalions at its disposal, a regiment either had to reduce its frontage to battalion width or operate with no reserve. No matter which course was adopted, the regiment's tactical integrity was gravely impaired. The flexibility inherent in the triangular system was lost, and flanks became much more difficult to protect. No American officers in Korea had previous experience with such a tactical system, nor had the Army schools produced a modified doctrine more applicable to a two-battalion regiment. Commanders and staffs at every echelon had assumed that the peacetime formations would have their missing components restored before being committed to action, but this assumption proved false in the summer of 1950.[20]

On the day following its relief by the 1st Cavalry Division, the 24th Division received a new commander, Maj. Gen. John Huston Church. A veteran of both world wars and holder of the Distinguished Service Cross, Church was no stranger to the situation confronting the 24th Division. He had been in Korea since 27 June, first leading the GHQ Advance Command



Maj. Gen. John H. Church, Commander, 24th Infantry Division

and Liaison Group (ADCOM) as MacArthur's personal representative and later serving on General Dean's staff in a similar capacity. Promoted to major general on 18 July, the slim and taciturn Church hoped to have a few days grace in which to restore the battered 24th Division to fighting trim.[21]

On 22 July, Eighth Army assigned the 24th Division to Army reserve status, with residual responsibility for protecting an airfield near P'ohang-dong on Korea's east coast. On 24 July, after only one day's respite, Lt. Gen. Walton Walker, Eighth Army commander, ordered the division to shift southward to counter a North Korean flanking drive in the vicinity of Chinju. Leaving the 21st Infantry at P'ohang-dong under Eighth Army control, the 19th and 34th Infantry regiments moved into positions around Chinju and Ko'chang respectively (see map 2). Action flared at both locations during the last three days of July as the North Koreans continued to gain ground at the expense of the 24th Division. In hopes of stabilizing the situation, Eighth Army returned the 21st Infantry to division control and that regiment relieved the 34th Infantry in the line on 31 July. So badly mauled by the North Koreans at Taejon that it had temporarily "lost its entity as a striking force," the 34th passed into division reserve.[22]

In the face of continued North Korean pressure, General Walker on 1 August ordered a phased withdrawal of Eighth Army behind the Naktong River. This maneuver would shorten Walker's front, while utilizing the natural barrier of the Naktong to shield the major port of Pusan. As part of the plan, the 24th Division, which had been thinly spread covering Eighth

Army's southern flank, began to concentrate its regiments in a sector stretching twenty-two airline miles northward from the junction of the Nam and Naktong Rivers. The 25th Division assumed responsibility for the sector south of the 24th, while the 1st Cavalry Division extended the line to the north. The redeployment was to be completed during the night of 2—3 August.[23]

Although the constant retreats had been necessary, Walker feared that Eighth Army was losing whatever aggressiveness it once may have had. As early as 29 July, he had issued to officers of the 25th Division a ringing "stand or die" statement, which had been quickly circulated to other Eighth Army units as well. Walker announced that reinforcements were en route to Korea but that he could no longer trade space for time. With its back to the sea, Eighth Army would have to hold its ground until help arrived.[24] Now, on 2 August, in the midst of still another retrograde movement, Walker dispatched to all maneuver units a message regarding counterattack:

> Prior to assumption of the offensive, daily counterattacks will be made by all units to keep the enemy off balance, disorganized, and prevent him from launching a coordinated attack against our positions. Recent operations by ROK forces have demonstrated the value of frequent counterattacks to regain lost portions of the battle position and delay further advances of the enemy. Counterattack is a decisive element of the defense. The success of a counterattack depends largely upon surprise, boldness, and speed of execution.[25]

For several days, the 24th Division had little or no opportunity to counterattack as it completed its withdrawal behind the Naktong. First to move was the 34th Infantry, which crossed the river on 2 August and was in position west of Yongsan by 2300. The 21st Infantry and the attached 17th ROK Regiment, which had been serving as rearguard, disengaged during the evening and followed the 34th across the river. Shortly after the last units reached the east bank on the morning of 3 August, engineers demolished the Koryong-Taegu bridge. The only other span in the division sector, on the Ch'ogye-Ch'angnyong road, had been destroyed on the previous evening. With both bridges down, the Naktong became a moat behind which all elements of the 24th Division concentrated. Division forward headquarters was located at Ch'angnyong, and division rear moved northward from Masan to Miryang. By the evening of 3 August, all division units had reached the new sector except the 19th Infantry, which had just been relieved near Masan by 25th Division units and was en route north by rail and motor.[26]

The Eighth Army's withdrawal behind the Naktong River line in early August marked a new phase in the Korean conflict. Previously, Walker's divisions had operated independently, with their flanks unprotected, a situation not envisioned by the doctrinal manuals of the day. Unfortunately, this method of operations had facilitated flanking maneuvers by North Koreans. The concern by American units for their flanks had contributed heavily to their tendency to retreat more hastily than their commanders desired. Now, for the first time, the land area held by American and ROK

forces had contracted to the point that a more or less continuous defensive line could be formed to shield the port of Pusan. The resulting Pusan Perimeter ran northward approximately 100 miles from the Korea Strait, then eastward 50 miles to the Sea of Japan. The western face of the perimeter was held by American units. From south to north, they were the 25th Division around Masan; the 24th Division behind the Naktong covering Ch'angnyong; and the 1st Cavalry Division, also behind the Naktong in the vicinity of Waegwan. Extending the line eastward to the coast were the remaining elements of the ROK Army. With its flanks momentarily secured and with a few reserves in place, Eighth Army faced the continuing North Korean assaults with greater confidence than before.[27]

The 24th Division Makes a Stand

2

The sector of the Pusan Perimeter occupied by the 24th Division in August 1950 extended from the junction of the Nam and Naktong Rivers northward along the Naktong to the vicinity of the village of Hyonp'ung. The distance from the Nam to Hyonp'ung by air was twenty-two miles, but via the twisting course of the Naktong, it was thirty-four miles. Although the river flowed through a valley that averaged 1,000 meters in width, the stream itself averaged no more than 350 meters across. The depth of water normally ranged between 1 and 3 meters. Peacetime traffic had crossed the Naktong in the 24th Division's sector via the Ch'ogye-Ch'angnyong bridge and several small ferries, but such means were no longer available. The low water levels existing in the summer of 1950 exposed a number of areas fordable on foot, but the steep banks prevented vehicles from crossing without engineer preparation of the approaches (see map 3).[1]

The valley of the Naktong in the 24th Division sector was flanked on both sides by hill masses averaging 200 meters in height but which occasionally rose above 300 meters. Although individual crests might be slightly taller than those facing them across the valley, seldom was the difference in elevation great enough to confer a significant military advantage. Only at the far northern end of the sector, where a 408-meter hill stood on the east bank, was the terrain on one side of the valley dominated by that on the other. Elsewhere, the only notable difference between the valley walls was the presence of more gullies leading down to the river on the eastern side than on the western. All of the hills were bare except for occasional clumps of grass and scrub pine.[2]

The width of his sector, the presence of the river, and the weakness of the 24th Division all influenced General Church in the preparation of his defensive dispositions. His plan called for the river front to be lightly held by units of platoon size or smaller, with gaps being covered by observation in daylight and by patrols at night. Regiments were to maintain local reserves well forward, while a mobile general reserve would be established farther to the rear. Defensive positions, both primary and alternate, were to be entrenched to the maximum extent possible. Minefields were to be placed at all possible crossing points. All boats and ferries were to be destroyed, except a handful needed for patrolling. No civilians were permitted

to cross the Naktong, and all residents were to be evacuated from the area between the river and the north-south road passing through Ch'angnyong and Yongsan.[3]

During the period 2 to 5 August, all elements of the 24th Division reached their assigned positions within the division sector. To implement his defensive plan, Church placed primary reliance on his major infantry components, the 19th, 21st, and 34th Infantry regiments, each of which contained only two weak battalions. In addition, the division maintained operational control of the 17th ROK Regiment. These units took positions in the line in the order in which they arrived. Two engineer combat battalions, the 3d and 14th, provided engineer support. Four field artillery battalions were also available, though none had more than two firing batteries, and two had only one battery each. The 78th Heavy Tank Battalion was represented solely by Company A, and the 26th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion had only Battery A present (see table 1).[4]

Table 1. Troop List, 24th Infantry Division, 5 August 1950

Division Troops

- Headquarters and Headquarters Company
- 19th Infantry
- 21st Infantry
- 34th Infantry
- 11th Field Artillery Battalion
- 13th Field Artillery Battalion
- 52d Field Artillery Battalion
- 63d Field Artillery Battalion
- Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion
- Headquarters Battery, 26th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Automatic Weapons)
- Battery A, 26th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Automatic Weapons)
- 3d Engineer Battalion (Combat)
- 14th Engineer Battalion (Combat)
- 24th Reconnaissance Company
- 24th Military Police Company
- 24th Quartermaster Company
- 24th Signal Company
- 24th Replacement Company
- 724th Ordnance Maintenance Company
- 24th Medical Battalion
- 24th Division Medical Detachment
- 24th Division Band

Attached Troops

38th Ordnance Maintenance Company

34th Ordnance Field Depot Company

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 66th Ordnance Battalion

8076th Surgical Hospital

55th Engineer Company

2d Engineer Construction Group

Operational Control

17th Republic of Korea Infantry Regiment

At 1800 on 5 August, the ration strength of the 24th Division was 9,882 division troops, 486 men attached, and 2,000 ROK soldiers, for a grand total of 12,368. Even in its skeletonized form, the division had serious equipment shortages. Missing weapons included two 105-mm and four 155-mm howitzers, thirteen 4.2-inch mortars, sixty-eight 3.5-inch rocket launchers, 103 BARs, fifty-five 57-mm recoilless rifles, seven 75-mm recoilless rifles, and sixteen M-24 tanks. Division transportation lacked 335 1/4-ton trucks, eighty-five 3/4-ton trucks, eighty-one 2 1/2-ton trucks, seventeen dump trucks, six 4-ton trucks, three repair trucks, 158 1/4-ton trailers, and 105 1-ton trailers. Ammunition stocks were low in all categories, and the shortage of 4.2-inch mortar rounds was especially critical. Illuminating rounds in all calibers were scarce, making it impossible to keep the river under close observation at night. Shortages of tools, barbed wire, and antipersonnel mines also hindered the division's defensive preparations.[5]

By its own estimate, the 24th Division's combat efficiency rating on 5 August stood at 53 percent. This state of affairs had not gone unnoticed at Eighth Army headquarters, which had initiated a staff study to investigate the feasibility of withdrawing the division from the line. The division's hard service and its losses in men and materiel were duly noted, as was the limited ability of Eighth Army to supply replacements of personnel and vehicles in the immediate future. The staff study recommended replacing the 24th Division with two regiments of the newly arrived 2d Infantry Division on the night of 8—9 August. Eighth Army's G3 section, however, disapproved this recommendation on the grounds that the division could not be spared from the front. The 24th Division would continue in the line, although General Walker remained concerned about the unit's condition. On 6 August, he told a member of MacArthur's staff that its combat value was minuscule and would remain so until the division was rehabilitated. In Walker's opinion, the 24th Division was the most severely depleted unit in Eighth Army.[6]

Of the division's three regiments, the 34th Infantry was undoubtedly the weakest, numbering only 1,402 officers and men on 5 August. With serious shortages of vehicles, 4.2-inch mortars, and BARs, the regiment had a combat effectiveness rating of 40 percent. Commanding the 34th was Col. Charles E. Beauchamp, a West Point graduate who had arrived from Japan

on 16 July just in time to lead the unit in the fight at Taejon. Beauchamp was the regiment's fifth commander in three months. None had had time to correct the deficiencies in training and officer proficiency visible in the regiment even before it was committed to Korea. According to Beauchamp, the 34th had been rated the least effective of any of the regiments occupying Japan. Its performance in Korea had reflected that appraisal, with failures at Ch'onan, Kum River, Taejon, and Koch'ang. In the opinion of historian Roy Appleman, the 34th Infantry was the "worst [regiment] of the three in the division."[7]

As the first unit to withdraw behind the Naktong, the 34th Infantry came to occupy the southernmost portion of the division sector. Although U.S. Army doctrine for defense on a wide frontage called for a full-strength regiment to cover no more than 10,000 yards, the 34th Infantry's zone stretched 20,000 yards up the Naktong from the mouth of the Nam. Behind the front, the 34th was responsible for the security of a bridge over the Naktong that led into the 25th Division's sector at Namji-ri. Accounting for much of the 34th's frontage was a prominent bulge in the center of the regimental line where the Naktong made a wide loop to the west before resuming its southward course. The resulting salient, approximately 5,000 yards deep and 6,000 yards wide at the base, would come to be known as the Naktong Bulge. Four ferry sites studded the salient, one on each side of the base and two near the nose (see map 4).

With only two battalions available, Colonel Beauchamp assigned the frontline positions to Lt. Col. Gines Perez' 3d Battalion. Perez, who had just arrived from the United States, chose Companies I and K to hold the flanks of the regimental position, with frontages of 5,000 and 7,500 yards respectively. He ordered Company L to occupy the salient in the center, which extended for a total of 11,500 yards. Since his battalion numbered only 493 officers and men on 5 August, Perez could do no more than establish a series of platoon-size strongpoints on the hills overlooking the river. Built around each company's four machine guns, the strongpoints generally covered those ferry sites that provided an avenue of approach to the regimental rear via roads or trails.

Directly supporting Perez were several additional units. The regimental intelligence and reconnaissance platoon occupied observation posts on two hills to the left of Company L's position. The regimental heavy mortar company emplaced four of its seven 4.2-inch tubes in a valley at the base of the salient, near the battalion command post in the village of Kogono-ni, and sited the remainder 2,000 yards northward in the same valley. Part of Battery A, 26th Antiaircraft Artillery (AW) Battalion, reinforced Company I as infantrymen. The battery's four remaining half-track-mounted quadruple antiaircraft machine guns functioned as a mobile reserve. On the road to Yongsan, four miles behind Perez' command post, Colonel Beauchamp established the 515 officers and men of Lt. Col. Harold B. Ayres' 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, as regimental reserve. Three miles nearer the front, the five 105-mm howitzers of Battery B, 13th Field Artillery Battalion, operated in direct support of the 34th Infantry. Nearby, the 155-mm howitzers

of Battery B, 11th Field Artillery Battalion, reinforced the fires of the 13th. Finally, Company D, 3d Engineer (Combat) Battalion, was assigned to the regiment with orders to prepare minefields and serve as a potential reserve.

From his headquarters near Yongsan, Colonel Beauchamp supervised the 34th Infantry's defensive preparations that had begun late on 2 August. During the next three days, the 3d Battalion strengthened its frontline positions, established a chain of observation posts, and sent nightly patrols along the east bank of the river. Fords were available, but because of a lack of boats, no patrols crossed the river in the 3d Battalion sector. Several miles in the rear, the 1st Battalion prepared counterattack plans and surveyed the road net behind the front. Company D, 3d Engineers, laid a limited quantity of antipersonnel mines along the river in front of K Company and improved the roads in the regimental sector. The artillery batteries established observation posts, registered their tubes, and developed fire plans to support the infantry defense. Throughout the regiment, units received limited quantities of new equipment as it became available.[8]

Extending the division's line northward beyond the 34th Infantry was Col. Richard W. Stephens' 21st Infantry. Stephens held a much narrower front than Beauchamp, just under 12,000 yards, probably because his sector contained the Ch'ogye-Ch'angnyong road, as well as the division headquarters eight miles in the rear at Ch'angnyong. The ruins of the Ch'ogye-Ch'angnyong bridge were in the center of the regiment's front, and two ferry sites were located upstream on Stephens' right. Fortunately, Stephens did not have to contend with any major salients in his line since the Naktong curved only gradually from northwest to north along his front. The 21st Infantry numbered 1,670 officers and men on 5 August, but Stephens was unable to deploy that many since Company C and a section of 81-mm mortars were still at Yongdok on Korea's east coast. Lt. Col. Charles B. Smith's 1st Battalion consisted of 540 men, while Maj. John McConnell's 3d Battalion was only a shadow of its former self with 360 men.

Although Companies I and L of McConnell's command were so depleted that they were attached to Companies K and M respectively, Stephens assigned the 3d Battalion to defend the river line. In order to maintain a three-company front, McConnell received part of the regimental Heavy Mortar Company, which was serving temporarily as a rifle company due to the severe shortage of 4.2-inch mortar ammunition. With a smaller area to defend than Perez, McConnell was able to deploy his platoons with interlocking fields of fire. From north to south, the front line was held by Companies M, K, and Heavy Mortar. Reinforcing the position were seven .50-caliber machine guns and crews from the 14th Engineer (C) Battalion, whose 472 men were attached to the 21st Infantry. Additional fire support came from five 60-mm, two 81-mm, and six 4.2-inch mortars emplaced just behind the rifle positions.

Bolstering McConnell, as regimental reserve, was Smith's 1st Battalion. Since Company C was absent, Stephens attached Company D, 14th Engineers, to Smith, who placed it and his own A and B Companies in separate

reserve positions several thousand yards behind the 3d Battalion. From there, they could rapidly reinforce any threatened points in the regimental sector. Battery B, 52d Field Artillery Battalion, and Battery B, 63d Field Artillery Battalion, provided 105-mm artillery support for the regiment from positions 3,000 yards behind Smith's battalion. Companies A and B of the 14th Engineers established their camps near Ch'angnyong, from which they could also serve as a mobile reserve.

Like the 34th Infantry to the south, the 21st Infantry spent the period 3—5 August in strengthening its positions along the Naktong. With more engineer assets than the other regiments, the 21st was better able to protect its front with obstacles. Although antipersonnel mines and trip flares were scarce, a few were planted at likely crossing points. These were supplemented by numerous booby traps improvised from TNT, tin cans, nails, gas drums, and artillery shells. Just as in the 34th's sector, no boats were initially available for patrols to use in crossing the river at night. By the afternoon of 5 August, Colonel Stephens, unsatisfied with this situation, had located several boats in the hands of the 14th Engineers. As a result, the 3d Battalion was directed to send patrols across the Naktong after dark.[9]

North of the 21st Infantry was a 30,000-yard sector held by the 17th Infantry of the ROK Army. Commanded by Col. Kim Hi Chun, the 17th was widely known among American commanders as a highly competent, aggressive unit. In early August, it numbered approximately 2,000 men, organized in three battalions. The 17th's artillery support, like that accorded the division's other regiments, was weak, comprising only Battery A, 13th Field Artillery Battalion (105-mm howitzers), and Battery A, 11th Field Artillery Battalion (155-mm howitzers). To assist in the construction of defensive barriers, Company B, 3d Engineers, moved into the regimental sector, while the two companies of the 14th Engineers near Ch'angnyong were available for additional support if necessary.[10]

Division reserve for the 24th Division was Col. Ned D. Moore's 19th Infantry. This regiment, 1,910 strong on 5 August, had been the last to arrive in the division area, closing at 2030 on 4 August. Moore's men immediately went into bivouac—Lt. Col. Robert L. Rhea's 1st Battalion two miles northwest of Ch'angnyong and Lt. Col. Thomas M. McGrail's 2d Battalion four miles south of the town. Badly depleted in weapons and equipment, the regiment spent much of the next day compiling shortage lists and reequipping itself with the limited quantities of materiel reaching division supply depots. Elements of the regiment conducted road reconnaissance throughout the division sector to accumulate information necessary for the preparation of counterattack plans. Since the 19th Infantry was seriously deficient in vehicles, the 24th Quartermaster Company assigned twenty 2 1/2-ton trucks to the regiment to enhance its mobility.[11]

For purposes of counterattack, several other units were grouped with the 19th Infantry in division reserve. Companies A and C, 3d Engineers, retained their primary mission of maintaining roads in the division rear, but they were also alerted to serve as part of a counterattack force if needed.

Similarly, the 24th Reconnaissance Company at Ch'angnyong provided security to division headquarters, but it also figured in the 19th Infantry's counterattack plans. Unfortunately, the company had already lost ten jeeps and two of its M-24 light tanks, while two of the five remaining tanks had inoperable main guns. In even worse condition, but also committed to the mobile reserve, was Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion. That unit retained only two M-24 tanks as its entire armor strength, and one of those was attached to the 24th Reconnaissance Company. Company A, therefore, began classes in infantry tactics in its camp at Pugong-ni behind the division's left flank. Finally, the 24th Division's headquarters staff, headquarters company, signal company, and medical section established composite defense platoons for either a "last stand defense" or duty as part of the division counterattack force, in case of an enemy breakthrough along the Naktong.[12]

Behind the frontline and reserve units, the administrative and logistic apparatus required to support an American division slowly established itself. On 2 August, the division's rear echelon began its move from Masan northward to Miryang, a distance of thirty miles. Miryang lay approximately twenty-five miles east of Ch'angnyong via either of two circuitous routes through mountainous terrain. Arriving at Miryang on 3 August, most of the various support units opened for business on the following day. An important exception was the division ammunition supply point (ASP), which would not open at Yuchon, seven miles north of Miryang, for several days. Prior to that time, the 24th Division continued to draw ammunition from its old ASP at Masan, an awkward process that exacerbated the existing ammunition shortage. In other respects, the 24th Division's lines of communication and supply were functioning adequately by 5 August (see map 3).[13]

With his division at last in position along the Naktong, General John Church awaited the inevitable North Korean attack. Well aware of his limited resources, Church had created a defensive scheme that relied upon counterattacks by strong reserves to destroy penetrations of his lightly held front lines. Within that general defensive framework, the division commander had chosen to concentrate much of his strength on his center and right. In Church's view, the northern sector of his line was harder to defend than the southern, primarily because of its inadequate road net, and he assumed that his North Korean opponent would reach the same conclusion. Acting upon that assumption, Eighth Army's weakest division gave its weakest regiment the responsibility for holding the soon to be famous Naktong Bulge.[14]

Opposing the 24th Division on the Naktong was the 4th Infantry Division of the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). Activated in late 1948, the 4th Division in the summer of 1950 consisted of the 5th, 16th, and 18th Infantry regiments, plus an artillery regiment and antitank, self-propelled gun, engineer, signal, medical, and training battalions. Each infantry regiment had three battalions, while the artillery regiment had a battalion of 122-mm howitzers and two battalions of 76-mm guns. The division's basic triangular organization strongly resembled that of an American infantry division, except for its smaller artillery contingent and its much reduced

logistical apparatus. The division's authorized strength was 10,381 officers and men, with most of its fighting power concentrated in the 2,590-man infantry regiments (see figure 2).

Commanded by Maj. Gen. Lee Kwon Mu, a veteran of the Chinese Communist Forces and former NKPA chief of staff, the division had played a major role in the capture of the South Korean capital. Its success in that campaign had won it the title of "Seoul Division." Continuing southward, the 4th Division had rolled over Task Force Smith in early July, and it had been pushing the U.S. 24th Division backward ever since. In exchange for the ground gained, however, the 4th Division had suffered severely. By the time it reached the Naktong, its strength was estimated by the Eighth Army Intelligence Section to be no more than 8,000 men, and its artillery component had been reduced to only twelve guns. Nevertheless, the 4th Division still held the initiative and began immediate preparations to launch an assault across the river.[15]

After withdrawing behind the Naktong, the 24th Division briefly lost contact with the North Korean formations opposing it. Information regarding enemy units in its front on 3 August came only from aerial reconnaissance and an occasional message from South Korean police. These sources reported small enemy troop and vehicle movements several miles west of the Naktong, which indicated a deliberate approach to the river. Division intelligence officers developed five possible options they believed to be within North Korean capabilities, ranging from attacks in specific sectors to nothing more than the continuation of the buildup just beginning. In light of the limited activity along the river, the division intelligence section considered the last course of action to be the most likely.

The following day brought a higher level of North Korean activity in the immediate vicinity of the Naktong. Although no American soldiers visited the west bank of the river, two separate North Korean patrols crossed the Naktong near the right flank of the 21st Infantry early on the morning of 4 August. Both patrols retreated quickly, one after being fired upon by elements of the 17th ROK Regiment. Later that day, small groups of North Korean soldiers were seen near the west bank of the river at the juncture of the 21st and 17th ROK Regiment's sectors and in the 34th Infantry's sector at the nose of the salient. In order to discover the extent of enemy activity beyond the range of its own observation posts, the division requested aerial reconnaissance of the area from the river westward for twelve to fifteen miles. Although aircraft struck several villages and claimed hundreds of enemy casualties, this method produced little new information. The division G2, therefore, did not significantly revise his forecast of probable enemy intentions.

Dawn on 5 August brought further increases in North Korean activity along the Naktong. Reconnaissance pilots, artillery forward observers, and infantry observation posts all reported groups of enemy soldiers moving in the area just behind the Naktong's west bank. The greatest concentration of observed enemy movements was in the sector held by the 17th ROK

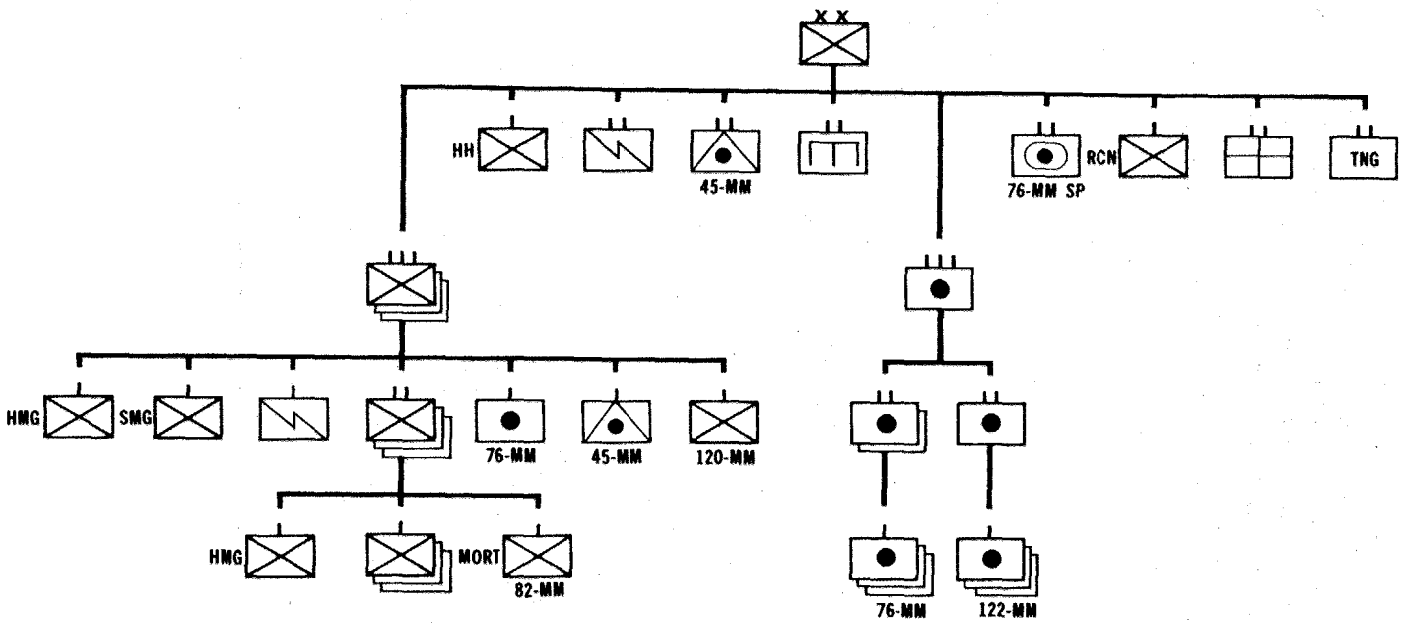


Figure 2. Typical North Korean infantry division (Far East Command—Research Supplement, 19 October 1950)

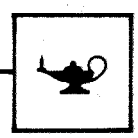
Regiment, with somewhat fewer incidents reported by the 21st Infantry, and fewer still by the 34th Infantry. Ominously, the 34th reported sighting enemy trucks just across the river. These were shelled by artillery, with limited results reported. Air support for the 24th Division remained at the same level as on the previous two days, with several strikes being made beyond the Naktong along the division's front. Unaccountably, the results of the strikes were not communicated to the division. No change was made in the division intelligence estimate submitted at 1800, which continued to view an enemy buildup as more likely than a crossing. If a crossing should occur, the 34th Infantry sector was considered a more likely site than that of the 21st, but even this possibility rated no higher than third in a list of five. In view of this analysis, Church made no change in the disposition of his units.

Unlike previous nights, which had been relatively quiet, the evening of 5 August saw little diminution in the level of enemy activity that had characterized the daylight hours. On the left flank of the division line, just before sunset, observers from the 34th Infantry saw a group of people stacking boxes in trees near the river. Several hours later, flares appeared in the hills to the west. Outposts on the right of the 21st Infantry line heard vehicles moving eastward toward the river at 2210 and reported seeing large numbers of men moving in the same direction at 2245. While the 34th Infantry sent no patrols across the river, the 21st Infantry placed a patrol on the western shore near midnight. Landing near the sector boundary shared with the 34th, the men heard vehicles moving near the river and the sounds of enemy personnel in a nearby village. Upon recrossing the river, the patrol requested an artillery concentration on the village, which was delivered with unknown results.[16]

The events of the evening of 5 August notwithstanding, no particular sense of alarm was felt within the 24th Division. Battered by the pounding it had received during its long retreat, the division badly needed a respite from heavy combat in order to regain its strength. The line of the Naktong appeared to offer just such a reprieve by providing a barrier to the continuation of the North Koreans' advance. As long as the North Koreans did not attempt a crossing, the presence of a watery barrier separating them from the enemy lulled the men of the 24th Division into a false sense of security.

The Battle of the Naktong Bulge Begins

3



At 0001 on 6 August, red and yellow flares burst luridly over the Naktong. A few minutes later, the 34th Infantry's Observation Post (OP) No. 1 on the south side of the Bulge reported small arms fire in its immediate front. This apparently was a North Korean attempt to divert attention from the opposite side of the salient, where several battalions of the 16th North Korean Regiment were beginning to cross the Naktong. Large numbers of the enemy used rafts, constructed earlier in the hills bordering the river, while others simply waded across. Although a few drowned, most arrived safely on the east bank. There they came under scattered fire from elements of L Company's outpost line, which caused them to move northward along the river bank before entering the hills. The initial contact, which occurred around 0115, ended almost immediately as the North Koreans disappeared in the darkness.[1]

By 0200, enough scattered contacts had developed to indicate that an enemy penetration of unknown strength was occurring on the right center of L Company, near its sector boundary with I Company. Artillery batteries in the regimental rear were warned to watch for infiltrators. At 0205, increased firing on the right caused the 34th Infantry's S3 to notify division headquarters that in his opinion an attack had begun. Solid information on enemy strength and positions was still lacking, however, so little further action was taken. Left to themselves, the North Koreans already across the Naktong continued to move eastward through the hills, while others crossed the river to join them. Around 0300, their leading elements reached the vicinity of the village of Kogono-ni, which lay in a valley traversing the base of the salient. Located just off the road to Yongsan and the regimental rear, the village was the site of the 3d Battalion command post (CP) and a detachment of the Heavy Mortar Company. Overrunning the area, the North Koreans forced Lieutenant Colonel Perez, his command group, and the mortarmen to withdraw eastward in haste (see map 4).[2]

Around 0330, Perez arrived at Lieutenant Colonel Ayres' 1st Battalion, which was in reserve near Kang-ni four miles to the rear. Perez burst into Ayres' CP and informed him of what had happened at the river. This was Ayres' first indication that anything was wrong. For some reason, Perez' flight was not transmitted to division headquarters at Ch'angnyong. In-

stead, at 0430, the 34th Infantry reported only that from thirty to eighty enemy had crossed the river in the I Company sector and engaged in a brief firefight before disappearing in the darkness. No further information was supplied to the division until 0520, when Colonel Beauchamp reported that the North Koreans had made a crossing in force in the center of the 34th's position. Beauchamp announced he was committing Ayres' 1st Battalion in a counterattack at first light, and he requested an artillery liaison plane to assist in locating the enemy. The division G3 duty officer, in turn, notified his section chief, arranged for the liaison plane, and requested that Eighth Army's Air Operations Center provide air strikes at dawn. By 0545, the 19th, 21st, and 17th (ROK) Regiments, as well as division artillery, had all been alerted.[3]

At Kang-ni, Ayres prepared to move his battalion forward at dawn, which occurred around 0630. He placed Capt. Clyde Akridge's Company C in five trucks with orders to drive toward the river until Ayres stopped them. Companies A and B followed on foot, while Ayres rode ahead of the battalion with a small command group to discover what was happening near the river. By 0700, Ayres was moving—as Beauchamp informed General Church when the latter called with orders to "clear up the situation." Passing en route the position of Battery B, 13th Field Artillery Battalion, Ayres drove to Perez' abandoned CP at Kogono-ni, where he saw no enemy troops. Just as the trucks carrying Company C arrived at Ayres' position, North Koreans hidden in the hills above the village directed a heavy fire

Lt. Col. Harold B. Ayres, Commander, 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry

into the small convoy. Ambushed before they could dismount, Akridge's men sustained several casualties and momentarily became disorganized.

In the face of increasing North Korean fire, Ayres ordered Akridge to assault the high ground with Company C, while he himself directed the fire of the company's 60-mm mortars. Akridge, who had only been with the company a few days, quickly received three wounds, and C Company's attack collapsed under a hail of North Korean bullets. Ayres continued to direct the mortars until his ammunition was exhausted and several mortarmen around him were hit. He then withdrew with his command group and succeeded in escaping without injury, although several of his staff were wounded in the process. Ayres spent the next several hours working his way back to the remainder of the battalion. The remnants of Company C took shelter around a grist mill near the ambush site.[4]

Three miles to the rear, the remainder of the 1st Battalion, accompanied by two quad-.50 half-tracks, marched westward under the supervision of Colonel Beauchamp. At 0830, as they neared the village of Sangnigok, they encountered several platoons of North Koreans, who opened fire on them from the hills west of the road. Between this firefight and the one at Kogono-ni lay Battery B, which could hear the firing but as yet could see no enemy. As a precaution, the battery commander sent twenty men to a nearby ridgetop as a security guard. Fifteen minutes later, the battery of five 105-mm howitzers was attacked by an estimated 200 North Korean troops, who began to rake the gun positions with machine gun and mortar fire. The artillerymen fought back and for a time held their own.[5]

By this time, General Church had become concerned about the extent of the North Korean penetration and the lack of progress that had been made in erasing it. Following a series of reports from the 34th's OP No. 2 that enemy units were in the rear of the Heavy Mortar position in the north end of the Kogono-ni valley, Church decided to reinforce the 34th's sector. At 0835, he notified Beauchamp that one battalion of the 19th Infantry would be committed to assist in counterattacking the penetration. Beauchamp was to "clean out" the area, then return the 19th's battalion to division reserve.[6]

At 0900, Brig. Gen. Pearson Menoher, assistant division commander, reported to Church from the 34th Infantry's sector. According to Menoher, Company C of Ayres' 1st Battalion was in Battery B's position under small-arms fire, while Companies A and B were 1,000 yards to the rear but moving forward. Beauchamp planned to maneuver Ayres' battalion in a southwesterly direction, then to the northwest to eliminate the penetration. Since the enemy was estimated to be in no more than company strength, Menoher believed the 19th Infantry's battalion might not have to move beyond Kang-ni. Unfortunately, conditions at the area of penetration were not as expected. Ayres' battalion was a shambles; Company C was no more than a remnant making a last stand near Kogono-ni; A and B were held up near Sangnigok; and the battalion commander was making his way back through the hills on foot. Battery B had been encircled and was

pinned down by mortar and automatic weapons fire. Near the river, most of L Company had withdrawn about a mile to the southwest and had been cut off by the North Korean thrust. In sum, instead of being under control, the situation was badly deteriorating.[7]

In only one respect was there cause for optimism. North Korean attempts to cross into the undefended sector of the Bulge had slackened markedly under the pressure of air and artillery interdiction of the crossing sites. The first air strike had occurred at 0645, just after sunrise, when four F-80s arrived and strafed suspected crossing points. Fifteen minutes later, four F-51s relieved the jets and continued the search for targets. Thereafter, aircraft appeared over the area at regular intervals throughout the day, attacking enemy boats on the river and small parties of North Koreans moving through the hills. In addition, fighter-bombers made numerous strikes on targets west of the Naktong to impede the enemy buildup. The two artillery batteries in the sector assisted the aircraft as much as possible but were hindered by range limitations and lack of available guns. When Battery B, 13th Field Artillery, became immobilized by enemy fire, the only tubes available in the 34th Infantry sector were the six 155-mm howitzers of Battery B, 11th Field Artillery.[8]

Interdiction of enemy activity in the hills east of the Naktong was not as successful as that in the river valley. Companies A and B of Ayres' 1st Battalion remained stalled near Sangnigok throughout the morning, although supported by fire from two quad-.50 antiaircraft half-tracks. One of these vehicles, however, was damaged by an antitank rifle, and the battalion executive officer, directing the attack in Ayres' absence, was wounded. With Ayres' battalion fragmented, no aid was available for Battery B, which had been encircled since 0900. At 1030, the battery commander concluded that his only hope was to withdraw along a trail to the southeast. Gathering about fifty men, he managed to extricate one howitzer and several trucks before enemy fire forced him to abandon the remaining four guns and numerous vehicles around 1100. By the time the battery reached safety near Yongsan in early afternoon, it had lost two killed, six wounded, and six missing.[9]

At approximately the same time that Battery B escaped, the right flank of the 34th Infantry began to collapse. Although not under direct attack, the men of Company I could hear the firing on their left gradually move toward their rear. Apprehensive, the lieutenant commanding Company I ordered a withdrawal northward into the 21st Infantry's sector. Company I, joined by detachments from the 34th's Heavy Mortar Company, M Company (Weapons), and Battery A, 26th AAA Battalion, crossed into the zone of the 21st Infantry shortly after 1030. This fact was noted by the 21st Infantry's left flank unit—its own Heavy Mortar Company—and reported to regimental headquarters. At 1055, the 21st Infantry passed this information on to division, which had been unaware of Company I's retreat. A few minutes later, at 1110, another message from the 21st's Heavy Mortar Company reported North Koreans moving into the positions vacated by the men of Company I (see map 4).

The new information thoroughly alarmed General Church. He ordered Colonel Beauchamp of the 34th Infantry to take all necessary measures to return Company I to its original positions and to relieve the officers responsible for the withdrawal. He authorized Colonel Stephens of the 21st Infantry to direct artillery fire upon the North Koreans now seen to be occupying the hills across the valley from the 21st Infantry positions. This valley was crucial because it contained a road leading directly from the river to the division's command post at Ch'angnyong. With this road potentially open to the enemy, the composite defense platoons at division headquarters hastily manned a perimeter around the town. To block this avenue of approach and reinforce his crumbling front, Church at 1150 dispatched the 24th Reconnaissance (Recon) Company down the road toward the river to assist Company I in restoring the line. By this time, Company I had withdrawn two miles to the vicinity of one of the 21st Infantry's reserve companies, where it reported it had been facing several thousand enemy troops.[10]

In addition to committing the 24th Recon Company, Church also allocated part of the 19th Infantry to bolster the 34th. Alerted at 0600 and ordered to Beauchamp's support at 0835, the 2d Battalion of the 19th moved by truck at 1000 from its camp on the Ch'angnyong-Yongsan road. It reached its assembly area at Yu-ri, five miles away, around 1100. Ten minutes later, Church directed Col. Ned Moore of the 19th Infantry to "get up there and clean out the enemy. I'll send your other battalion to you." At the same time, he ordered Moore's 1st Battalion to leave its position northwest of Ch'angnyong and follow the rest of the regiment to Yu-ri. Although it moved by truck, the 1st Battalion required approximately two hours to travel the eleven miles to its destination.[11]

By early afternoon, Lieutenant Colonel Ayres had managed to rejoin Companies A and B of his battalion, which were still stalled at Sangnigok. After adjusting mortar fire on suspected enemy positions, Ayres ordered the advance to resume. Company B assaulted a series of low hills to the right of the road, while Company A deployed in the rice paddies on the left. Although the men in the hills found the going difficult, Capt. A. F. Alfonso's Company A eventually worked its way forward to the abandoned gun positions of Battery B. Supported by the remaining quad-.50 half-track, Company A deployed forward of the battery position, while a detail searched for survivors of the morning's action. Satisfied that he had recovered everyone left behind, Alfonso pressed forward with his men into the valley Company C had entered earlier in the day. There he found thirty-five of Akridge's men making a final stand in a small grist mill. North Koreans had approached within grenade range of the mill but had not been able to overrun it. Gathering up the dead and wounded they could find, Alfonso's men loaded them into abandoned trucks and sent them to the rear, escorted by the half-track and several riflemen. By the time Company A resumed its advance toward the Naktong, it was late in the afternoon. Company B was unable to join it, having been halted by enemy resistance in the hills north of the abandoned artillery position.

While Alfonso's Company A cautiously proceeded down the road to the river, men of Battery B returned to their former position and removed two more howitzers and trucks before being driven off by sniper fire from the hills. Ahead of them, Company A soon encountered strong enemy resistance. Halting his column, Alfonso suppressed the North Korean fire with several rounds from a 60-mm mortar, then ordered his men forward. The riflemen fired left and right as they moved down the valley toward the Naktong. Just after sunset, Company A reached the river, where it found elements of Company L, which had withdrawn earlier in the day from their original positions at the nose of the salient. Because the combined force numbered only about ninety men and the enemy had closed in behind them, Alfonso decided to establish a defensive position there. He opened communications with Ayres by radio relay through Company B two miles in the rear. Designated force commander by Ayres, Alfonso then requested an airdrop of food, water, ammunition, and medical supplies for his beleaguered troops (see map 5).[12]

Behind Ayres' battalion, Lt. Col. Thomas McGrail's 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, had moved to a line of departure northeast of Sangnigok by 1500. Approximately one hour later, it began to advance slowly in a northwesterly direction in order to seal off the southern half of the area vacated by Company I of the 34th Infantry. The plan of maneuver called for the battalion to seize Hill 146, about a mile west of Sangnigok, then to turn north to another ridge a mile from the first, and finally to assault westward one-half mile to the hills overlooking the Naktong. Given the heat of a Korean August and the rough terrain, McGrail's assignment was ambitious at best. Enemy resistance, though slight, further delayed the advance. Meanwhile, Colonel Moore held Lieutenant Colonel Rhea's 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, in reserve until McGrail's advance clarified the situation.[13]

While the 19th Infantry attempted to regain the southern half of I Company's original position, the 24th Recon Company attempted to regain the northern half. Organizing its cooks and mechanics into an extra platoon, the 24th Recon Company departed Ch'angnyong just before noon. Meeting no enemy resistance, the leading elements of the company reached the river around 1300. After contacting Company I, the recon company commander drew up a plan to recapture the lost defensive positions on the hills overlooking the river. Reinforced by the recon company's rifle squads and supported by the fire of its light tanks, Company I launched a counterattack around 1500. The first hill was gained easily, but once on the reverse slope, the infantrymen came under heavy fire from automatic weapons and mortars located on the next hill to the south. Covered by an artillery barrage, Company I withdrew once more, all the way to the position of the supporting tanks. Although men of the company claimed they had been surrounded by up to 4,000 North Koreans, the commander of the 21st Infantry's Heavy Mortar Company, who was observing from a hill to the north, estimated that the enemy force numbered no more than 150 men. Concluding that Company I was useless for further offensive action that day, the commander of the 24th Recon Company moved both units to high ground near the road and established defensive positions for the night.[14]

In the southern half of Company I's old position, the 19th Infantry was somewhat more successful than other counterattacking elements had been. Finally committed to attack northwest from the vicinity of Sangnigok in late afternoon, McGrail's 2d Battalion reached its first objective, Hill 146, by 1715. Leaving F Company on Hill 146, McGrail turned the remainder of the battalion northward toward his second objective, Hill 174. Reaching that hill with E and G Companies by 1900, he estimated that 300 North Koreans were caught in the village of Ch'ongdan, between Hills 146 and 174. Believing his force to be too weak to assault the village, McGrail directed heavy mortar and automatic weapons fire on the enemy position until darkness prevented further action. The North Koreans, who probably numbered far fewer than 300 men, then withdrew unhindered, while their destruction was reported to the 24th Division.

Although Rhea's 1st Battalion had been available to him since 1300, Colonel Moore did not commit it to action until 1800. The original plan of attack called for Rhea to follow McGrail to Hill 146, then wheel southward and sweep through the Naktong Bulge. With only three hours of daylight remaining, this proved impossible to accomplish, thus dashing General Church's hopes of restoring the river line by dark. Rhea moved westward with Company C on the left, B on the right, and A in reserve. Part of Company B reached Hill 146 without difficulty, but its 2d Platoon came under fire from Hill 165 to the south. Company C also encountered fire from Hill 165, causing the unit to recoil. As night approached, Rhea consolidated all of his companies in the vicinity of Hill 146, established communications with the 2d Battalion to the north, B Company, 34th Infantry, to the south, and waited for daylight. Thus ended the final counterattack of the day in the 34th Infantry sector.[15]

The North Korean penetration in the 34th Infantry zone was not the only problem for General Church as darkness fell on August 6. North Korean units had crossed the Naktong in the sectors guarded by the 21st Infantry and the 17th ROK Regiment. An estimated two squads of North Koreans had crossed in boats on the left of the ROK sector just before dawn, but the battalion commander had quickly committed his reserve company and the penetration had been contained. Unfortunately, Eighth Army had decided to withdraw the 17th ROK Regiment from 24th Division control as part of a general reorganization of South Korean forces. The regiment had been scheduled to depart on the morning of 6 August, but the crisis in Church's sector caused Eighth Army to delay the movement for twenty-four hours. To replace the South Koreans, Church created Task Force Hyzer from three companies of the 3d Engineer (Combat) Battalion, Company A of the 78th Heavy Tank Battalion (less tanks), and, ultimately, the 24th Reconnaissance Company.[16]

In the 21st Infantry's sector, an action resulting from another enemy crossing remained unresolved at nightfall. At 1000 on the morning of 6 August, a detachment of South Korean police went to the village of Sadung to evacuate any civilians who might remain. Located on the Naktong floodplain below the hills occupied by Companies M and K, the partially de-

stroyed village contained few civilians but proved to be full of North Korean soldiers who had crossed the river secretly during the night. The police were driven from the village by the North Koreans, who then fired on a nearby squad of Company K. In the absence of Major McConnell, the battalion commander, his executive officer called for mortar and machine gun fire to be placed on the village, but communications problems delayed transmission of the order. As the afternoon passed, more North Koreans attempted to join their comrades in Sadung by floating their equipment across the river on small rafts. Several were killed by fire from the hills, but others arrived safely and disappeared into the village.

By midafternoon, artillery had finally been brought to bear on Sadung, but with little effect. At 1620, McConnell reported that K Company's right flank squad was being driven back by at least fifty North Koreans from Sadung. In hopes of eradicating the penetration before nightfall, Colonel Stephens, at 1630, ordered Lieutenant Colonel Smith to drive the enemy from Sadung. Although counterattack plans had been prepared earlier for just such a contingency, it was several hours before Smith's Company A was in position to attack. Meanwhile, North Koreans in Sadung began to infiltrate eastward through a draw leading into the rear of M Company. Artillery concentrations were the only force available to suppress North Korean activity until 1900, when Company A's counterattack finally began. A South Korean policeman captured earlier in the day managed to escape during one of the barrages, and he reported at least 150 North Koreans in the village. In spite of heavy enemy fire and communications difficulties with its own supporting artillery, Company A drove the North Koreans back into Sadung but could go no farther. As darkness covered the valley, the company managed to secure a toehold in the north end of the village and held it throughout the night (for location of Sadung, see map 3).[17]

General Church had wanted the enemy penetrations destroyed by nightfall, because failure to do so would allow the North Korean 4th Division an opportunity to reinforce the estimated two battalions of its 16th Regiment already east of the Naktong. With the results of his counterattacks in hand, Church knew that the river line could not be restored that night, and he regretfully informed General Walker of that fact at 2130. Enemy activity in the 17th ROK and 21st Infantry sectors, although worrisome, was sufficiently localized to cause little concern. In contrast, the North Korean advance to the base of the salient in the 34th Infantry sector was potentially quite serious. There, at least 12,000 yards of river frontage lay open to enemy exploitation under cover of darkness. Recognizing that the enemy would probably seek to expand his foothold east of the Naktong, Church outlined his own plan for the next day in Operations Instructions No. 18. The 19th and 34th Infantry regiments were to continue their counterattacks toward the river, while the 21st Infantry defended its sector and Task Force Hyzer relieved the 17th ROK Regiment.[18]

An analysis of the first day's action reveals that four major counterattacks were undertaken by elements of the 24th Division. Ayres' counterattack provided the best opportunity to deal with the North Korean penetra-

tion at an early stage, but its strength was diluted by the manner in which it was executed. An experienced combat officer who had served in Italy during World War II, Ayres took a calculated risk by splitting his battalion and sending one company forward in trucks.[19] He thus gained speed—but at the expense of mass. Any advantage conferred by speed was lost when the company was ambushed. Not only was a company virtually destroyed, but Ayres himself was unavailable to control the remainder of his battalion for several precious hours. When he did regain control, one of his two remaining companies was isolated in the enemy rear. Coupled with the disintegration of Perez' 3d Battalion, the fragmentation of Ayres' 1st Battalion ensured the future ineffectiveness of the 34th Infantry.

On the 34th's northern flank, the unauthorized withdrawal of Company I and attached elements opened an even larger avenue into the 24th Division's rear. The response of the 24th Recon Company to this crisis was prompt, but it was limited to the vicinity of the road, because the unit's infantry component was small. The counterattack, therefore, depended largely upon Company I. However, judging from the wildly exaggerated reports of enemy strength emanating from this company, it was too demoralized to recover the lost ground from the small enemy force present. The 24th Recon Company provided as much support as possible, but Company I was no longer an effective unit, and the counterattack failed.

Although slow to begin, the series of counterattacks mounted in late afternoon by the two battalions of the 19th Infantry made some progress in containing the North Korean penetration. Arriving by 1100, the 2d Battalion did not begin its attack until 1600, while the 1st Battalion, which arrived two hours after the 2d, also waited five hours before being committed. Both battalions advanced under a scheme of maneuver that was decidedly optimistic in terms of the tasks to be completed in the few hours remaining before nightfall. Lack of information on enemy dispositions hindered both units as they advanced, especially the 1st Battalion, which was forced to reduce its frontage due to unexpected enemy fire. Neither battalion obtained its ultimate objectives, but the regiment's final position within a mile of the river at least established a firm shoulder on the northern flank of the enemy bridgehead.

The final counterattack of the day was the attempt by the 21st Infantry to deal with the North Koreans occupying Sadung. Once again, much time elapsed between the discovery of the enemy at 1130 and any serious attempts to eliminate their penetration. When initial efforts by K Company proved insufficient to dislodge them, Company A from the regimental reserve was ordered at 1630 to implement a previously prepared counterattack plan. Company A began its assault at 1900 but was hindered by inadequate coordination with supporting artillery batteries. Despite Company A's best efforts, Sadung remained in the hands of the North Koreans at nightfall.

In every case on 6 August, counterattacks by elements of the 24th Division fell far short of expectations. Although General Church and his regimental commanders were aware of the necessity for regaining the river

line before dark, they were unable to attain that goal. In fact, they only began to contain the North Korean thrust on the northern shoulder and made no progress whatsoever on the southern flank. Although rapidity of response is a major factor affecting the success of a counterattack, every counterattack, except Ayres' initial effort, was slow in execution. This was true even when a preexisting counterattack plan was implemented. Unfortunately, the long preparation periods did not produce increased information on enemy dispositions for assault-element commanders. Nor did the extra time result in improved artillery support for the attacking infantry. Because of its limited number of tubes, the artillery played little positive role in the counterattacks and, in at least one case, was responsible for much of the delay. These factors, when combined with the enervating heat, the rugged terrain, and the general condition of the 24th Division, explain its limited success during the first day of battle on the Naktong (see map 5).

During the evening of 6—7 August, combat activity slackened along the river in the 24th Division sector. On the northern flank, enemy troops attempted several small crossings in the zone being evacuated by the 17th ROK Regiment but apparently were dispersed by artillery fire. The 21st Infantry continued its efforts to eject the North Koreans from Sadung but were still thwarted by failure to establish satisfactory communications with supporting artillery. To the south, the 19th Infantry held its ground in the face of enemy probes against Companies B and C in the center of its line. Within the Naktong Bulge itself, fragments of Companies A, C, and L of the 34th Infantry maintained an uneasy vigil from their perimeter along the Naktong, in the enemy's rear.[20]

Disappointed that the North Korean penetration had not been destroyed by his mobile reserve on 6 August, General Church ordered the counterattacks to be resumed on the following day. Yet the 24th Division was now without reserves of its own to throw into the struggle. The 3d Engineer (Combat) Battalion previously had been available for that role, but Eighth Army's order detaching the 17th ROK Regiment from the 24th Division meant that the engineers organized as Task Force Hyzer would have to defend the sector evacuated by the departing South Koreans. As a partial replacement for the ROK unit, Eighth Army gave Church the 1st Battalion of the 9th Infantry and a battery of the 15th Field Artillery Battalion. These units, which had just arrived in Korea as part of the 2d Infantry Division, reached the battlefront on the evening of 6 August. The infantry battalion took a position at Ch'angnyong as division reserve, while the artillery battery established firing positions west of Yongsan to support the 19th Infantry. In the division rear, several ordnance, engineer, and medical detachments from Eighth Army moved into Miryang. These support units would ultimately aid the 24th Division in its fight to hold the Naktong line, but their immediate effect was to complicate the 24th Division's already tenuous supply situation.[21]

The absence of significant reserves on 7 August forced General Church to continue the counterattacks with the units committed on the previous day. Beauchamp's shattered 34th Infantry contributed little to this effort

from its positions in the southern half of the Bulge. Companies A, C, and L, consolidated under the command of Captain Alfonso, held their perimeter on the hills overlooking the river, but increasing North Korean activity in their vicinity prevented them from maneuvering. In early afternoon, they received an airdrop of badly needed food, water, and ammunition. Approximately half of the supplies landed outside their perimeter, and several men were wounded in unauthorized efforts to retrieve the bundles before nightfall. A thousand yards southwest of Alfonso's enclave, Company K continued to hold its original positions along the Naktong against only slight enemy opposition.[22]

With most of his force pinned down, Beauchamp had only two companies available for counterattack. He ordered Company B to leave its position just east of the village of Tugok and to advance along the road leading to Captain Alfonso's perimeter near the river. Understrength and exhausted, Company B attempted to move forward around midmorning, but heavy enemy fire prevented the company from making any appreciable gain. Further attempts proved equally feeble and futile. Company B would do no more that day, leaving only Company I, four miles to the north, to attempt to gain ground for the 34th Infantry. Supported by the light tanks of the 24th Recon Company, Company I, around 1300, reoccupied the northern tip of the hill mass that had represented the regiment's right flank prior to the North Korean attack on 6 August. An hour later, the company made contact with a platoon from Company G of the 19th Infantry as it advanced from the south, and both units established a perimeter for the night (see map 6). That evening the 34th Infantry reported its strength at 1,090 officers and men and its combat effectiveness at only 30 percent.[23]

Church's hopes of eliminating the North Korean penetration before nightfall of 7 August rested primarily on Colonel Moore's 19th Infantry. The regiment's attack plan called for the 1st Battalion to move both west and south in an effort to reestablish a firm shoulder on the river, while reducing the enemy's maneuver space. The 2d Battalion would simultaneously advance toward the west and north, also toward the river, where it would seek a link with Company I, 34th Infantry. These plans represented nothing more than the continuation of the previous day's scheme of maneuver. Company commanders received their attack orders at 0700 with H-hour placed at 0900.

Lieutenant Colonel Rhea's 1st Battalion moved out around 0845. Company B remained on the hill overlooking the village of Sinam-ni to provide a base of fire, while Company C advanced northwest across the valley toward Ohang Hill. Moving in a skirmish line formation, the troops crossed the valley unopposed, but half way up the hill on the far side, they came under fire from North Koreans on the crest. Despite this resistance, Company C continued to advance and ultimately seized the objective. Within ten minutes, about fifty North Koreans counterattacked the hill, but they were repulsed with heavy loss.

Company A of the 1st Battalion was not as lucky as Company C. Ordered to attack due south to seize Hill 165 and two nearby villages, the

company commander formed the 1st Platoon on the right, the 2d Platoon on the left, and the 3d Platoon in support. The 1st Platoon passed along the west side of Hill 165 and after a short but intense firefight occupied a spur projecting from the main hill mass. A message reporting the platoon's success was sent back to the company commander, but he never received it. Meanwhile, the 2d Platoon assaulted the north side of Hill 165. One squad quickly reached the crest but was violently counterattacked by North Koreans entrenched on the reverse slope. Harried by mortar fire, the 2d Platoon withdrew from Hill 165 by 0920. Their situation, in the words of the regimental journal, was "not too good."[24]

North of Rhea's 1st Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel McGrail's 2d Battalion encountered little difficulty in advancing westward to the line of hills overlooking the Naktong. By noon, Company F was in contact with Company C of the 1st Battalion on Ohang Hill. Company E seized the next hill to the north without opposition, although it later received sporadic fire from both American and North Korean sources. Farther northward still, Company G also reached the river, then sent a platoon along the ridge to make contact with Company I, 34th Infantry. The yawning gap created by the latter unit's hasty withdrawal of the previous day had finally been closed, considerably reducing the maneuver space available to the North Koreans (see map 6).

By noon, the advance of the 19th Infantry began to stall. At 1455, a regimental staff officer radioed to division headquarters: "Had to slow down our attack. Lots of heat exhaustion. Men are dropping out like flies. However, it appears that we have them on the run." During the lull, General Church arrived at Colonel Moore's CP. In light of the imminent departure of the 17th ROK Regiment from the division sector, Church initially directed Moore to move the 2d Battalion north by truck to support Task Force Hyzer. Before this order could be executed, however, the division commander rescinded it, and McGrail's men remained on the hills above the Naktong.

At 1700, the unit journal of the 19th Infantry recorded: "Troops suffering from heat exhaustion, lack of rations and water. Too tired to advance." Only after the temperature began to drop as nightfall approached did the advance resume. Companies F and C consolidated their positions on Ohang Hill near the river, while Company A once again assaulted Hill 165. Drawing two squads from his 1st Platoon on the right, the company commander united them with the relatively fresh 3d Platoon and sent the combined force forward. Although delayed briefly by snipers and machine gun fire, the men of Company A seized the crest. With all of his radios malfunctioning, the company commander sent messengers to gather up the remainder of his unit and consolidate it on the hill. By sunset at 2030, Company A believed it was secure for the night.

But Companies A, C, and F were not allowed to enjoy their gains. About an hour after sunset, the North Koreans began a firefight with all three units. Twenty minutes later, at 2150, Company A reported that its positions on Hill 165 had been overrun and that an enemy force of un-

known size was heading toward the 1st Battalion CP. Covered by the 81-mm mortars of the battalion's Weapons Company, Company A withdrew in considerable haste to the northeast. Around 2330, the unit was finally halted and reassembled near the mortar positions adjacent to the 1st Battalion CP. Meanwhile, the North Koreans made a similar attack on Company B, which had remained in position all day on Hill 146. Unlike Company A, this unit successfully withstood the enemy onslaught (see map 6).[25]

Although the efforts of the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments to reduce the Naktong Bulge remained the main focus of his concern, General Church could not completely neglect affairs on the 24th Division's center and right. Items of interest included a small but troublesome North Korean bridgehead in the 21st Infantry's sector and also the gap created by the departure of the 17th ROK Regiment from the division's right flank. Neither situation was as critical as Beauchamp's and Moore's battle to the south, but both remained potentially dangerous.

The problem faced by Colonel Stephens' 21st Infantry on 7 August centered around the village of Sadung, just as it had on the previous day. Company A of Lieutenant Colonel Smith's 1st Battalion had been trying, without success, to eject the North Koreans from Sadung throughout the night of 6—7 August. The company was hindered by stubborn enemy resistance but also by its inability to achieve satisfactory coordination with its supporting artillery. Growing impatient, Smith decided to withdraw Company A at 0430 on 7 August if no further progress had been made by that time. None was achieved, although 155-mm illuminating shells were fired at regular intervals to prevent the North Koreans from reinforcing their troops in the village. Because of communications difficulties, no further artillery support was forthcoming.

In order to cover Company A's disengagement, Smith ordered Company C, 14th Engineers, to move from its reserve position to the high ground overlooking Sadung. Before the engineers could arrive, however, Company A completed its withdrawal under cover of darkness. With friendly forces safely out of the line of fire, Stephens and Smith hoped to destroy the North Koreans remaining in Sadung by a concentrated application of artillery and aerial firepower. Their maddening inability to arrange for observed artillery fire on the village continued throughout the morning, however, due to shortages of both radios and forward observers. Thus, the batteries supporting the 21st Infantry could do no more than fire occasional blind concentrations on Sadung. Nor was air support more effective. The regiment's request for an air strike was denied at 0830 because of the higher priority assigned to the units farther south. Thus, the 21st Infantry would have to solve the problem of Sadung on its own.[26]

In midmorning, a patrol from Company K entered Sadung, where it found bloodstains and enemy equipment but no North Koreans either alive or dead. Shortly after 1100, an air strike was made available to the 21st Infantry, but the disappearance of the enemy from the village made it unnecessary, and the planes were released to other missions. Fifteen minutes

later, North Koreans reappeared in the village, and by 1250, they had infiltrated between Companies K and M and had cut off an observation post. Stung by the enemy's audacity, Colonel Stephens ordered his battalion commanders to resolve the Sadung problem once and for all. A platoon from Maj. John McConnell's 3d Battalion counterattacked to relieve the surrounded OP shortly after 1300, but strong enemy resistance forced Smith to add the weight of Company C, 14th Engineers, before any ground was gained. By 1640, both Sadung and its satellite village had been recaptured, and engineer detachments moved in to mine and booby-trap the area. Fifteen enemy dead were counted.

Nominally a simple operation, the mining of Sadung proceeded with difficulty into the evening. The engineers were first delayed by an infantry lieutenant who ordered them to halt because artillery would be firing on the village later. Once this matter was resolved, the engineers were harassed by North Korean snipers hiding in the grass nearby. Next, artillery fire began to fall upon Sadung, endangering the working parties. Urged on by Colonel Stephens, the engineers hastily finished the job and departed not long after sunset. Behind them, chickens began to set off the demolitions.[27]

Almost immediately after dark, the sounds of truck engines were heard beyond the Naktong, opposite Sadung. At 2230, the 3d Battalion reported that enemy troops in company strength had once more crossed into Sadung and were moving into the draw between Companies K and M. An additional crossing was reported 2,000 yards downstream near the wrecked highway bridge, where booby traps were exploding. The defenders fired artillery concentrations on both locations but with unknown results. Although threatened with encirclement, outposts near Sadung received orders to hold their positions until dawn, when a counterattack would attempt to rescue them. Since the companies of the 14th Engineer (C) Battalion by this time were all engaged in either extending the regimental line northward or providing security for the artillery, only Companies A and B of Smith's 1st Battalion were available for the counterattack. By midnight, both companies had been alerted, and ten trucks were available to move them forward at dawn.[28]

Units available for counterattack missions were limited in the northern half of the 24th Division's zone because of a series of unit and boundary changes imposed upon the division by Eighth Army. Early on the morning of 7 August, three companies of Lt. Col. Peter C. Hyzer's 3d Engineer (C) Battalion relieved the 17th ROK Regiment from its positions along the Naktong. The departure of the South Korean regiment at 1600 left the 3d Engineers to guard a river frontage of approximately 29,000 yards. To reinforce Hyzer's three available companies, General Church detached the battalion's Company D from the 34th Infantry and the 24th Recon Company from its position guarding the Ch'angnyong-Naktong road, sending both of them to join the 3d Engineers. Collectively, all of these units were now known as Task Force Hyzer. At the same time, Church detached Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion, from Hyzer's control and dispatched it to support Beauchamp's 34th Infantry. The tankers were currently serving as infantry,

since their two remaining tanks had already been assigned to support Moore's 19th Infantry.[29]

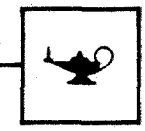
Fortunately for Task Force Hyzer, the North Koreans made no serious attempt to force a crossing in the engineers' sector during the relief of the 17th ROK Regiment. North Korean guerrillas and infiltrators were active, however, in the task force's rear areas, where one group battled South Korean police and another harassed Battery A, 11th Field Artillery Battalion. As 7 August closed, Colonel Hyzer's area of responsibility contracted as Eighth Army reduced the task force's frontage by some 20,000 yards. The ground relinquished was to be covered by units of the 1st Cavalry Division, which would extend southward into the gap. To aid Hyzer further, the 21st Infantry extended its frontage several thousand yards northward by moving Company C, 14th Engineers, from its reserve position into line (for the 17th ROK sector, see map 3).[30]

The end of the 24th Division's second day of battle along the Naktong provided General Church with some grounds for optimism. Although his goal of eliminating the North Korean penetration had not been achieved, the river frontage available to the enemy for exploitation had been markedly reduced by the counterattack of the 19th Infantry. Equally positive, the North Koreans had not significantly reinforced their troops within the Naktong Bulge during the night of 6—7 August. Small groups had crossed the river during daylight on 7 August, but their numbers were minimal. Nevertheless, Church's intelligence section recognized that the North Koreans remained able to reinforce their forward elements east of the Naktong, and they forecast just such an effort during the night.[31]

On the negative side of the ledger, the 24th Division continued to be stretched thin. Division strength, including attached units, totaled 11,441 officers and men on 7 August. Combat efficiency stood at no more than 46 percent. With every combat unit of the division either in line or in direct support, security of the division headquarters complex at Ch'angnyong remained in the hands of composite defense platoons drawn from service units and staff sections. Throughout the day, the division's only reserve was the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry, of the 2d Infantry Division. At 2215, Eighth Army ordered the remainder of the 9th Infantry (less its 3d Battalion) to move to Ch'angnyong, where it would come under the operational control of the 24th Division. In addition, the 27th Infantry of the 25th Infantry Division, located to the south, was alerted for possible duty in the 24th Division's zone. With no other reserves available to him, General Church hoped his own forces would suffice to drive the North Koreans back across the Naktong River.[32]

The Counterattack Stalls

4



The events of the night of 7—8 August 1950 demonstrated, once again, that the North Koreans were adept at using the cover of darkness to further their offensive preparations and to keep the American defenders off balance. Before midnight, Communist units made limited attacks on several companies in the 19th Infantry's sector east of the Naktong, as well as still another thrust into Sadung below the hills occupied by the 21st Infantry. The assaults against the 19th Infantry were repulsed in a series of firefights at close quarters, and the 21st Infantry believed it had broken up the North Korean crossing at Sadung solely with artillery fire. This latter assessment proved far too optimistic as Lieutenant Childers, commanding K Company, 21st Infantry, discovered shortly after midnight. Childers, alone in the company CP around 0100, suddenly was confronted by a squad of North Korean soldiers. Bolting quickly into the darkness, he withdrew to the position of the supporting 4.2-inch mortars, where he found a detail of men from the 14th Engineer (C) Battalion. Organizing the mortarmen and engineers into a roadblock team, Childers awaited the coming of dawn.[1]

About the same time Childers was surprised, eight miles to the southeast the officers and men of Battery A, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, encountered unfriendly nocturnal visitors. Childers' CP near the Naktong was an obvious target for local infiltration, but Battery A was in the midst of a headquarters complex five miles from the river and at least two miles behind the infantry positions of the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments. Nevertheless, the artillerymen were organized for defense, and in a brief firefight, they drove off the North Korean intruders. Daylight revealed at least thirteen enemy bodies scattered outside Battery A's perimeter. Little notice was taken of this episode at 24th Division headquarters, perhaps because Battery A was a new arrival belonging to the 2d Division, but in retrospect, its significance is clear. The two-mile gap between Companies B and L of the 34th Infantry provided an unguarded corridor leading to the cluster of headquarters, service units, and artillery batteries at Kang-ni, Yu-ri, and Yongsan, as well as to the 24th Division's vital main supply route (MSR) leading back toward Miryang. Battery A's action at Yu-ri meant that North Korean infiltrators were at best only three miles from Yongsan, with nothing to prevent them from continuing eastward, as long as they remained

south of the Yongsan-Naktong road. But the surviving documentation does not indicate that anyone at the headquarters of the 24th Division drew this conclusion on 8 August. During the day, however, the now dismounted members of Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion, were assigned to provide local security to the artillery batteries west of Yongsan.[2]

Infiltration of American lines was by no means the most significant activity of the North Korean 4th Division during the night of 7—8 August. Its commander, Maj. Gen. Lee Kwon Mu, had finally mustered enough troops and boats to reinforce significantly his 16th Regiment already within the Naktong Bulge. During the final hours of darkness on the morning of 8 August, at least two battalions quietly slipped into the water at several points along the four-mile section of river front still in North Korean hands. The crossing, which used more than seventy boats and rafts, continued after daylight, when it was observed by Captain Alfonso's isolated companies still clinging to their perimeter just south of one of the major North Korean ferry sites. Alfonso's men fired on the North Koreans at long range with a .50-caliber machine gun and called for an air strike. Upon their arrival, the aircraft strafed the exposed North Koreans for some time, causing them to disperse momentarily. Nevertheless, when the planes departed, the Communists resumed their crossing. Alfonso next called for artillery fire, but the number of tubes available was too small to provide a significant concentration, and the enemy crossing continued. By 0815, an aerial observer reported the Bulge area to be full of North Koreans, and at 0852, Alfonso's Company A reported it was under enemy fire. Fortunately for Alfonso, the North Koreans for the moment were more interested in pushing men and supplies across the Naktong than in eliminating his little band of infantrymen.[3]

By now it had become obvious to General Church and his staff that the main thrust of the North Korean attack on the 24th Division lay in the Naktong Bulge sector held by the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments. Enemy infiltrators in small numbers caused some anxious moments for Company K of the 21st Infantry around Sadung during the morning, but they represented only a diversion. On the division's right flank, Task Force Hyzer continued to patrol its enormous frontage while waiting for units of the 1st Cavalry Division to assume responsibility for much of the sector, in accordance with the boundary change decreed by Eighth Army. Enemy activity in Task Force Hyzer's zone was virtually nonexistent during the day, another indication that the North Korean 4th Division had staked its hopes on a drive toward Yongsan through Beauchamp's and Moore's depleted regiments.[4]

Beauchamp's 34th Infantry remained fragmented throughout 8 August. The four companies on the southern flank of the enemy penetration remained inactive all day, trading sporadic fire with North Korean units slowly approaching their isolated position. Company I, separated from its parent unit far to the south and beyond Beauchamp's effective control, was officially attached to the 19th Infantry by division order. Only Company B, holding the ridge east of the village of Tugok, was capable of offensive

The M-24 tank (General Chaffee)

action. During the afternoon, it tried again to break through to Alfonso's enclave on the river. The infantrymen moved through Tugok and assaulted the ridge beyond, but strong enemy resistance prevented them from going farther. After holding Tugok for approximately four hours, they fell back to their original positions. Little had been gained except the rescue of some men from the 34th's Heavy Mortar Company, who had been in hiding since 6 August.[5]

Supporting Company B in its abortive advance were the two remaining M-24 light tanks of Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion. As the infantry drive faltered, the tanks forged ahead and suddenly came under fire from several 14.5-mm antitank rifles. Hit by fragments, the commander of the leading tank was incapacitated. The loader, Pfc. Louis Kappler, took command of the tank and continued the fight, although he was wounded in both arms. When Kappler fainted from loss of blood, the commander of the second tank, Sgt. Ervin Yates, whose own vehicle had been disabled by a shot in the engine, raced to Kappler's tank and took control. Blasting his way forward, Yates destroyed several North Korean heavy weapons emplacements before nightfall forced him to withdraw. On the way to the rear, he attached a tow cable to the other tank and dragged it to safety. Both Kappler and Yates were later recommended for the Silver Star.[6]

As on the previous day, the 24th Division's primary counterattack was assigned to Col. Ned Moore's 19th Infantry. Moore had arranged for an air strike to open the fight at 0700 and had specifically requested the use of napalm and rockets. At the appointed time, no aircraft appeared. Artillery marked the target, Hill 165 and vicinity, at 0730 but the sky remained empty of planes. Finally, at 0800, after 155-mm white phosphorous shells

marked the target a second time, the aircraft arrived. To Moore's chagrin, they carried neither bombs nor rockets and strafed the hill with bullets only. Upon their departure at 0830, the artillery began a barrage to soften up the target.[7]

Moore's orders from General Church required him to determine the enemy's strength and dispositions while maintaining pressure through limited offensive action. He therefore planned to make only minor advances on the right near the river, while consolidating those companies scattered throughout the mass of hills. Accordingly, Company E moved up on line with Companies F and C and prepared to advance. After repulsing a probe by a North Korean platoon against E, the three companies began to move forward from their positions on Ohang Hill. They quickly encountered heavy fire from North Koreans dug in on the opposing ridge beyond the village of Ohang in the valley below. Having discovered that the enemy was present in force, the companies halted and consolidated their positions. From their new location overlooking the valley, they were able to fire on North Koreans attempting to remove American vehicles abandoned in the first day's fighting, but this contributed nothing to the reduction of the enemy salient.[8]

Moore reserved his major effort for Hill 165 on his left, which had already changed hands several times on the previous day. Once more, Company A was assigned to assault the hill, while Company B on a nearby ridge provided both direct fire support and adjustments for mortars and artillery. Around 0900, Company A, supported by the fire of the regiment's 4.2-inch and 81-mm mortars, began a methodical attack from the north. By noon, the infantrymen had fought their way halfway up the hill. At that moment, a flight of F-51 Mustangs roared overhead and proceeded to bomb, rocket, and strafe the area indiscriminately. Company A was shattered and the 81-mm mortars of Company D were silenced. Seizing the opportunity, the North Koreans added their own heavy mortar fire to the bombardment. A hail of 120-mm mortar shells not only hastened Company A's withdrawal but also fell among the 19th Infantry's 4.2-inch mortar positions and on the road leading back to Kang-ni. Blasted by the combined friendly and enemy firepower, Company A reeled back in disorder to the village of Mii-ri, where it was finally rallied. The North Koreans pressed close behind, forcing the 1st Battalion CP to evacuate Mii-ri in haste. Finally, with the aid of accurate artillery fire, the position was stabilized, but there would be no further advance by the 19th Infantry on 8 August (see map 7).[9]

The inability of the 24th Division to make any progress in reducing the North Korean penetration made it necessary for General Church to commit his last remaining reserve unit to the fight. A battalion of the 9th Infantry from the 2d Division had been available at Ch'angnyong for twenty-four hours, and another battalion from the same unit, along with regimental headquarters, was en route from the coast. As Col. John G. Hill, the commander of the 9th Infantry, led his column over the pass between Miryang and Yongsan, a messenger met him with instructions to hurry forward to Ch'angnyong for a conference with General Church. Leaving

his men to follow at their own pace, Hill paused in Yongsan only long enough to greet Beauchamp, an old friend, before heading north to the 24th Division CP.

At midmorning, Hill found General Church sitting on a box getting his hair cut. The diminutive general described to Hill the situation in simple terms: "This fellow has busted right through my center and is looking down my throat. I will give you planes for reconnaissance and my artillery to help. I want you to attack at once." Hill argued that his units, on the road since 0200 and not yet concentrated at Yongsan, would need time to get their bearings before being committed to action. Church initially wanted the advance to begin by 1500, but after Hill vigorously pressed for a delay, the division commander set 1600 as the time for the counterattack. Hill was to take his two battalions and strike due west against the nose of the enemy penetration. He would be supported by Batteries A and B (the latter just arrived) of his own 15th Field Artillery Battalion, as well as by the batteries from the 11th and 13th Battalions already supporting the 34th Infantry.[10]

With his two infantry battalions concentrated around Yongsan, Hill conferred at noon with his battalion and company commanders. At the meeting, Hill outlined his proposed plan of operations. Under it, the 1st Battalion was assigned the right of the regimental line, while the 2d Battalion was given the left. Company F and the regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon would serve as regimental reserve. The goal of the attack was the Naktong's east bank, and the fight was to be pressed until dark, although it was not to be hurried. All of these instructions were embodied in an attack order issued at 1315. This document took into account the North Korean thrust toward Mii-ri from Hill 165 by making the hill the initial priority of the 1st Battalion and by retaining Company F nearby as a reserve.

Compared with the battle-weakened regiments of the 24th Division, the 9th Infantry was a large unit. Although its 3d Battalion had been withheld as a reserve for Eighth Army, the two remaining battalions each numbered over 800 officers and men. Having recently arrived from the United States, the troops were fresh but untried. Morale was high, and the men were eager to get into action after the boredom of the long sea voyage and the dreary camps around Pusan. In general, the regiment's equipment status was excellent, although there were serious shortages of 4.2-inch mortar shells and 3.5-inch rockets. Even salt tablets were available to help the troops survive the blistering heat of the afternoon sun without becoming exhausted from dehydration.[11]

By 1445, the regiment had begun to move through the rear echelons of the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments in preparation for its assault. All was not ready, however, until 1645 when both battalions crossed the line of departure. The intense heat and humidity slowed the advance to a crawl as the men struggled to drag their heavy weapons forward with the rifle companies. After only a few yards, the 1st Battalion, on the right, encoun-

tered light enemy fire from both small arms and mortars. Several mortar rounds landed near the battalion's forward CP. The North Korean resistance, coupled with the high temperature which produced numerous cases of heat exhaustion, caused the attack to falter almost immediately on the right. Recoiling from the enemy fire, the battalion drifted to the northwest, away from the fight. In contrast, the 2d Battalion, on the left, made considerable progress against no appreciable resistance, largely because it advanced over ground secured earlier by Company B of the 34th Infantry. Nightfall found Colonel Hill's 1st Battalion tied in with the left flank of Moore's 19th Infantry, while his 2d Battalion dug in near the 34th's Company B, on the hills south and east of Tugok. The yawning two-mile gap between that point and Alfonso's enclave remained open for North Korean exploitation (see map 7).[12]

The manner in which the 9th Infantry was employed on 8 August represented a lost opportunity to make a significant contribution to the course of the battle. General Church's orders to Hill had been extremely vague but had required an immediate response. Given the limited time available to familiarize himself with the terrain and situation, Hill had chosen to use the Yongsan-Naktong road as his general axis of advance. He had also chosen to send his untried troops forward slowly and to pass them carefully through elements of the other regiments. The result was to squander the 24th Division's only foreseeable major reinforcement in simply bolstering the center of the threatened sector, while the enemy continued to exploit an opening of major proportions on the division's left. Had Hill been given more time to survey his situation and deploy his men, he might have been able to strike the enemy a hard blow with his two large battalions or at least reestablish a continuous division front. Denied that time by Church, he was unable to do more than devise a hurried, pedestrian response. Thus, the potential for a decisive counterattack was dissipated as the 9th Infantry was drawn piecemeal into the confused fighting for Hill 165 at the center of the North Korean penetration.

Nightfall of 8 August found the 24th Division no nearer its goal of restoring the Naktong line than it had been on the previous evening. In contrast, the North Koreans had materially reinforced the 16th Regiment's initial penetration with most, if not all, of another regiment. Even in areas where Church's troops had regained the river, such as the sector reoccupied by Company I, 34th Infantry, numbers of enemy soldiers had vanished into the hills only to reappear later in seemingly secure rear areas. Briefly during the afternoon, some of these infiltrators interdicted the Ch'angnyong-Naktong road little more than two miles from the division's headquarters. The hours of darkness saw a significant increase in North Korean artillery fire, which fell near both Church's CP at Ch'angnyong and the 21st Infantry's CP three miles to the north. These incidents, alone, meant little, but when combined with events in the Yongsan sector to the south, they clearly depicted a division that had completely lost the initiative.[13]

By its own estimate, the condition of the 24th Division on the evening of 8 August was poor, with combat efficiency standing at only 40 percent. Combat efficiency of the 34th Infantry, which numbered no more than 1100

men, was estimated at 24 percent. The 19th Infantry, with 1700 men, and the 21st Infantry, with 1800, rated 42 percent and 40 percent respectively. Organic division strength was 9,883, although attached units brought the grand total to 13,476. Casualties had been heavy and the flow of replacements no more than a trickle. The division remained seriously deficient in machine guns, 81-mm and 4.2-inch mortars, BARs, M-24 tanks, jeeps, and trucks. Nor was the ammunition supply system functioning smoothly, especially in regard to artillery items. In fact, a critical shortage of 155-mm artillery fuses during the day was alleviated only by an emergency airlift of a small quantity from Eighth Army reserve stocks in Taegu. Grievous as these deficiencies were, General Church had no alternative but to order a continuation of the counterattack on the following day.[14]

During the night of 8—9 August, a significant change occurred in the dispositions of the 34th Infantry on the south flank of the North Korean penetration. Ever since the initial enemy crossing on 6 August, Captain Alfonso's Companies A, C, and L had maintained a perimeter on the hills overlooking the Naktong about two miles forward of the main American battle line. Virtually unmolested by the North Koreans on 7 August, these men were in radio contact with the 1st Battalion CP and had received supplies by air. On 8 August, this relatively tolerable situation had deteriorated markedly. Heavily reinforced, the North Koreans in the Naktong Bulge had begun to move toward the beleaguered Americans, while the airdrop of that date had missed Alfonso's perimeter completely. Seeing the enemy massing for an attack upon his position during the night, Alfonso requested permission for his men to break out to the east. After checking with Colonel Beauchamp, Lieutenant Colonel Ayres of the 1st Battalion gave his approval.

Burdened by numerous casualties, Alfonso ordered his able-bodied soldiers to take turns carrying the wounded by rotating bearers from the front of the column to the rear. To facilitate the withdrawal, he chose to use the Yongsan road as far as possible, ignoring Ayres' suggestion to employ a more circuitous route to avoid enemy contact. Assembling his men on the road at 2230, Alfonso led the column northeastward. No sooner had they left their defensive positions on the hills overlooking the road than the enemy attacked in strength. Finding the Americans moving away, the North Koreans began to interdict the road with automatic weapons fire. This fire destroyed Alfonso's scheme of rotating litter bearers, as no one in front was willing to move nearer the enemy, who was pressing close behind.

By the time Alfonso's column reached the site of the American mortar positions abandoned on 6 August, it had begun to lose its cohesion. Knowing that he had encountered large numbers of North Koreans in the immediate vicinity two days before, Alfonso halted the column before it entered the narrow defile leading past the village of Tugok. Mistakenly expecting to find a guide there sent by Ayres, the captain grew apprehensive when none appeared. As dawn approached on 9 August, Alfonso decided to seek a route around the enemy positions suspected to be ahead. Taking two men with him and leaving the rest in a makeshift perimeter, he walked southeast for about two miles, then turned northeast, ultimately reaching the

road again near Ayres' CP. While Alfonso reported to Ayres, a sergeant went back to guide the men to safety. Meanwhile, the companies had disintegrated into several small groups, each seeking to escape independently. Twenty-five men from Companies A and L reached the battalion CP at 1340, while other groups, after taking a longer detour, struck the road about a mile west of Yongsan. One group of seventy men had been pinned down for several hours in midmorning by machine gun fire, and no more than forty of them had escaped the trap, leaving behind both their dead and wounded. The survivors of the three companies were fed a hot meal and sent to rest and reorganize in the regimental rear.[15]

The departure of Alfonso's men from their positions on the river widened the hole in the 24th Division's line, leaving Company K of the 34th Infantry isolated on the division's left flank. At 0635, the company's northernmost outpost was overrun by North Korean units, as was a patrol sent earlier to contact Alfonso. Within an hour, a reinforced platoon from the company counterattacked to regain the lost position, but the attack was unsuccessful. Instead, Company K was forced to relinquish a mile of riverfront in the face of large numbers of North Koreans moving openly around its right and into its rear. By early afternoon, the company had bent its line into a right angle to avoid being flanked but was in serious danger of being pinned against the Naktong as the North Koreans continued to exploit the gap in the 24th Division's line.[16]

The developments on the division's southern flank in the early morning hours of 9 August had no effect on General Church's plans for dealing with the North Korean penetration. Since Beauchamp's 34th Infantry was in tatters and Moore's 19th Infantry had been reduced to less than 300 riflemen in each of its battalions, Church's primary reliance shifted to Colonel Hill's 9th Infantry. Fresh from the United States, this unit was large but green. This inexperience had been much in evidence on the previous day when the regiment had failed to come to grips with the enemy because of faulty staff work and the inadequate physical conditioning of its men. Whatever its faults, Church planned to employ Hill's regiment on 9 August in still another counterattack against North Korean strongpoints around Hill 165 and the village of Tugok. The attack was to be supported by a diversionary air strike against enemy positions facing the 19th Infantry, adjacent to the 9th on its right.[17]

The planned air strike, however, did not materialize at the appointed hour because air controllers of the 1st Cavalry Division diverted it en route to deal with a minor breakthrough on their own front. Nevertheless, the 9th Infantry began its advance shortly after 0545. Once again, its misunderstanding of its position in relation to both friendly and enemy units hindered the 1st Battalion. By the time its advance wilted under the midmorning heat, only Company B had managed to place a platoon on the slopes of Hill 165. Hostile fire soon forced even that unit to withdraw, leaving the North Koreans firmly in control of the hill. A mile to the south, the 2d Battalion encountered even greater difficulties. Companies E and G were assigned to seize Tugok and the ridge beyond with the aid of Company

B of the 34th Infantry and the sole remaining tank of Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion. Initially, the battalion made progress, with a platoon from Company E reaching the ridge behind Tugok, while Companies B and G gained part of the high ridge across the road to the southeast. These gains, however, were only temporary, as a violent North Korean counterattack quickly sent all three companies reeling back to their original starting points. Casualties were especially heavy in the 2d Battalion and included the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Fred L. Harrison, who was seriously wounded.[18]

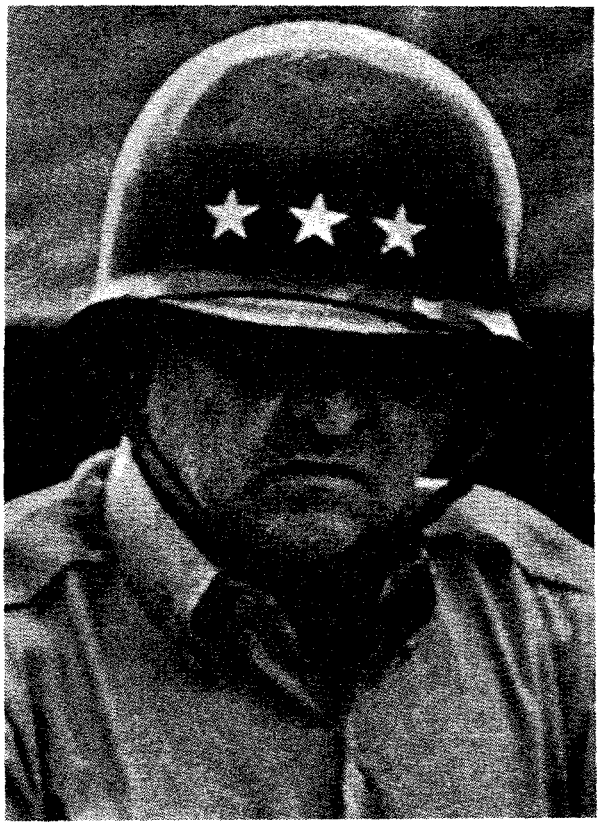
By noon, the counterattack of the 9th Infantry had stalled, and the regiment's poorly conditioned troops were exhausted. Without adequate water discipline, most of the men in the rifle companies had drained their canteens early and were now suffering severely from the effects of heat and humidity. Supplies of salt tablets and fresh water were sent forward along with ammunition, but the troops were unable to resume their advance until the late afternoon. In the interim, Church ordered his assistant division commander, Brig. Gen. Pearson Menoher, to arrange a coordinated attack by all units later in the day. Around 1400, Menoher met with Beauchamp, Moore, and Hill at the 19th Infantry's CP at Kang-ni. There it was agreed that the three regiments would launch a coordinated attack all along the line at 1700. The 19th Infantry, on the right, would strike toward the high ground beyond the villages of Ohang and Sinam-ni, while the 9th Infantry, on the left, would assault both Tugok and Hill 165. Company B of the 34th Infantry, with its attached tank, would assist the 9th Infantry's 2d Battalion in its drive on Tugok. The attack would be preceded by a ten-minute artillery barrage beginning at 1650. Ominously, while the conference was in session, observers at the front reported small groups of North Koreans moving to reinforce Hill 165.[19]

Hill 165 and its associated ridges now had become the focal point of the battle as far as the 24th Division was concerned. Although overshadowed by the hills to the west, also in enemy hands, it dominated the lower hills and valleys to the east. From its crest, an observer could look directly down the road through Kang-ni toward Yongsan, five miles away. North Korean snipers dug in on its slopes were able to make life miserable for American units located on adjacent but lower hills. Holding a position less than 500 yards north of Hill 165, Company B of the 19th Infantry suffered especially from this sniping. After eleven men of the company had been hit, a sergeant named Dudley organized his own sniping party and responded in kind. He and his men were so successful in countering the enemy fire that Dudley later was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.[20]

While the troops at the front took advantage of the afternoon lull and their officers planned the next counterattack, activity of a different sort characterized General Church's headquarters at Ch'angnyong. The headquarters had been harassed on the previous day by reports of infiltrators in their vicinity and by random artillery fire. These annoyances worsened during the morning of 9 August. Several artillery rounds burst uncomfort-

ably near the division CP at 0430, and half an hour later another report arrived of enemy infiltration just west of town. During the morning, patrols from the composite defense platoons searched the hills for the elusive infiltrators, but little could be done about the artillery fire, which sporadically ranged over the area between Ch'angnyong and the river. After more rounds detonated near Ch'angnyong at 1120, Church ordered the division's headquarters to relocate to Kyun'gyo, eight miles east of Yongsan and almost fifteen from Ch'angnyong (for location of Kyun'gyo, see map 3).[21]

Although executed in an orderly fashion, the displacement of Danger Forward, as the division's advance CP was known, necessarily interrupted the normal functioning of its components. Defensive outposts were ordered in at 1230, and the first headquarters elements departed an hour later. Among the first units to move was a detachment of the 24th Signal Company, whose mission was to establish communications circuits at the new location. Around 1600, the division staff sections left Ch'angnyong, although the section chiefs remained behind with skeleton crews to control operations until the new CP at Kyun'gyo was open for business. Most of the convoys arrived at Kyun'gyo after about two hours on the road, but persistent communications problems prevented the new headquarters from being fully operational for some time. Compounding the confusion was an unannounced visit to Church by Lt. Gen. Walton Walker, commanding Eighth Army.



Lt. Gen. Walton H. Walker,
Commander,
Eighth U.S. Army

Thus distracted, the 24th Division's command structure did not devote its full attention to either its own impending counterattack or the continued crumbling of the division's left flank.[22]

At 1650, the artillery preparation began. The arrival of Batteries A and B, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, and the reequipment of Battery B, 13th Field Artillery Battalion, permitted the concentration of eighteen 105-mm howitzers for the first time since the battle had begun. In addition, Battery B, 11th Field Artillery, joined the bombardment with its heavier 155-mm howitzers. While the artillery fired on the North Korean forward positions, aircraft struck enemy targets nearer the river, including suspected North Korean gun positions beyond the Naktong.[23]

The counterattack began promptly at 1700, but it never became the powerful, coordinated thrust contemplated by the officers attending the afternoon conference at Kang-ni. On the right, the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, moved off Ohang Hill and attempted to seize the ridge beyond Ohang village. Numbering no more than 280 riflemen, the battalion was unable to gain any ground. The effort, however, cost numerous casualties from enemy fire and heat exhaustion. Included among the latter were the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Robert Rhea and his operations officer. Even more depleted than its sister unit, the 1st Battalion did not even attempt to advance. On the other flank, Company B of the 34th Infantry was similarly inactive, although its attached light tank contributed to the preliminary bombardment.[24]

The inability of the 19th and 34th Infantry regiments to gain ground placed the burden of the counterattack upon Colonel Hill's 9th Infantry. Hill 165 was to be assaulted by the 1st Battalion from the north and Company E of the 2d Battalion from the southeast. A difficult operation at best in terrain affording limited visibility, this simultaneous attack from several directions avoided casualties from friendly fire only because the timing of the attack broke down. Although Company E easily began climbing the slopes of the objective fifteen minutes after crossing the line of departure, the 1st Battalion delayed its own advance because of coordination problems with the supporting artillery. By the time the 1st Battalion went into action, Company E was hard pressed by the North Korean defenders and unable to reach the crest of the hill. Nevertheless, it grimly clung to the southern slope, while the three companies of the 1st Battalion fought their way southward onto the western slope. The crest of Hill 165, which lay to the east, was neutralized but not occupied. Meanwhile, a mile to the south, Company G of the 2d Battalion advanced through Tugok and onto the ridge beyond, only to find itself isolated there. With darkness rapidly approaching and further coordination impossible, all units dug in where they were for the night. Hill planned to resume the attack at first light, but he expected little from his 2d Battalion, which had lost its commander in the morning and had been roughly handled by the enemy in the afternoon assault (see map 8).[25]

The initial reports reaching General Church portrayed the results of the counterattack in glowing terms, and it was not until 2330 that Hill

forwarded a more somber assessment.[26] In the interim, a series of sighting reports began to arrive from the division's southern flank. About an hour after sunset, the 19th Infantry reported North Korean troops in various locations stretching all the way to Namji-ri on the Naktong, far behind the 24th Division's left flank. When added to similar reports from the 34th Infantry and the pilot of an artillery spotter plane, this information produced a disturbing picture. If true, the reports indicated that the North Koreans had not only isolated Company K of the 34th Infantry but were about to drive a large wedge between the 24th Division and the neighboring 25th Division to the south. Yongsan itself was in danger, as was the MSR to Miryang. In sum, the trickle of North Koreans through the gap in the division's line was on the verge of becoming a torrent unless immediate corrective action was taken.[27]

Suspecting that they were in danger of being flanked, Colonels Hill, Beauchamp, and Moore warned their regiments to be especially vigilant during the night. In addition, Beauchamp ordered Company L of his 3d Battalion to move to the aid of Company K on the river. Seriously depleted by its recent ordeal, Company L had been resting near Yongsan for only a few hours when it received orders at 2100 to return to the Naktong. The unit departed immediately, reached K Company at 0115 on 10 August, and took up position on K's right three hours later. This action by Beauchamp narrowed the gap in the division's front but did not close it.[28]

Throughout the night of 9—10 August, the headquarters elements of the 24th Division remained split, with most of the staff located at the new CP at Kyun'gyo, while the section chiefs were still at Ch'angnyong. This may account for the division's slow response to the North Korean flanking maneuver, already far advanced. Church and his staff planned nothing more for 10 August than a continuation of the previous afternoon's coordinated attacks against the center of the enemy's line. Yet information available to at least part of the staff indicated a serious problem on the division left that called for an entirely different response.[29]

The exact sequence of events that occurred within the division command structure is impossible to recapture with the documentation available, but certain facts are known. At 2137 on 9 August, the S2 of the 19th Infantry transmitted to division headquarters a report indicating that significant numbers of North Korean soldiers were moving into the division's rear through a gap in the front line. This report, later proven to be substantially correct, was received at 2150 by the division G2 section and at 2227 by the division G3 section. At 0015 on 10 August, G3, in turn, provided the information to the 21st Infantry, holding the right of the division sector. At 0400, the same report was included in an intelligence summary forwarded to Eighth Army headquarters at Taegu. Thus, the crucial information was in the hands of at least part of the division staff before midnight on 9 August, and it was considered important enough to be transmitted to other units as well as to higher headquarters. When, or if, the report reached General Church is not known. In any event, the division commander did not act to

close the gap in his line until shortly after 1200 on 10 August. Once again, the 24th Division was reacting too slowly to an enemy initiative.[30]

The counterattack planned by the 9th, 19th, and 34th Infantry regiments for the morning of 10 August essentially duplicated the previous afternoon's plan for a coordinated attack. Following a preliminary artillery bombardment, the 9th and 19th Infantry regiments, assisted by part of the 34th, were to assault the hills and ridges opposite them and drive all the way to the river. At 0545, three batteries of 105-mm and one of 155-mm howitzers opened fire on the enemy frontline positions and continued their bombardment for fifteen minutes. Farther to the west, air strikes hampered North Korean movement across the Naktong.[31]

On the right of the line, the 19th Infantry jumped off on time at 0600. It employed only its 2d Battalion, since the 1st Battalion was masked by part of the 9th Infantry in its front. Companies E and F began the advance, with G in reserve some distance to the rear. Drained by battle casualties, heat exhaustion, and straggling, none of the companies was larger than a normal platoon. Within fifteen minutes, Company E, on the right, was pinned down by enemy fire from the direction of the river. This effectively stalled the attack of the 2d Battalion, and the initiative passed to the North Koreans. At 0725, Company E reported that it was in "bad shape," and by 0935, it had been isolated by enemy assaults. The battalion commander hurriedly called up the two usable platoons of Company G, which fought their way along the river in an effort to relieve Company E. By 1050, Company C of the 1st Battalion was also moving to the aid of the 2d Battalion. With this assistance, the remnants of Company E broke free from encirclement and withdrew to safety. The North Koreans followed them, seizing Ohang Hill in the process. By the time its position was stabilized on the next line of hills to the north, the 2d Battalion had been driven back 750 yards (see map 9).[32]

On the left of Moore's 19th Infantry, Hill's 9th Infantry also crossed the line of departure on time. Almost at once, it came under intense artillery and mortar fire but continued to attack. The objectives of the 1st Battalion were to consolidate its hold on Hill 165, then to seize the villages of Maekkok and Sugae-ri to the west. Company B spent the morning clearing Hill 165, Company A moved into Sugae-ri with relative ease, but Company C was unable to wrest Maekkok from the North Koreans. To the south, the 2d Battalion actually lost ground, as Company G was forced to withdraw from its exposed position west of Tugok. As for the 34th Infantry's participation, Company B and the Heavy Mortar Company clung to the lower slopes of Obong-ni Ridge but did not move forward.[33]

At 1000, a violent North Korean counterattack struck the units around Tugok and Obong-ni. Both the 2d Battalion of the 9th Infantry and the two companies of the 34th Infantry reeled backward under the pressure. The blow fell especially hard on the 2d Battalion, where only one company had more than one officer, and the battalion commander, a major, had just assumed command. When the North Koreans struck, the officers of the 2d

Battalion lost control, and the unit began to disintegrate as it withdrew. Racing back to the regimental CP, the battalion commander told Colonel Hill his unit could not hold. After reprimanding the major for leaving his battalion, Hill returned with him to the front. There, they found the battalion executive officer restoring order with the relatively unshaken Company F. By afternoon, the situation had been stabilized, but 2,000 yards of critical terrain had been lost.[34]

The successful North Korean attack further widened the hole in the front line and exacerbated the growing problem of infiltration on the 24th Division's left flank. In this area, the Naktong ran in an easterly direction and served as the boundary between the 24th and 25th Divisions. The main road connecting the two divisions crossed the Naktong on a bridge near Namji-ri, about six miles south of Yongsan. North Korean units had entered Namji-ri on the previous evening and by noon on 10 August were probing northward toward Yongsan itself. Unaware that the area was infested with small groups of the enemy, American troops continued to use the road to move supplies, and they relaxed in what they believed to be a secure rear area. One such group, five men from Battery A, 26th AAA Battalion, spent the morning swimming in a pond north of Namji-ri. Returning to K Company, 34th Infantry, they were halted around 1430 by a North Korean roadblock. Overpowered by the enemy, they joined several other Americans already captured at the same place.[35]

Although he was not yet aware of the roadblock south of Yongsan, General Church had finally resolved to deal with the gap on the left of his front. During the morning, his intelligence and operations officers visited the various regiments to gain firsthand knowledge of the situation. By 1100, the division G2 had reached the new headquarters at Kyun'gyo, and the information he brought from the 34th Infantry may have inspired Church to act. At any rate, by 1240, Church had tentatively decided to transfer a battalion of Colonel Stephens' 21st Infantry south to the 34th's sector to assist in plugging the hole. Rather than act precipitately, Church decided to visit Stephens at his CP north of Ch'angnyong before making a final decision.[36]

Church reached the 21st Infantry CP around 1300. Finding only light enemy activity in front of the regiment, he quickly confirmed his initial decision and ordered Stephens to detach Lieutenant Colonel Smith's 1st Battalion for duty south of Yongsan. Smith's force consisted of only three companies, A, B, and D (Weapons), since Company C had not yet arrived from Korea's east coast. While Stephens was concerned about Smith's departure, which would be visible to the North Koreans watching from the heights west of the Naktong, he was assured that Company C and an attached artillery battery had been released by Eighth Army and were en route to join him. Church then departed to visit Task Force Hyzer, while Stephens and his staff gathered the trucks needed to move Smith's battalion. By 1645, the 1st Battalion was on the way south. As Stephens had predicted, the enemy noted its departure and attempted to hasten it with artillery fire.[37]

Even before Smith's men began to move, Church discovered that the situation on his left was more serious than he had earlier believed. Passing through Yongsan at 1600 on his way back to Kyun'gyo, Church and his assistant division commander, Brigadier General Menoher, learned of the North Korean roadblocks on the road to Namji-ri. Momentarily without units to respond to the crisis, Church contacted his G3, Lieutenant Colonel James Snee, at Kyun'gyo. Told to seek aid wherever necessary, Snee attempted to contact both Eighth Army at Taegu and the 25th Division to the south, but his land lines were dead. At 1610, he drafted a Flash message for Eighth Army and ordered it sent in the clear. He dispatched a similar message at 1625 by light aircraft to the 25th Division. Both messages requested assistance from the 27th Infantry, a part of the 25th Division that had just moved into Eighth Army reserve near Masan.[38]

While Snee attempted to gain the use of the 27th Infantry, Church departed for Kyun'gyo. He left General Menoher at Yongsan to coordinate the activities of whatever units might be found to counter the enemy's southern thrust. Initially, the only unit available was the Heavy Mortar Company of Beauchamp's 34th Infantry, one of the companies forced back from Obong-ni during the morning North Korean attack. At 1640, the company received orders to move down the Namji-ri road to guard Yongsan's southern approaches. Twenty-five minutes later, General Church ordered the 24th Recon Company detached from Task Force Hyzer and sent to Yongsan. At 1730, in response to Church's earlier plea for aid, Eighth

Brig. Gen. Pearson Menoher, Assistant Division Commander, 24th Infantry Division

Army ordered the 27th Infantry to send a battalion northward to secure the Naktong bridge at Namji-ri.[39]

Ever so gradually, the forces summoned by the 24th Division's call for help began to arrive. While Menoher waited for the 24th Recon Company to appear with its light tanks, he supported the handful of heavy mortar crewmen by calling in air strikes on the road north of Namji-ri. At 1850, he reported that the North Koreans were within two and one-half miles of Yongsan. Shortly thereafter, the 24th Recon Company arrived after a thirteen-mile journey from Sibi-ri. While it prepared to go into action, Menoher reported the situation to Church, who told him to remain at Yongsan until the situation was stable and a coordinated plan had been developed for action the next day. Church also passed along the wishes of Walton Walker, Eighth Army commander, to "get that place cleared up."[40]

At 2000, the 3d Platoon of the 24th Recon Company began its attack down the road toward Namji-ri. Meeting no resistance for approximately three miles, the tankers finally encountered an enemy machine gun position supported by riflemen. Since they had been told that a company of the 34th Infantry was following to secure any ground gained, the tankers halted to await its arrival. They waited until after darkness fell, but no infantry could be found except the mortarmen already present. Unwilling to risk his tanks without adequate infantry support, the platoon leader pulled everyone back about 500 yards and established his own roadblock at 2300 (see maps 3 and 9).[41]

South of the Naktong, Lt. Col. Gordon Murch's 2d Battalion of the 27th Infantry and Battery B, 8th Field Artillery Battalion, departed at 1930 for Namji-ri. Murch expected action since a patrol attempting to contact the 24th Division via the Namji-ri bridge had been turned back by enemy fire earlier in the day. On the way north, progress was impeded by thousands of refugees moving in the opposite direction. Trying to avoid one of the heavy trucks, a refugee cart tipped over, revealing a cache of guns and ammunition. Several North Koreans disguised as refugees dashed for the hills, but most were shot down by Murch's men. Thus delayed, the 2d Battalion did not reach the Naktong until long after nightfall. On nearing the bridge, the troops encountered light resistance. Deploying his three companies, Murch ordered Company F to seize a bridgehead on the other side of the river. While Company F fought its way over the bridge, Companies E and G took positions on hills overlooking the crossing site. Rather than proceed farther in the darkness against opposition of unknown strength, Murch decided to wait for daylight before advancing beyond his bridgehead.[42]

Nightfall also brought an end to operations on the main division front. Once again, a supposedly coordinated counterattack had lacked coordination. Only the 1st Battalion of the 9th Infantry had made any progress at all, while the 19th Infantry, on its right, had only held in place, and the units on its left had been driven back in disorder. Unable to capture Maekkok and unsupported on either flank, the 1st Battalion withdrew to

the vicinity of Hill 165 and dug in for the night. The battalion's new position allowed it to tie in more closely with the 19th Infantry on its right but left a large gap in the direction of the 9th Infantry's 2d Battalion on the left.[43]

The inability of the three regiments to advance in the center and the developing threat to his left flank caused General Church to seek a better solution to the problem of coordination. Previously, all three regimental commanders had been free to act independently. Any coordination that occurred was more the result of goodwill among Moore, Hill, and Beauchamp, and the tireless efforts of Assistant Division Commander Menoher, than of conscious design. To end the confusion, late on 10 August Church created Task Force Hill, under Col. John G. Hill, the senior colonel in the sector. Hill was given control of his own regiment, Moore's 19th Infantry, Beauchamp's 34th Infantry, and the 1st Battalion of the 21st Infantry, which had reached an assembly area southwest of Yongsan during the night. He was charged with devising a plan that would eradicate the North Korean penetration at the earliest possible time. When the plan was complete, General Menoher would bring it to division headquarters at Kyun'gyo.[44]

Vested with his new authority, Hill convened a conference during the night at a schoolhouse in Yongsan. Present were Hill, Moore, Beauchamp, their regimental operations officers, and the commanders of the 13th and 15th Field Artillery Battalions. In its final form, the plan called for the 19th and 9th Infantry to attack southwest toward the Naktong, just as they had been doing for several days. Meanwhile Smith's battalion of the 21st Infantry would attempt to roll up the right flank of the North Korean line. The 34th Infantry would protect Smith's left flank as he advanced. The plan did not address the developing threat to Yongsan from the south nor the fact that Smith's assembly area was dangerously near the enemy's line of transit to Namji-ri. In effect, the plan assumed that the area southeast of Obong-ni Ridge was unoccupied territory where Smith could maneuver without hindrance (see map 9).[45]

By midnight, Church estimated that the 24th Division was barely holding its own against an enemy continually being reinforced from across the Naktong. Organic division strength stood at 9755, with 5401 attached, for a total of 15,156 officers and men. The number of replacements reaching the division was slowly increasing, 247 being shipped to units on 10 August, although a growing number of stragglers partially negated these gains. Similarly, increased quantities of weapons were arriving in the division area, significantly reducing shortages in machine guns and mortars. While the division still lacked 16 M-24 tanks, 292 1 1/4-ton trucks, 88 3/4-ton trucks, and 87 2 1/2-ton trucks, these deficiencies were not crippling as long as the division remained generally on the defensive. Ammunition stocks, except for mortar shells, were adequate. The supply of salt tablets, however, was insufficient to meet consumption rates and required emergency efforts to increase the supply.[46]

Operationally, the 24th Division's G2 section expected the North Koreans to continue to attack out of their bridgehead to effect a junction with their units blocking the road from Yongsan to Namji-ri. It was this movement that the next day's attack by Smith's battalion of the 21st Infantry was designed to forestall. Prudently, the 24th Division's Headquarters Company was ordered to patrol the roads leading from the Naktong to the Yongsan-Miryang MSR, and supply convoys moving toward the front were warned to be alert for snipers. Otherwise, no special precautions were taken to safeguard either the division headquarters complex at Kyun'gyo or its lines of communication to the front. The 24th Division command structure believed it had finally caught up with the enemy, but events would soon show it still to be operating at least twelve hours behind the North Koreans.[47]

The Fight for the MSR

5

Dawn of 11 August marked the opening of a new phase in the 24th Division's fight to maintain its position along the Naktong. The failure of the individual regiments to erase the North Korean penetration had caused General Church to create Task Force Hill in an attempt to produce a more united effort. Hill's staff worked through the predawn hours planning a coordinated attack by the seven infantry battalions engaged in the Bulge. Central to the plan was a sweep by the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, to the northwest behind Obong-ni Ridge, a movement that the planners believed would roll up the North Korean right flank.[1] Unfortunately, before the day was over, this ambitious plan would have to be cast aside. An excellent proposal had it been implemented several days earlier, the plan now had been overtaken by events occurring south of Yongsan. There, North Korean units were on the verge of reaching the 24th Division's MSR. This threat, which grew by the hour, would soon replace Task Force Hill's operations as the division's primary concern and would remain so for several days.

Task Force Hill's initial attack was not scheduled to begin until 1200, but activity on the southern front began at first light. At Namji-ri, Lt. Col. Gordon Murch pushed Companies E and G of his 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, across the Naktong, where they joined Company F in its bridgehead north of the river. Having secured Namji-ri, Murch began an advance up the road toward Yongsan. The road, passing through a wide floodplain, initially paralleled the Naktong on the right. Murch deployed Company F on the road, with Company G on its left, and Company E echeloned to the left rear to cover the battalion's open flank. One mile north of Namji-ri, a heavily diked stream crossed the road before emptying into the Naktong, and there Murch found the enemy. Firing from behind the dike, North Korean machine gunners pinned the leading platoons of Company F to the ditches on either side of the road. Murch called for artillery support from Battery B, 8th Field Artillery Battalion, which was supporting him from south of the river. He also requested an air strike on the enemy position. Under the cover provided by these diversions, Company G gained access to the dike west of the North Korean gunners and began to sweep down upon their flank. Abandoning their position in response to this threat, the North Koreans fled northward under a rain of shells from Battery B. By noon,

Murch's men had occupied the dike and were cautiously probing beyond it (see map 10).[2]

Several miles north of Murch, events were not unfolding so happily for the 24th Division. Primary defender of the two roads leading south from Yongsan was the 24th Recon Company with its handful of M-24 tanks. Capt. John A. Kearns had detailed his 2d Platoon to work its way southward on the easternmost road, while his other two platoons covered the direct road to Namji-ri. All elements left their blocking positions at dawn and headed south. On the east road, the 2d Platoon drove a party of North Koreans out of the village of Non-ni, but the enemy took up new positions on the hills to either side and prevented further movement. A mile to the southwest, the rest of the company was similarly held up just south of Tochon-ni. Under increasing fire from automatic weapons and antitank rifles, Kearns' platoons could go no farther without reinforcement.[3]

One and one-half miles west of the 24th Recon Company, Lieutenant Colonel Smith's 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, was in its assembly area preparing for the noon attack when it was suddenly overrun by a large force of North Koreans. Taken by surprise, the battalion suffered at least eight casualties and lost several trucks and weapons before the enemy disappeared into the hills. This occurred shortly after 0900, about the same time that Yongsan began to come under heavy artillery fire. Seemingly well directed, the barrage struck amidst the various headquarters and supply elements crowded into the built-up area. Hardest hit was the CP of the 24th Recon Company, which lost two men killed and five wounded. As the shelling continued, men who had access to vehicles began to evacuate the town.[4]

Around 1030, just as Kearns' two platoons south of Tochon-ni were preparing to assault North Korean positions in the hills above the road, a violent artillery barrage struck the Americans. Unnerved by the shelling, which probably came from Murch's artillery south of the Naktong, the platoons withdrew precipitately and did not halt until they were nearly a mile north of Yongsan. In the town itself, the North Korean artillery fire intensified, driving more rear echelon elements northward into the countryside. Battery B, 11th Field Artillery Battalion, and the CP of the 13th Field Artillery Battalion also came under the same fire, but they remained in place. Such was not the case with Battery B of the 13th Field Artillery Battalion a mile and one-half nearer the front. It was forced to displace closer to Yongsan because of enemy small-arms fire. By 1200, all the division's elements around Yongsan, in what had once been the relatively secure rear, were under some form of North Korean harassing fire.[5]

The problems in the rear notwithstanding, Task Force Hill launched its noon attack on schedule. With Smith's battalion shaken from its morning brush with the enemy, the main effort shifted to the 9th Infantry in the center of the line. While the 1st Battalion provided a base of fire from the vicinity of Hill 165, the 2d Battalion advanced about 1,500 yards across a valley to the foothills on the right of the Yongsan-Naktong road. This advance, made against light enemy resistance, recovered most of the ground

lost on the previous day. On the 9th Infantry's left, A and B Companies of the 34th Infantry also moved forward slightly. Such was not the case on the front of the 19th Infantry, holding Task Force Hill's right. There, the 1st Battalion was charged with covering the 9th Infantry's right flank by an advance of its own. Depleted by casualties, stragglers, and heat exhaustion, however, the battalion could only hold its position, despite pleas for aid from the exposed 9th Infantry (see map 10).[6]

While Task Force Hill struggled to make small gains, four miles to the rear at Yongsan, the situation continued to deteriorate. The only part of Kearns' 24th Recon Company still guarding the southern approaches to the town was the 2d Platoon near Non-ni. At 1430, fire from North Korean antitank rifles set one of the platoon's tanks ablaze and destroyed the platoon leader's vehicle. As the enemy began to outflank his command, 2d Lt. J. L. Bragg ordered it to withdraw to the southern edge of Yongsan. There the platoon was reformed by Captain Kearns, who used it to establish a new blocking position just south of town. Kearns then went in search of the remainder of his company.[7]

At 1755, Colonel Beauchamp informed Colonel Snee, the division G3, that he believed Yongsan's fall was only a few hours away and that all available troops had been committed. Another message sent at 1845 reported that enemy pressure against Yongsan from the south was increasing. Shortly thereafter, the artillery batteries emplaced 1,000 yards west of Yongsan came under North Korean small-arms fire. Battery B, 13th Field Artillery, which had already moved once because of enemy harassment, turned one of its howitzers around and fired a round toward suspected enemy positions in its rear. The artillerymen also sprayed the area with 40-mm and machine gun fire, temporarily ending the threat as the enemy faded back into the broken country to the south.[8]

All around Yongsan similar encounters took place between surprised American soldiers and North Korean infiltrators. Such was the fate of a motor patrol from Headquarters Company of the 9th Infantry. Ambushed by infiltrators, the patrol extricated itself only when one of its members, Pfc. Lawrence Y. Bater, remained behind to provide covering fire. The patrol escaped, but Bater did not. When his body was discovered several days later surrounded by enemy dead, it was evident that he had sold his life dearly. Because his "heroic and selfless action resulted in the successful withdrawal of his comrades," Private First Class Bater posthumously received the Distinguished Service Cross.[9]

Quick action was necessary to bring more troops to the defense of Yongsan, but the sources from which to draw fresh units were rapidly being depleted. At 1905, General Church once more called upon Col. Richard Stephens' 21st Infantry. Church ordered Stephens to send a company to Yongsan as rapidly as possible. Since the telephone line from Kyun'gyo to Stephens' CP was dead, the message was dispatched by light plane and dropped to the 21st at 1940. By the time a similar message arrived ten minutes later, Stephens had already alerted the 14th Engineer (C) Battalion

and called its commanding officer to his CP. At 2000, Stephens ordered the 14th Engineers to send all available men to join Beauchamp at Yongsan. A liaison party left immediately and arrived at Yongsan, nine miles away, at 2030. It was followed by elements of Company A, augmented by cooks and staff section personnel from Headquarters and Service Company. This ad hoc collection of troops, numbering fewer than 100 men, reached Beauchamp's CP at 2115.[10]

The day ended with Yongsan still in American hands but shielded on the south and east by only a thin line of troops. Captain Kearns had finally located the remainder of his recon company and had united them with his 2d Platoon on the southern approaches to the town. The detachment of the 14th Engineers sent by Colonel Stephens moved out on the MSR several miles east of Yongsan, where it established a series of roadblocks connected by a jeep patrol. Beyond the engineers, another ad hoc formation patrolled the MSR toward Kyun'gyo. Consisting of Capt. George Hafeman's 24th Division Headquarters Company and miscellaneous detachments from the 24th Military Police Company, 24th Signal Company, 24th Division Band, 724th Ordnance Maintenance Company, and South Korean police, this formation was given the name of Task Force Hafeman (see map 11).[11]

Much of the North Korean pressure on Yongsan during 11 August was an indirect result of the advance northward of Lieutenant Colonel Murch's 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry. After forcing the enemy from the dike north of Namji-ri, Murch had spent several hours consolidating his position. At 1530, he began a slow drive northward toward Yongsan. As the advance compressed the North Korean access corridor into the 24th Division's rear, the enemy either moved toward Yongsan or dispersed into the hills and gullies on either side of Murch's axis of advance. Nightfall found the 2d Battalion moving onto the high ground west of the road from Yongsan to Namji-ri. Unfortunately, its isolated position made it vulnerable to enemy infiltration, causing Murch to withdraw his companies to the vicinity of the dike by 2300. Although a prudent move, this decision again widened the North Korean infiltration corridor (see map 10).[12]

The developing threat to the division's rear caused General Church on the night of 11 August to reorient the thrust of the 24th Division's counterattack. Although he was still determined to reduce the North Korean bridgehead in the Naktong Bulge, the security of the division's MSR had now become his first priority. Accordingly, Task Force Hill was ordered to cease offensive operations and stand on the defensive until further notice. To deal with the threat to Yongsan from the south, the remainder of the 27th Infantry was instructed to join Murch's 2d Battalion in its drive north toward Yongsan, thereby isolating the North Korean infiltrators. Until the 27th could accomplish its mission, security of the MSR depended upon three small units, the 24th Recon Company, Company A of the 14th Engineer (C) Battalion, and Task Force Hafeman.[13]

Although the 24th Division's predicament on the night of 11 August was not yet catastrophic, the potential for disaster was great enough to influence the actions of even those division elements far in the rear. Having

been engaged in an almost continuous retrograde movement for the past month, the 24th Division's rear echelons were by now well attuned to even the subtlest indicators presaging another retreat. The all too familiar signs were now reappearing, and prudent soldiers acted accordingly. The division medical officer, noting the threat to the MSR, began to rearrange the location of his clearing platoons. War correspondents, who previously had had free access to the division's G2 and G3 sections, now were summarily excluded and henceforth would receive information only through briefings conducted by the division's public affairs officer. At Miryang, site of the division's rear headquarters and railhead, the division's finance section began to arrange for the evacuation of its cash reserve and military pay records. As yet there was no panic, but the men of the 24th Division had once more begun to look over their shoulders. If not arrested quickly, this tendency could escalate into a problem of massive proportions.[14]

Adding to the 24th Division's woes on the night of 11 August was a report from Eighth Army at 2150 that the North Koreans had pushed another force across the Naktong, this time just beyond the division's northern flank. The sectors held by the 21st Infantry and Task Force Hyzer on the division's right had been relatively quiet for several days, enabling Church to reduce troop strength there in order to reinforce more threatened areas to the south. An infantry battalion, an engineer company, and a 155-mm artillery battery had all moved to Yongsan from the division's right within the past twenty-four hours. Thus, no units were immediately available to respond to the new threat. Lieutenant Colonel Hyzer of the 3d Engineer (C) Battalion, responsible for the 24th Division's right flank, sent a seventeen-man patrol across the Naktong during the night in hopes of discovering the enemy's intentions, but it would be at least a day before an answer could be obtained. Beyond that, no action could be taken, and Eighth Army was so informed.[15]

By midnight of 11—12 August, the pitifully small number of troops available for the defense of the MSR had all been deployed. Normally, trucks and ambulances moving between the division railhead at Miryang and the forward units near Yongsan had a tortuous journey of almost twenty miles along a narrow, twisting, frequently one-lane dirt road. From Miryang, the road ran westward through mountains for five miles before dropping into the valley of a small stream. Once in the valley, the road turned southward for another five miles, passing through several villages en route. Along this section were located the rear headquarters of some of the divisional units and several medical detachments. At the village of Kyun'gyo, site of the 24th Division's forward headquarters, the MSR turned west and headed for Yongsan, nine miles away. Quickly enveloped by the hills, the road surmounted two passes, located two and five miles respectively west of Kyun'gyo. Beyond the second pass, the road traversed the bottom of a narrow valley for three miles until it intersected the Tochon-ni to Yongsan road, one-half mile south of Yongsan (see map 11).[16]

Inadequate as it was, the road through Kyun'gyo was the sole route capable of meeting the logistical requirements of the 24th Division. The

only other road from Miryang to Yongsan was an even more circuitous track of over forty miles that could not possibly handle the division's traffic. In addition to the supply trucks moving westward and the ambulances moving eastward, the section of the MSR from Kyun'gyo to Yongsan was also the right-of-way for the telephone lines connecting division headquarters with the combat units at the front. Any prolonged break in the MSR would have catastrophic consequences for the 24th Division. Ammunition and food stocks would be depleted, casualties would not be able to reach hospitals, and wire communications links between General Church and his maneuver elements would be severed. Thus, the rutted dirt road that served as the 24th Division's lifeline had to be protected at all costs.[17]

Because of the division's weakened condition, only the three and one-half mile section of the MSR nearest Yongsan was guarded. On this stretch, traffic passed through a series of small posts manned by men from diverse units. The first position, on the outskirts of Yongsan itself, was held by the men of Captain Kearns' 24th Recon Company. The next mile and one-half was guarded by a detachment of the 14th Engineer (C) Battalion. Consisting of about 100 men drawn from Company A and the battalion's Headquarters and Service Company, this force was by no means a cohesive combat unit. Its unit integrity was further degraded by the manner in which it had been deployed. Four separate positions were established at roughly 800-yard intervals: from west to east, Post 1 under Lieutenant Henderson with seventeen men, Post 2 under Lieutenant Moore with fifteen men, Post 3 under Lieutenant McMillan with twenty-four men, and Post 4 under Lieutenant Martin with twenty-five men. A five-man jeep patrol under Corporal Hurst connected the four posts with Captain Gass' CP in Yongsan. The battalion commander, Major Miller, stationed himself in Yongsan as well.[18]

Five hundred yards beyond Engineer Post 4 lay the segment of the MSR guarded by Task Force Hafeman. This ad hoc force was an even more varied collection of detachments than the engineers, consisting of men from at least six different units. Capt. Hafeman had only 135 men, some of them volunteers, like Pfc. Francis L. Baker of the 724th Ordnance Maintenance Company. Hafeman deployed most of his contingent in two strongpoints: Post 1 at the hamlet of Simgong-ni and Post 2 at Wonjon Pass, 1,000 yards to the east. Both positions had jeeps and were well equipped with machine guns but were short of ammunition, hand grenades, and mortars. Behind Hafeman's men, the MSR was unprotected all the way to Kyun'gyo, except for the headquarters detachment of Battery A, 26th AAA (AW) Battalion, located three miles east of Hafeman's Post 2.[19]

The first half of the night of 11—12 August was relatively quiet. Vehicles traveling on the MSR moved only in groups of two or more, since North Korean infiltrators were known to be in the area. The only sign of their presence, however, was a series of random shots by snipers, one of which killed a man at Hafeman's Post 2 just before midnight. During the first hour of 12 August, Corporal Hurst of the 14th Engineers led a jeep patrol out to Engineer Post 4 without encountering any enemy. Hurst's patrol returned to Yongsan at 0115 and fifteen minutes later began another trip

eastward. On this run, Hurst met two ambulances en route to Yongsan. The ambulances arrived safely at 0140 and picked up several wounded men for the return trip to Miryang. There was no indication that the trip would be other than uneventful.[20]

Filled with patients, the two vehicles of the 1st Ambulance Platoon departed Yongsan around 0200, passing through the roadblock of the 24th Recon Company and Engineer Posts 1 and 2 without incident. Ahead of them, Corporal Hurst's jeep patrol neared Engineer Post 4, its turnaround point. Around 0220, between Engineer Posts 2 and 3, the two ambulances suddenly received heavy bursts of automatic weapons fire. The driver of the second ambulance was hit, and his vehicle careened into the ditch. Two medics ran back up the road to warn Engineer Post 2. Rather than continue into the fire, the first ambulance turned around, hastily loaded the passengers and patients of the other vehicle aboard, and headed back toward Yongsan. Halting briefly at Lieutenant Moore's Engineer Post 2, the ambulance continued westward, raising the alarm at the 24th Recon's roadblock along the way. Moore sent a corporal following it in a 2 1/2-ton truck to inform Major Miller of the incident. Although the truck driver was unable to locate Miller's CP in the darkness, he did alert Lieutenant Henderson's Engineer Post 1 as he passed it.[21]

At the other end of the engineers' line, Corporal Hurst had just begun his return patrol. Unaware of the fate of the ambulances, he and his men drove blindly into the North Korean ambush. When Hurst's driver was hit, the jeep stopped in the road. Dragging the wounded man under the jeep, Hurst and two others took cover, while another soldier raced to warn Lieutenant Moore's Engineer Post 2. By the time his warning was delivered at 0330, it was superfluous. When Hurst's jeep patrol did not return on schedule, two lieutenants from the 14th's headquarters detachment drove out to Lieutenant Henderson's Engineer Post 1 to learn the cause. When they arrived, Henderson, hearing the small-arms fire up ahead, advised them not to go forward until daybreak. By this time, word had already reached Yongsan that the MSR had been cut by fire about a mile and one-half out of town.

At 0520, about an hour before sunrise, Lieutenant Martin's Engineer Post 4 came under heavy fire from North Korean riflemen and machine gunners. When the fire did not diminish after several hours, Martin concluded that his twenty-five men were in danger of being trapped. Accordingly, he rashly split his force in an effort to escape. Sergeant Churchill and most of the men were told to make their way east to join Task Force Hafeman's Post 1, while Martin and two NCOs headed for Lieutenant McMillan's Engineer Post 3. McMillan's position meanwhile had come under attack at 0600 by North Koreans who had crawled within grenade range under the cover of darkness. After a grenade explosion wounded McMillan and several others, Sergeant Kavetsky, the ranking NCO, decided to lead eight men in a dash for Moore's Post 2. So fierce was the North Korean fire that all except Kavetsky were shot down. Kavetsky dived into a rice paddy near the road to escape from the searching enemy fire. From his hiding place, he saw Lieutenant Martin's party drive up to the abandoned

Post 3, come under fire, and be taken prisoner. Both Engineer Posts 3 and 4 had now fallen to the North Koreans (see map 11).[22]

East of the engineers, Task Force Hafeman participated in the action. North Koreans estimated to be in company strength opened fire on Hafeman Post 1 at 0630, cutting it off from Hafeman Post 2. Better supplied with communications gear than the engineers, Hafeman maintained radio contact with the beleaguered Post 1 until 0700, when the link failed. Pending re-establishment of communications, Hafeman sent a detail to the rear for additional small-arms ammunition, hand grenades, and an 81-mm mortar. When radio contact was restored at 0730, he learned that Post 1 had sustained three casualties. Rather than passively await events, Hafeman at 0830 decided to try to break the enemy's stranglehold on Post 1. He ordered three jeeps to make a dash from Post 1 to Post 2. Armed with .50-caliber machine guns and BARs, the jeeps set out at 0900.

Braving the enemy's automatic weapons fire, the small convoy fought its way to Hafeman Post 2 at Wonjon Pass. The convoy arrived at 0935, having suffered three casualties. One of the machine guns had been damaged, one of the jeeps had been shot up, and another had lost a tire. Nevertheless, the convoy had survived, and its leader believed he had inflicted some damage on the enemy. At 1000, the ammunition and grenades requested earlier by Hafeman arrived at Post 2. Hafeman loaded them in the jeeps and at 1005 dispatched the vehicles back to Post 1. The convoy again passed through the gauntlet of fire and delivered its cargo safely. Reinforced by Sergeant Churchill's detachment from Engineer Post 4 and resupplied with ammunition, Hafeman Post 1 was momentarily secure.[23]

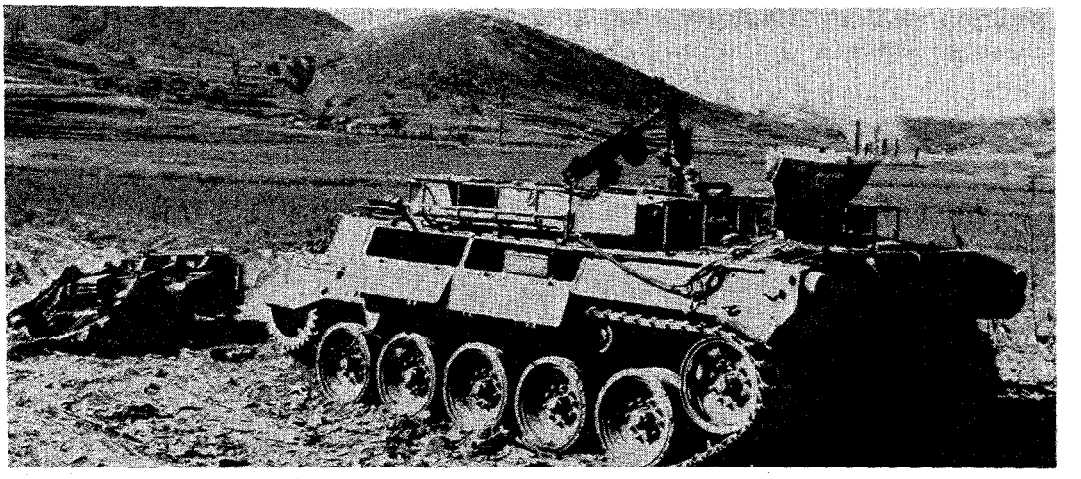
Back at Yongsan, supply vehicles and ambulances began to gather, waiting for the MSR to be cleared. There, they were threatened by North Korean infiltrators who had crossed the road in the engineer's sector and moved onto the hills overlooking Yongsan from the southeast. Some of them were spotted by the men of the 24th Recon Company, who drove the North Koreans back with mortar fire. Around 0800, forty-one men from Company B, 21st Infantry, retreated into the 24th Recon's position from southwest of Yongsan. Thankful for the reinforcements, Captain Kearns sent them to occupy the hills where the North Koreans had been seen. Indicative of the confused state of the fighting around the MSR, this intermingling of units and chains of command eroded cohesion at a time when unity of effort was essential. Aware of the problem, General Church, at 0845, ordered Colonel Hill to assume command of all units around Yongsan. Church further authorized Hill to withdraw an infantry company from the Naktong front and to use it to reopen the MSR. Preoccupied with the battle for the river line, Hill, in turn, delegated responsibility for clearing the MSR to Lt. Col. Charles Smith of the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry. Hill created Task Force Smith and transferred Company F of the 9th Infantry to Smith's control. Smith's own companies were already heavily involved with North Korean units southwest of Yongsan, so he would have to defend the town's southeastern perimeter with Kearns' Recon Company and the remnants of Company A, 14th Engineers, until reinforcements arrived. His most advanced

position was now Engineer Post 2, which was under heavy enemy fire from three directions.[24]

For several hours, the lack of an offensive force to sweep the hills precluded any effort to reopen the MSR. Several attempts, however, were made to pass through the gauntlet of fire between Engineer Post 2 and the abandoned Posts 3 and 4. At 0900, 1st Lt. William Coghill, executive officer of the 24th Recon Company, and his communications chief, Sgt. James Keelen, attempted to reach Yongsan in a jeep from Miryang. At the North Korean roadblock, the jeep was struck by a 14.5-mm antitank round that caromed into Coghill's leg. Instead of taking cover, Coghill ordered Keelan to continue through the enemy fire in order to report personally what they had learned to Captain Kearns. For his actions that day, Coghill later received the Silver Star. No further attempt was made to enter the contested corridor until 1400, when an M-24 tank from Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion, was sent forward from Yongsan in an effort to rescue a wounded man trapped somewhere beyond Engineer Post 2. Although hit by 14.5-mm antitank rounds in a gas tank and an ammunition storage compartment, the tank searched unsuccessfully for the casualty, then returned to Yongsan. After that, the enemy's grip on the MSR remained unchallenged for several hours.[25]

East of the North Korean blockade, Captain Hafeman received permission at 1330 to abandon his Post 1, but he delayed the attempt until the arrival of the mortar he had requested earlier. Unknown to Hafeman, a relief force was even then gathering at Yongsan to fight its way through to join him. He finally received the mortar at 1500 and emplaced it to cover the withdrawal of Post 1. Troops then were instructed to mount all automatic weapons on the remaining vehicles in order to provide cover for the foot soldiers as they withdrew. While these preparations were under way, the relief force could be seen advancing from the direction of Yongsan. This was Task Force Cody.

Captain Cody of Company F, 9th Infantry, had reached Yongsan around 1600 with one of his platoons. There, two rifle squads were loaded on three M-24 light tanks and two M-39 personnel carriers from Kearns' 24th Recon Company and sent forward to clear the roadblock. As this force made its way beyond Engineer Post 2, Sergeant Kavetsky rose from his hiding place in a rice paddy and scrambled aboard one of the M-39s. Kavetsky was unscathed, but another soldier, who attempted the same thing a few yards farther down the road, was killed by North Korean fire. Eventually, Task Force Cody reached Hafeman's Post 1, which was then being abandoned. Cody's men joined Hafeman's detachment as well as Sergeant Churchill's survivors from Engineer Post 4, and together they rolled out of Hafeman Post 1 in a hail of enemy bullets. At 1705, the convoy reached relative safety at Hafeman Post 2 in Wonjon Pass, having lost one man killed on the way. Although Task Force Cody had instructions to return to Yongsan, Brigadier General Menoher, Church's representative on the scene, ordered it to remain with Hafeman.[26]



M-39 armored utility vehicle, one of the 24th Division vehicles destroyed in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge

At 1800, Hafeman reorganized his command. Besides men from headquarters, signal, MP, band, and ordnance detachments, he now commanded detachments from both Company F, 9th Infantry, and the 24th Recon Company. Sending the military policemen to rejoin their parent unit, Hafeman decided to withdraw nearer to Kyun'gyo. Leaving five outposts on the hills overlooking Wonjon Pass, he fell back with the remainder of his force almost three miles to another pass just west of Kyun'gyo. Hafeman then was ordered to division headquarters to brief officers from the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, which would attempt to reopen the MSR on the following day. In its share of the day's fight, Task Force Hafeman had lost one man killed and ten wounded. Dead was Pfc. Francis Baker of the 724th Ordnance Maintenance Company, a young soldier who had voluntarily left his safe job in the rear to help reopen the division's MSR.[27]

As darkness approached, the Americans at both ends of the MSR consolidated their positions. In Yongsan, Lieutenant Colonel Smith allowed the remnants of Company A, 14th Engineers, to withdraw from Engineer Posts 1 and 2. Major Miller's battered engineers were sent to a hill northeast of Yongsan, where they dug in for the night. In their defense of the MSR, they had suffered twenty-three men killed, four wounded, and three missing. Near sunset at 2030, an M-24 tank from Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion, joined a tank and personnel carrier from the 24th Recon Company in making a final attempt to run the enemy blockade. The elements from the recon company successfully dashed through the enemy fire in the gathering darkness, but the other tank turned around and returned to Yongsan. At 2100, Captain Cody brought the remainder of Company F, 9th Infantry, into the lines southeast of the town to fill gaps in the position held by the 24th Recon Company. As the men dug in, North Korean artillery pounded their position. No one was hit, but four jeeps were damaged. On the MSR, at least 6,000 yards of road were in enemy hands (see map 12).[28]

The failure to clear the MSR seriously hindered the 24th Division in its fight to wrest the Naktong Bulge from the enemy. Because the road was blocked, casualties could not be promptly evacuated to Miryang, which overtaxed the limited facilities in the Yongsan-Ch'angnyong area. Additional medical support was sent forward, but it had to take the roundabout route via Ch'ongdo. A much more serious consequence for the division was the loss of the telephone lines laid along the MSR between division headquarters and the front. Deprived of this wire link, Church and his staff were forced to rely upon an inadequate radio net or on messages dropped from light observation planes. Radio messages had first to be encoded, then transmitted, and finally decoded—a process that increased the average time between dispatch and receipt to three and one-half hours. Thus, General Church lacked an accurate picture of events in the division sector for much of the day.[29]

Indicative of the disruption caused by the blocked MSR was the difficulty encountered by Colonel Hill in attending a conference at division headquarters at Kyun'gyo. At 1015, Hill was told to go to the airstrip at Ch'angnyong, where a plane would be waiting to fly him over the North Korean blockade to Church's CP. At 1245, Hill responded that he would be at Ch'angnyong at 1330. This message was so delayed in transit that division headquarters was still waiting for Hill's answer over an hour later. Without this confirmation, no plane could be sent. At 1450, Hill was still awaiting transportation at the Ch'angnyong airstrip. Eventually, the plane arrived and transported Hill over the roadblock without incident. At Kyun'gyo, he found not only General Church but also General Walker of Eighth Army. According to Hill, Walker wanted to know if Hill's troops could clear the MSR, to which Hill responded affirmatively. Hill's answer notwithstanding, Walker gave Church still another of his dwindling reserve assets, the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry of the 2d Infantry Division. This unit, together with the 27th Infantry advancing from the south, would be assigned to secure the road from Kyun'gyo to Yongsan.[30]

Although the fight for the MSR occupied most of the 24th Division's attention on 12 August, there was activity on other fronts as well. Standing on the defensive, the regiments comprising Task Force Hill made only slight adjustments in their lines. Meanwhile, they fended off numerous small attacks by the North Koreans, who continually probed the American positions for weak spots. Near the Naktong, Col. Ned Moore of the 19th Infantry requested and received an airdrop of propaganda leaflets on the North Korean lines, but there was no immediate indication of its effectiveness. Back at Yongsan, the near approach of the enemy caused several artillery batteries and unit CPs, including that of Beauchamp's 34th Infantry, to displace northward a short distance. Behind them, the road to Ch'angnyong became clogged with the traffic diverted from the MSR. In the midst of it all, the medical detachments of the 21st Infantry struggled to cope with the increasing number of casualties arriving both from the Naktong front and the action on the MSR.[31]

Another worrisome sector was the division's northern flank, where Eighth Army had identified a new enemy bridgehead east of the Naktong. Before dawn, Eighth Army analysts concluded that the crossing either was inconsequential or had been repulsed, but Church, nevertheless, cautioned Stephens' 21st Infantry and the engineers of Task Force Hyzer to be on their guard. At 0500, five survivors of the seventeen-man patrol Hyzer had sent across the Naktong the previous night returned to the east bank. They told of being attacked by large numbers of the enemy, escaping only when their wounded leader, Lt. Ward Neville, sacrificed himself in a delaying action. This report indicated considerable North Korean strength on Hyzer's right front. At 0735, the 21st Infantry's Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon, patrolling east of the Naktong, was ambushed by North Koreans near the village of Hyonp'ung. The platoon escaped, but at the cost of one man wounded and one jeep destroyed. Stephens' men estimated North Korean strength at two companies, but elements of Task Force Hyzer placed the number at battalion size, and a patrol from the 1st Cavalry Division believed a regiment had crossed. Taking no chances, Stephens repeatedly requested the return of his 1st Battalion, but on each occasion, Church demurred.[32]

Left to their own devices, Stephens and Lieutenant Colonel Hyzer of the 3d Engineer (C) Battalion redeployed their limited assets to meet the new threat. With the division's right flank thinly held, an enemy penetration in strength could quickly reach the north-south road from Hyonp'ung through Ch'angnyong to Yongsan. Therefore, Hyzer ordered two of his four companies to block the road and relocated both his CP and his Service Company in more sheltered positions. Stephens withdrew his only uncommitted unit, Company C, from behind the river positions and placed it in mobile reserve near the regimental CP. Battery B of the 63d Field Artillery Battalion, which was in the area undergoing reconstitution, now turned its six 105-mm howitzers northward. Similarly, a 155-mm tube of Battery A, 11th Field Artillery Battalion, was also traversed to cover Hyonp'ung. Both Stephens and Hyzer established observation posts to watch for any North Korean forward movement, and after dark, the artillery directed unobserved fire on the area of the crossing point (see map 13).[33]

Well aware of the risks he and Hyzer were running, Stephens could only await the enemy's next move. With Task Force Hill locked in combat on the ridges west of Yongsan and the division's MSR momentarily severed, Stephens could expect no more divisional assets from Church. Indeed, normal communications links with division headquarters still had not been restored, and he was similarly out of touch with the 1st Cavalry Division to the north. Stephens, who previously had considered the morale of his unit to be good, now downgraded it to fair. In his unit report submitted at 1700, he explained the revision was "due to [his unit] covering a 10 mile river front with four depleted companies and knowing unit covering right of Division had one platoon to patrol a 10 mile front in which the river can be crossed by wading—which happened last night by at least 2 Battalions of Enemy."[34]

From the perspective of General Church at Kyun'gyo, the 24th Division, on the night of 12 August, had a relatively stable front, a potential threat on its right, and a crisis on its MSR. Obviously, the Kyun'gyo-Yongsan road had to be reopened and the pressure on Yongsan reduced before another drive could be mounted to regain the ground lost in the Naktong Bulge. With the 24th Division's own resources already fully committed, General Walker first had given Church Col. John Michaelis' 27th Infantry, then he added Lt. Col. Clair Hutchin's 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry. Michaelis' 1st and 3d Battalions had joined his 2d Battalion north of Namji-ri by 1100, and at 1440, the regiment was formally but temporarily attached to the 24th Division. Church planned to use the 27th Infantry to sweep the enemy from the region south and east of Yongsan. To provide a secure jumping-off point, the 2d Battalion, at 1930, reoccupied the high ground it had taken and abandoned on the previous day. Meanwhile, Hutchin's battalion, during the night, relieved Task Force Hafeman in the hills west of Kyun'gyo. Both Michaelis and Hutchin prepared to advance toward Yongsan on the next morning.[35]

Holding his 1st Battalion in reserve around Namji-ri, Colonel Michaelis sent his 3d Battalion forward on the Yongsan road at 0930 on 13 August. At 1100, it came abreast of the 2d Battalion, holding the high ground west of the road. Both battalions then drove toward Yongsan, sweeping the enemy before them. Supporting the advance were Battery B, 8th Field Artillery Battalion, and tanks from Company C, 73d Tank Battalion. Michaelis' men encountered only small groups of the enemy, and these were easily destroyed or forced to disperse into the hills. As the battalions advanced, patrols from the regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon maintained contact between them and probed toward the MSR east of Yongsan. On the left, the 2d Battalion made contact with the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, southwest of Yongsan, then advanced to the town at 1500. On its right, the 3d Battalion moved more slowly into the hills southwest of Yongsan, searching for the elusive North Koreans. It reached the MSR at 1630 and two hours later made contact with the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, at Simgong-ni (see map 13).[36]

Because of the nature of the terrain traversed, the advance of Lieutenant Colonel Hutchin's 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, along the MSR was much more arduous than that of Michaelis' 27th Infantry. Hutchin deployed Company C on the ridges south of the road, Company B on the ridges north of the road, and Company A on the MSR itself. Supported by a tank platoon, Company A advanced easily, but the companies on the hills above found the going extremely difficult. Scheduled to begin at 0500, the advance was delayed until the flank companies reached their start positions on the ridges overlooking the road. Part of Company B did not arrive at its line of departure until 1000. Unfamiliarity with the terrain led the battalion's officers to misidentify some objectives and overlook shorter routes to others. Unprepared for the heat and humidity of a Korean August and poorly conditioned for hill climbing, the men struggled slowly from one ridge to the next. Few North Koreans were seen, and even fewer were engaged as the

battalion inched ahead. The lack of enemy contact, in fact, led at least one officer to conclude that the 24th Division had been frightened unnecessarily by only a handful of the enemy. Finally, at 1330, the battalion's leading elements debouched from Wonjon Pass and reached the village of Simgong-ni, where they encountered a patrol from the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon of the 27th Infantry. While the battalion consolidated its position at Simgong-ni, Lieutenant Colonel Hutchin led a patrol into Yongsan, where he conferred with Colonel Hill. The battalion had lost only one man to enemy action, but nine were evacuated because of heat exhaustion.[37]

Although Michaelis and Hutchin had not located the North Koreans that had cut the MSR, General Church believed there was no time to mount an all-out search for them in the rough terrain paralleling the road. Accordingly, he ordered the 27th Infantry to return to the vicinity of Namji-ri. By the end of the day, Michaelis' 2d and 3d Battalions had been moved by truck to rejoin the 1st Battalion at Namji-ri, where the regiment reverted to Eighth Army reserve. Similarly, most of the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, was withdrawn to the vicinity of the 24th Division's headquarters at Kyun'-gyo. Company A, reinforced by two tanks, remained behind to guard Wonjon Pass and patrol the MSR. Although sufficient to keep the MSR open, this force was unable to prevent small parties of North Koreans from harassing convoys and wire crews on the road during the night. Nevertheless, the threat to the 24th Division's MSR had been effectively removed. Its mission accomplished, Task Force Hafeman was dissolved.[38]

With the threat to its supply lines resolved, the only remaining obstacle to an early resumption of the 24th Division's counterattack in the Naktong Bulge was the new North Korean crossing north of the division's right at Hyonp'ung. In midafternoon, General Church visited Colonel Stephens of the 21st Infantry at the latter's CP. Stephens outlined the limited precautions taken by his depleted regiment, now consisting of only one weak battalion, one additional infantry company, and two companies of engineers. North of Stephens, only the four engineer companies of Task Force Hyzer stood between the 24th Division's rear and the estimated 900 North Koreans at Hyonp'ung. Neither Stephens nor Hyzer had been able to contact major elements of the 1st Cavalry Division, in whose sector the North Koreans had originally crossed, nor did they know the location of any of the 1st Cavalry's units in the vicinity.[39]

Upon returning to his own headquarters at Kyun'gyo, Church learned that Eighth Army had decided to expand the 24th Division's area of operations northward to include the Hyonp'ung crossing site. Church passed this unwelcome news to Stephens shortly after 2000, following it with an order for Stephens to assume responsibility for the new area at once. Task Force Hyzer was attached to Stephens, but since it was already deployed in the affected area, this represented no reinforcement for the hard-pressed 21st Infantry. Church also ordered Stephens to conduct a reconnaissance around Hyonp'ung to determine the North Korean strength and intentions there. A patrol from Hyzer's Company D had already penetrated Hyonp'ung several

hours earlier but had been driven out by friendly artillery fire. Hyzer prepared a new effort for the following day and meanwhile guarded the road southward from Hyonp'ung as best he could. Surprisingly, the North Koreans at Hyonp'ung remained quiescent. For Stephens and Hyzer, this was the only bright spot in an otherwise gloomy situation.[40]

During the fight to clear the 24th Division's rear on 13 August, Task Force Hill stood on the defensive and attempted to hold its ground around Yongsan. Each regiment sustained furious North Korean assaults before sunrise and again after nightfall. On Hill's right, the brunt of the North Korean attacks fell upon the 1st Battalion of the 19th Infantry. Company C was assailed twice but repulsed the enemy each time, capturing weapons and a prisoner. On its left, Company B defended its positions against four enemy assaults. There, a ravine leading into the left rear of the company allowed the North Koreans to penetrate the defenses. A firefight then ensued at ranges under thirty yards. In one section of the perimeter, the fighting was literally hand-to-hand. Only after the company called down 81-mm mortar fire nearly on its own positions was the perimeter restored. Four hours after their initial assault, the North Koreans withdrew to the opposing ridge.[41]

To the left of the 19th Infantry, the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 9th Infantry repelled three North Korean attacks in the early hours of 13 August, but the cost was high. Enemy fire felled 140 men, and an additional 59 were evacuated as nonbattle casualties, most suffering from heat exhaustion. Officer losses were especially heavy. One unit, Company E of the 2d Battalion, lost all of its officers on five separate occasions during this period of the battle. Each time, M. Sgt. Warren H. Jordon assumed command of the company and led it successfully, actions that ultimately brought him a battlefield commission. According to the unit report, the combat efficiency of the 9th Infantry remained high, although the adjacent 19th Infantry reported disturbingly that the 9th's 1st Battalion was too exhausted to remove its own dead.[42]

South of the 9th Infantry, the 1st Battalion of the 34th Infantry also was caught up in the general North Korean attack sweeping across the front of Task Force Hill. After repulsing one enemy assault, Company B was driven back 200 yards by a second but was able to stabilize its position with the aid of Company A. Two miles to the south, Companies K and L began to withdraw from their exposed position on the Naktong under cover of the nearby 27th Infantry. This withdrawal, ordered by Colonel Beauchamp with the approval of the task force commander, was an effort to consolidate the scattered units of the 34th Infantry. When Colonel Michaelis of the 27th Infantry objected, however, General Church canceled the movement. Beauchamp protested, but the two companies remained a while longer in their isolated position, where they exerted little or no effect on the battle.[43]

Behind the Naktong front, Yongsan's defenders made limited attacks on the morning of 13 August in an effort to drive North Korean infiltrators from the high ground overlooking the town and the MSR. Task Force Cody, composed of most of Company F, 9th Infantry, and a platoon of Company

B, 21st Infantry, attacked a hill southeast of Yongsan in midmorning. Cody's men received fire support from both the 24th Recon Company to the west and Company A, 14th Engineers, to the north. During the advance, a mortar round from the heavy weapons platoon of Company F fell short, killing two men and wounding four others. Fortunately, enemy resistance was light and the position was secured by late afternoon. Arrival of the 27th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, completed the relief of Yongsan, freeing several units from the composite force that had defended it. Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion, was finally allowed to send its two battered M-24 tanks to the rear for much needed repairs. After some confusion, the remnants of Company A, 14th Engineer (C) Battalion, were also released and permitted to return to their parent unit north of Ch'angnyong. Essentially an orphaned unit in a confused situation, this company had been badly placed and poorly supervised during the defense of the MSR. As a result, it had been decimated.[44]

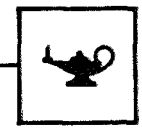
During the day, while the fighting raged throughout the division's entire area of operations, senior officers met to plan the resumption of counterattacks by Task Force Hill. First, Colonel Hill conferred with his regimental commanders, Beauchamp and Moore. Then, while he drove to meet General Church at the Ch'angnyong airstrip, the regimental commanders held planning sessions with their battalion commanders and staffs. The result of these meetings was a plan calling for a coordinated attack by the 19th, 9th, and parts of the 34th and 21st Infantry regiments to begin at 0630 on 14 August. As before, the objective of the counterattack was the complete elimination of the North Korean bridgehead. The counterattack was to be supported by air strikes from 100 aircraft as well as by all of the artillery batteries within range. Yongsan would be protected by elements of the 24th Recon Company and an engineer detachment. The 24th Recon Company was also charged with maintaining liaison with the 27th Infantry around Namji-ri.[45]

As night fell, General Church could look upon the events of 13 August with some satisfaction. The division's MSR had been secured, North Korean attacks on the division's front had been turned back, and Task Force Hill was preparing to resume its counterattacks. Still, there were worrisome problems facing the 24th Division. Wire communications forward from Church's headquarters at Kyun'gyo was still nonexistent, a situation only partially remedied by a second radio net established by the 24th Signal Company. Ammunition for the division's 4.2-inch and 81-mm mortars was in critically short supply, as were illuminating rounds of all calibers. Although the logistical system was at last forwarding an adequate supply of weapons, few replacements had arrived to replenish the division's depleted battalions. By its own estimate, Church's command had a combat efficiency rating of only 52 percent, with some individual units reckoned at no more than 20 percent. Worst of all, there was disquieting information from a prisoner that a fresh regiment of the North Korean 4th Division had just joined the battle. Aerial observation had noted a suspicious set of ramps on both sides of the Naktong at the tip of the Bulge, and one of the forward

units had reported the presence of an enemy tank east of the river. Church hoped that his counterattack planned for the following day would be the last one needed to restore his part of the Pusan Perimeter, but he also knew that the odds were not yet heavily in his favor.[46]

The Failure of Task Force Hill

6



The counterattack scheduled to begin at 0630 on 14 August was envisioned by Task Force Hill's planners as a powerful drive that would carry all the way to the Naktong, smashing the North Korean penetration and eliminating the bridgehead. According to Operations Order Number 5, all frontline units would participate in the advance, although more was expected of some units than others. On the task force's right, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, would push forward to the village of Sinam-ni, while the 2d Battalion, to the north, retained its grip on the Naktong shore. Still, these were secondary roles when compared with that assigned the 9th Infantry in Task Force Hill's center. That regiment was scheduled to send its two battalions forward on either side of the road running from the village of Tugok down to the Naktong. North of the road, the 1st Battalion was assigned a series of hills as objectives, beginning with an extension of Hill 165. Known to the troops as Cloverleaf because of its distinctive shape on the operations maps, this hill had been in North Korean hands for much of the battle. South of the 1st Battalion, the initial objective of the 2d Battalion was the heights above Tugok. When that area was secured, the 2d Battalion would advance along the south side of the road and assault the north end of a long ridge known as Obong-ni. The south end of Obong-ni was the objective of the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry. Like Cloverleaf, Obong-ni Ridge had long been in North Korean hands, and recent observation flights by light aircraft had revealed the enemy building field fortifications. Completing the attack plan, the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, would sweep around the southern end of Obong-ni in a renewed effort to roll up the North Korean right flank.[1]

Although they had been on the defensive for several days while the division's MSR was being cleared, the units comprising Task Force Hill were by no means rested. The grueling fighting of the previous eight days had taken its toll on the already depleted rifle companies, as had the heat and humidity of the Korean summer. Nightly North Korean probes and company-size assaults had also deprived the weary infantrymen of much needed rest during the recent defensive phase. With the flow of replacements at a low ebb, casualties had not been replaced, leaving rifle companies no larger than platoons in most regiments. The 19th and 34th Infantry regiments were especially weak, and even Hill's strongest unit, the 9th Infantry,

was gradually wasting away under the daily toll of losses. Knowing the weakness of the rifle companies, the planners hoped to compensate for the lack of infantry strength with increased employment of artillery and air support. Four full batteries of 105-mm and one of 155-mm howitzers were available to support the counterattack, with the bulk of the guns allotted to the 9th Infantry. Even more was expected from the aerial component. Eighth Army had assigned Task Force Hill first priority for air strikes on 14 August, a situation not previously attained and one that was quite ephemeral. This meant that up to 100 aircraft, both F-51s and F-80s, would be available for close air support, controlled from the task force CP. The staff of the 24th Division, in conjunction with the Air Force and the Eighth Army's Air Operations Center, had been working on the air plan for several days. It was hoped that this aerial assault would provide the momentum needed to carry the weary infantry to victory.[2]

Unfortunately, the work of the planners was partially negated by the weather. Between 0300 and 0400 on 14 August, rain began to fall in torrents. High winds sprang up, turning the downpour into driving sheets of water. The wind, rain, and low cloud ceiling forced postponement of the planned aerial bombardment. Nevertheless, the scheduled ten-minute artillery preparatory fires began on time. Shortly thereafter, the infantrymen struggled out of their water-filled foxholes and began to move forward through the rain. What the task force staff had intended to be a coordinated advance quickly lost cohesion and force as some units gained ground while others remained stalled at their lines of departure. Colonel Hill's early reports to General Church were quite optimistic, reflecting primarily the initial success of the 2d Battalion, 9th Infantry, in gaining its first objective, the hill overlooking Tugok. Soon, however, less favorable reports began to arrive at Hill's headquarters just west of Yongsan. What had initially promised to be a rapid advance now mired down in a bitter fight for a few hundred yards of Korean terrain.[3]

As had so often been the case, the counterattack first began to disintegrate on the flanks, where the weakest units were deployed. On the task force's left, the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, successfully negotiated the small hills in its immediate front but was stopped in its tracks by the North Koreans entrenched on Obong-ni Ridge. The 34th Infantry, whose combat efficiency was judged to be no greater than 20 percent, could advance no farther. On its left, the 1st Battalion of the 21st Infantry moved forward from its position southwest of Yongsan to a new location on the left and rear of the 34th. It, too, was then halted by stiff enemy resistance, its goal of outflanking the North Korean line unachieved. The situation on the right of the task force was even worse. There, the 19th Infantry proved entirely unable to carry out its part of the plan. Reduced to only a handful of men by the previous week's fighting, the 2d Battalion did not attempt to advance at all during the day. On its left, the 1st Battalion had a key role to play in supporting the advance of the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry, to the south. Unwilling to move until the men of the 9th secured more of the Hill 165 complex, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, remained in its original posi-

tions all morning. This failure to move as scheduled hindered the efforts of the 9th Infantry to take Cloverleaf. Free to concentrate on the 1st Battalion of the 9th, the North Koreans inflicted more than sixty casualties on that unit within an hour (see map 14).[4]

The failure of his 1st Battalion to participate in the counterattack prompted the regimental commander, Col. Ned Moore, to go forward to view the situation for himself. At 1010, he left regimental headquarters with his operations officer for the CP of the 1st Battalion. After explaining the situation, the battalion commander joined the party as they went forward to the company positions. As a result of Moore's intervention, Company A finally began to move in midafternoon. The company, which numbered only forty men, was aided in its advance by the progress of the 9th Infantry on its left. Supported by fire from Company B's positions on its right, Company A's handful of men moved into the hills north of the hamlet of Maekkok. While they did so, General Church arrived at the command post of the 19th Infantry to see for himself what was causing the delay. Satisfied that at last the regiment was in motion, Church departed after ten minutes without seeing Colonel Moore, who was still at the front with his battalion commander.[5]

During the afternoon of 14 August, the rain ceased to fall, although the low cloud ceiling remained until late in the day. Many flights had been canceled during the morning, but now aircraft began to operate over the counterattack area. Braving the poor flying conditions, pilots dropped through the overcast for the remainder of the day to deliver air strikes on the North Koreans tenaciously defending the reverse slopes of Obong-ni, Cloverleaf, and other hills. Artillery spotter planes also roamed the battlefield, directing fire missions against enemy concentrations. Beneficial as it was, this assistance came too late. By late afternoon, Task Force Hill's counterattack had ground to a halt almost everywhere. Company A of the 19th Infantry was still moving forward north of Maekkok, and part of the 9th Infantry was still battling its way up the slopes of Cloverleaf, but elsewhere the battered units of Task Force Hill were digging into the soggy earth, preparing defensive positions from which to face the inevitable North Korean counterattacks. The average gain for Task Force Hill during the day was only 500 yards. Elements of the 21st and 34th Infantry regiments on the left had fared slightly better, but most of the 19th Infantry had not moved at all. Everywhere, the North Koreans had skillfully defended the rugged terrain from reverse slope positions dug into the countless hills and ridges of the Bulge. They had suffered heavy losses, especially from the artillery and air strikes of the afternoon, but they had given up little ground and had inflicted equally serious losses on units of Task Force Hill.[6]

An ominous development in the day's fighting was the first intervention of North Korean armor in the area east of the Naktong River. There had been occasional reports of tank sightings earlier, but no tanks had been actually verified east of the river. The few sightings prior to 14 August had all been west of the Naktong, opposite the 21st Infantry. There, the tanks had usually fired a few rounds into the American defensive positions,

then clanked off into hiding for a while before repeating the process. On 14 August, however, there was no mistake—the North Koreans had somehow managed to get several tanks across the river into the Bulge. The first report of enemy armor came from the 19th Infantry, which radioed word of a tank in its sector at 1045. Attempts to destroy this tank with both air strikes and artillery fire throughout the day proved futile. At 1630, the tank fired into the position of Company B, calling forth another effort to neutralize it with artillery. Again, the tank was silenced only briefly, and it was back in action at 1800 against Company A. This time, a mortar barrage and another air strike were tried, all to no avail. As night fell, the beleaguered Company A, now down to twenty-five men, could hear North Koreans massing on the reverse slope of their hill for an attack. Under cover of darkness, the enemy filtered through a gap between Company A's advanced position and that of Company B, to the right rear. Shortly before 2200, the North Koreans assaulted the now isolated Company A and drove its few riflemen southward into the zone of the 9th Infantry, where they were pinned down by tank fire. Company A's retreat, thus, brought an end to Task Force Hill's counterattack on 14 August (see map 14).[7]

Elsewhere in the division sector, the situation remained stable. North of Task Force Hill, the 21st Infantry continued to hold its section of the river defenses and even managed to improve its minefields. A few North Koreans were sighted across the river, but artillery fire dispersed them whenever they gathered in sufficient numbers to justify a fire mission. During the day, the regiment received 289 replacements, most of whom were sent to the badly understrength 3d Battalion. This was the first significant number of replacements to join the 24th Division, and General Church had decided they should be assigned to either the 19th or 21st Infantry regiments. Although the 19th badly needed reinforcement, Church believed it imperative to bolster his northern flank against the North Korean force in the Hyonp'ung bridgehead. Surprisingly, the enemy unit that had crossed there continued to show little initiative. In order to maintain contact with the estimated two-battalion North Korean force, Colonel Stephens ordered the 3d Engineer (C) Battalion to patrol aggressively around Hyonp'ung. Since artillery fire from the 1st Cavalry Division was still periodically falling on the town, General Church requested its cessation. The 1st Cavalry Division agreed to halt its bombardment on the following day. Inexplicably, only the first part of this message was transmitted to the 21st Infantry, which ordered the 3d Engineers to send a patrol into the town. They did so, only to have it driven out at 1000 by friendly artillery fire. Other patrols later in the day were more successful, and one even returned with a wounded prisoner. This man, who belonged to the 10th North Korean Division, had been shot by his own squad leader when he proved unable to keep up. He indicated that the 10th Division was very weak and lacked heavy weapons, which possibly accounted for its relative inaction.[8]

The situation in the 24th Division's rear areas was decidedly improved on 14 August. Herculean labor by the 24th Signal Company at last restored wire communications between the division's headquarters at Kyun'gyo and

the units on the front lines. Companies K and L of the 34th Infantry finally received permission to withdraw from their exposed position on the southern edge of the Bulge and moved into regimental reserve. Two companies of the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, patrolled the MSR and adjacent trails, while the remainder of the battalion went into division reserve. In the south, the 27th Infantry crossed back into the sector of the 25th Division at Namji-ri shortly after noon. It was replaced by a company of the 35th Infantry, which took up positions just south of the Namji-ri bridge. Contact with this unit was maintained by patrols from the 24th Recon Company moving south from Yongsan. The North Korean force (estimated at battalion size) that had earlier cut the MSR had now disappeared into the jumble of hills and ridges on either side of the road. Church and his staff knew that they had not been destroyed, only dispersed, but neither the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, nor the 24th Recon Company could find them. With a battalion available to protect the MSR if necessary, Church resolved to continue Task Force Hill's counterattack on the following day. Even though his division's combat efficiency was estimated at only 52 percent by his staff, Church believed he had no other course of action available. His decision, thus, became part of Operations Instructions Number 23, issued at 2400 hours.[9]

In all but one particular, the plan for Task Force Hill's counterattack, scheduled for 15 August, was the same as that of the day before. The change involved Lt. Col. Charles Smith's 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, on the task force's left. Smith's battalion no longer was expected to sweep around the southern end of Obong-ni Ridge and outflank the North Korean line. Instead, it received the much simpler mission of remaining in place to protect the task force's rear and left flank. But even this assignment proved impossible to accomplish as the North Koreans preempted the American counterattack by initiating one of their own shortly after midnight. The first blow fell on Smith's hapless battalion, which was soon engulfed by North Korean assaults from three sides. At 0230, with at least twenty of his men wounded, Smith called Colonel Hill and quietly requested permission to withdraw along the line of his communications wire. Hill later recalled that he responded: "You sound calm and perfectly all right to me. I hate to see you withdraw. On the other hand you are on the ground and should know best. I don't want to lose you. Think it over for half an hour and call me back." Smith reluctantly agreed, warning Hill not to initiate the call since the ringing of the field telephone might betray Smith's position to the North Koreans. At 0300, Smith again called Hill and again asked permission to withdraw since the situation had worsened. Reluctantly, Hill told Smith to bring his men back to safety. To cover their withdrawal and subsequent reorganization, Hill moved forward the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, itself numbering fewer than 300 men.[10]

As Smith's battalion fell back in disarray, North Korean assaults spread across the front of Task Force Hill. In the 19th Infantry's sector, the ubiquitous North Korean tank fired from close range into the positions of the 1st Battalion. Shells from the same or perhaps a second tank struck Company C of the 9th Infantry. Most serious of all, at 0300, four North Korean T-34

tanks crawled out of the darkness near the village of Tugok, turned onto the Yongsan road, and crashed through the position of the 2d Battalion, 9th Infantry. Seemingly unstoppable, the tanks rampaged through the battalion's immediate rear, crushing a jeep and shooting up several company supply points. Had the tanks continued eastward, they would have reached a succession of headquarters, including Task Force Hill's, as well as several artillery batteries. Fortunately, darkness, unfamiliarity with the terrain, and their pause to destroy supply dumps impeded their progress. Daylight found them deep within the American lines but still short of the vital targets nearer Yongsan.

While circuits buzzed throughout the sector raising the alarm, Cpl. Robert C. Carroll of Company H, 9th Infantry, took matters in his own hands. Obtaining a 3.5-inch rocket launcher, Carroll stealthily approached to within fifty yards of the leading tank and disabled it with one shot. The remaining T-34s turned and fled westward to safety, but the immobilized tank continued to fire in all directions. Carroll next charged the tank with a hand grenade. Using an ax he found strapped to the vehicle, he attempted to force open the turret hatch cover but was driven off by an enemy crewman. Undaunted, Carroll next grabbed a gasoline can from a nearby abandoned vehicle and doused the tank's deck with fuel. He then ignited the gasoline with a rag torch and jumped clear. No exit was attempted by the enemy tankers, who burned to death in their machine. For his initiative and courage that day, Carroll received the Distinguished Service Cross.[11]

By the time Corporal Carroll finally dispatched the North Korean T-34 at 0827, Task Force Hill had already attempted to resume its counterattack. This time the weather was clear and dry, but because the 24th Division's sector had been assigned Priority Two by Eighth Army's Air Operations Center, far fewer flights were available for close air support. All along the front, the counterattack sputtered and died. On the right, the 19th Infantry once more made no progress. The remnants of Company A were reorganized under a sergeant but remained in the zone of the 9th Infantry for much of the day. Rather than try to advance, Colonel Moore's 2d Battalion attempted to scrape together a reserve to cover the hole created by Company A's withdrawal. Next to the 19th, the 9th Infantry also was unable to move forward and contented itself with digging in to hold its meager gains of the previous day. Farther south, the depleted 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, initially made some progress after repelling a North Korean attack before dawn. The battalion attacked in columns of companies. In the lead, Company A moved forward following an artillery preparation and gained the ridge in its immediate front. Suddenly, it was flanked from both sides. Suffering heavy casualties, the company fell back with only forty able-bodied men left. As Company A reorganized, Company B took up the assault and called for an air strike to soften up the enemy positions. Aircraft responded quickly but inaccurately, the strike falling on Company B. Thoroughly disorganized, Company B, too, withdrew to the battalion's original position. The North Koreans followed with a counterattack of their own, but after having made small gains, this attack was broken up by American artillery fire. When

the 34th Infantry's S2 reported to division headquarters at 1030 that "We don't have the stuff," he was speaking only for his regiment. His words, however, seemed applicable to all of the units comprising Task Force Hill (see map 15).[12]

The inability of the 24th Division to destroy or even gain ground against the North Korean 4th Division in the Naktong Bulge had not gone unnoticed by General Walker at Eighth Army headquarters. During the morning of 15 August, Walker visited General Church at Miryang, site of the 24th Division Rear. Displeased that the battle was still not successfully resolved after ten days of fighting, the Eighth Army commander decided to throw one more of his precious reserve units into the fight. As Church later recalled, Walker said, "I am going to give you the Marine Brigade. I want this situation cleared up, and quick." This apparently was an impulsive decision, and Walker delayed implementing it until after conferring with his staff at his Taegu headquarters. Arriving there by noon, Walker confirmed the decision an hour later. The Marines were already en route from the southern part of the Pusan Perimeter to Miryang, where they had been scheduled to become part of Eighth Army's reserve. Walker sent Col. William A. Collier, a member of his staff, to Miryang to meet the Marines' commander, Brig. Gen. Edward Craig, and brief him on the situation. The 24th Division was instructed to provide the Marines with logistical support and transportation upon their arrival.[13]

After Walker had departed for Taegu, but while Church was still at Miryang, the 24th Division commander received a message from Colonel Hill relayed through the division G3 at Kyun'gyo. Sent at 1130, Hill's message was blunt: "The situation is serious, particularly on south flank. It is under heavy attack. Strongly recommend we go on the defensive." Hill indicated that the assistant division commander, Brigadier General Menoher, was with him and concurred in his estimate. Relying upon Walker's earlier promise of reinforcements, Church quickly agreed to cancel Hill's orders to continue the counterattack. Instead, Task Force Hill would once again assume a defensive stance. At the front, where North Korean assaults continued to beat upon the American forward positions, the new posture had already been in effect for several hours. Throughout the remainder of the day and into the evening, the North Koreans maintained their offensive pressure, first against one unit, then against another. Each time they were turned back, most often with the assistance of artillery. The gunners supporting the division fired a total of 3,540 rounds during 128 missions on 15 August, compared with only 2,222 rounds and 91 missions on the previous day. Ammunition was expended at so great a rate, in fact, that the division artillery commander feared that infantry officers were requesting support too freely. No doubt much ammunition was wasted, but in several cases, the artillery support given the depleted and exhausted infantry units of Task Force Hill on 15 August was critical in staving off the violent North Korean assaults.[14]

At the same time he learned of Colonel Hill's plea for an end to the counterattack, General Church received Eighth Army's permission to employ

the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, in the northern sector. Although the army staff did not appear inordinately concerned about the North Korean bridgehead near Hyonp'ung, Church was told that the battalion could be used to counter the crossing if he believed it necessary. Near Hyonp'ung, Lieutenant Colonel Hyzer's 3d Engineer (C) Battalion continued its aggressive patrolling all day. Whenever enemy units were encountered, the patrols called down air strikes and artillery fire upon them, with undetermined results. Hyonp'ung had by this time become a deserted no-man's-land, visited intermittently by patrols of both sides. The main North Korean strength remained concentrated around Hill 409, a short distance west of the town, and showed no indication of further movement. Nevertheless, Church decided to use the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, to cordon off the small enemy brideghead. At 2245, the battalion received orders to join the 3d Engineers near Hyonp'ung by 0430 on the following morning. Only the 24th Recon Company now remained to protect the division's MSR.[15]

Although the 24th Division's counterattack ground to a halt on 15 August with no appreciable gain, there were a few indications that the North Korean 4th Division was also suffering the effects of ten days of continuous battle. The most significant sign was the increasing number of prisoners taken by the 24th Division. Four prisoners were captured on 15 August, three from the North Korean 4th Division and one from the 10th. There apparently would have been more if an unfortunate incident in the 34th Infantry's sector had not occurred. During that unit's abortive morning assault, approximately twenty-five North Koreans threw away their weapons and attempted to surrender. Misunderstanding their actions, an American soldier fired at them, and the rest of his squad did likewise. Angered, the North Koreans retrieved their weapons and resumed the battle, killing several men of the 34th Infantry. Only one of the North Koreans in this group ultimately surrendered. Information from him, when correlated with that from other prisoners captured that day, indicated that ammunition, supplies, and morale were very low among the enemy. If true, this assessment gave new hope that further counterattacks by the 24th Division might finally eliminate the North Korean thrust into the Naktong Bulge.[16]

7

The Final Counterattack

According to an operational directive issued by Eighth Army late on 15 August, the 24th Division was to remain on the defensive until 17 August, when it would unleash a massive counterattack with the aid of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. The intervening day would be devoted to planning the operation and coordinating the support of U.S. Air Force elements. It would also permit the Marines to reach their assigned sector. Rather than a day of rest and preparation, however, 16 August proved to be another day of heavy combat. Unwilling to relinquish the initiative it had seized earlier, the North Korean 4th Division resumed its own attack before dawn. Out of the darkness poured hundreds of screaming North Koreans who advanced behind a shower of hand grenades. The attack rippled across the front of Task Force Hill in waves, from the 34th Infantry's position on the left, through the 9th Infantry's sector in the center, all the way to the 19th Infantry's foxholes overlooking the Naktong. On the flanks, Task Force Hill lost ground, but its center held firm.[1]

Since the task force's left flank, consisting of the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, and the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, was refused, only the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, faced the North Korean positions on the southern end of Obong-ni Ridge. There, Companies B and C were dug in on Hill 91, about 1,000 yards east of Obong-ni. Around 0430, North Korean units, supported by heavy automatic weapons and a self-propelled 76-mm gun, assaulted the hill. After a thirty-minute firefight, the two companies of the 34th were forced to abandon their positions and leave Hill 91 to the enemy. Behind them, the nearest high ground lay a mile distant across a valley filled with marshes and rice paddies. Under cover of artillery fire from the 13th Field Artillery Battalion, the companies withdrew across the valley. When they passed the position of the artillery's forward observer, he destroyed his radio and joined the retreat. With its left flank now open, Company A, to the north, also fell back into the valley. Eventually, the companies all gained the high ground a mile northeast of their original positions, and there the battalion reorganized itself after daylight (see map 16).[2]

At the other end of Task Force Hill's line, another North Korean attack also gained ground. For several days, the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, had held the southern tips of several ridges near the Naktong that faced the

North Korean positions on Ohang Hill. Companies E and F, much reduced in strength, together defended the ridge nearest the river, while Company G was on a separate ridge across a narrow valley to the southeast. In this sector, the North Korean attack was preceded by artillery and mortar fire, which Companies E and F first believed was an American barrage fired in error. At 0700, the North Korean infantry rushed forward and violently assaulted the ridge held by the two companies. Reporting the attack to regimental headquarters, the battalion commander requested permission to withdraw but received no answer. Gradually the remnants of the two companies were forced back by enemy pressure. As the morning progressed, they slowly withdrew northward along the ridgetop, making the North Koreans pay heavily for their gains. Shortly after noon, the battalion commander informed regimental headquarters: "Situation critical. E-F . . . cannot observe river, want more troops." Colonel Moore responded: "Doughboy [19th Infantry] will send I and R platoon. White [2d Battalion] must hold." With the aid of this small reinforcement, Companies E and F finally halted the enemy advance after losing 600 yards of the ridge. There, they reorganized and, at 1500, mounted a counterattack. Aided by the element of surprise, as well as by flanking fire from Company G, the two companies regained their old positions with surprising ease.[3]

In the center of Task Force Hill, the 9th Infantry sustained North Korean attacks all morning without giving up any ground. The attacks began before dawn on the positions held by the 2d Battalion on both sides of the Yongsan-Naktong road near the village of Tugok. Preceded by preparatory fires from artillery, mortars, and heavy automatic weapons, the attacks came in recognizable waves. During each attack, a group of North Koreans would stand fast, screaming, while others charged the American line. The North Koreans advanced fanatically, in a style reminiscent of many Japanese charges in World War II. As each successive assault was broken, the force behind the next attack lessened, until at last the enemy ceased to move forward. Artillery fire from the 15th Field Artillery Battalion contributed heavily to the repulse of the enemy from the 2d Battalion's positions. To the north, where the 1st Battalion clung to the slopes of Cloverleaf and Maekkok Hill, American artillery also raked the North Koreans as they assaulted throughout the morning. Advancing in broad daylight, the enemy broke into the positions of Company C on Cloverleaf and Company B on Maekkok. As Americans were hit, the North Koreans jumped into their fighting holes. In hand-to-hand fighting, they were driven out again and back down the slopes. To hasten their departure, the 9th Infantry called down air strikes upon them as they retreated. By noon, the North Korean will to continue attacking appeared to have been broken.[4]

In only one sector of the 24th Division's zone of responsibility did the North Koreans east of the Naktong remain on the defensive. Although it could have created serious difficulties for General Church, the 29th Infantry of the North Korean 10th Division continued to remain quiet in its bridgehead at Hill 409 near Hyonp'ung. Having been granted Eighth Army's permission to use the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, to deal with the enemy

incursion, General Church had ordered the battalion into the 21st Infantry's sector and placed it under the supervision of Colonel Stephens. The battalion arrived south of Hill 409 at 0430 and spent the morning moving into position for a company-size probe of the North Korean positions. After driving enemy outposts from the low ground south of the hill mass, the battalion prepared to send Company C forward. At 1400, a heavy air strike on Hill 409 triggered numerous secondary explosions. Under cover of this activity, Company C began its advance. Like the units of the 24th Division earlier in the campaign, Company C soon began to lose men from heat exhaustion. When it encountered an enemy force in a village at the foot of Hill 409, the company withdrew to its original position. In late afternoon, it advanced again, supported by several M-4 Sherman tanks from the regimental tank company. This probe also drew heavy enemy machine gun fire. With the day far spent and the North Koreans evincing no disposition to assume the offensive, Colonel Stephens suspended operations against Hill 409 until the following day. He was less than satisfied with the 1st Battalion's performance, especially its inability to coordinate supporting fires from available artillery and mortars.[5]

While his frontline units contained the North Korean assaults, General Church at Kyun'gyo presided over planning sessions for the 24th Division's coming counterattack. By early afternoon, the plan was complete and was published formally as Operations Directive Number One. As of 1400, Task Force Hill was abolished, with its components reverting to direct control of division headquarters. According to the plan, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade would relieve the 34th Infantry on the division's left flank late on 16 August. The 34th then would move northward behind the lines and relieve the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry. In turn, that unit would enter the sector held by the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry. All units would then prepare to advance at 0800 on 17 August in a coordinated counterattack. The advance would be preceded by a thirty-minute artillery and aerial bombardment.[6]

As developed by the division's staff, the plan called for the greatest effort to be made on the flanks of the North Korean penetration. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade's first task was to seize Obong-ni Ridge. Next, the brigade was to seize another hill mass to the southwest, then turn west across the Yongsan-Naktong road and assault a third hill mass in the center of the Bulge. The elimination of approximately half of the enemy salient was thus entrusted to the Marines. Their left flank, meanwhile, would be protected by the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, from its positions southwest of Yongsan. At the other end of the line, the 19th Infantry's mission was similar to that of the Marine brigade. It, too, was assigned three objectives. First was Ohang Hill, followed by two ridges deep within the North Korean lines. These last two objectives were to be seized in conjunction with the 34th Infantry. That unit would assist the 19th Infantry by fire during the attack on Ohang Hill, then join the advance toward the ridges that were Objectives 2 and 3. The final participant in the attack, the 9th Infantry, was assigned only one objective, the ridge west of the

village of Tugok. Once that objective was gained, the 9th Infantry would stand in place. If the situation permitted, it would then be withdrawn to become part of Eighth Army's reserve (see map 17).[7]

Obviously, the 24th Division's counterattack plan depended heavily upon the influx of relatively fresh reinforcements represented by the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. This unit, commanded by Brig. Gen. Edward Craig, was unlike any of the 24th Division's components in that it was a balanced ground-air team. The ground element of the brigade consisted of the 5th Marine Regiment (three battalions of infantry), augmented by an antitank company and an artillery battalion. The air element consisted of two squadrons of fighter-bombers (forty-eight aircraft), one squadron of night fighters (twelve aircraft), and an observation squadron (eight aircraft and four helicopters). Originally numbering over 6,300 officers and men, the Marine brigade had already seen action in the southern part of the Pusan Perimeter with the 25th Division. There, it had been heavily involved in the counterattack conducted by Task Force Kean beginning on 6 August. The brigade had left that operation on 13 August and had been in Eighth Army reserve since that time. Like the Army, the Marines had gone to war only half prepared. Each of the 5th Infantry's battalions contained only two rifle companies, and the entire brigade lacked much of its organic transportation. The tank company was armed with the modern M-26 Pershing tank, but the only experience the crews had with that weapon had been gained in the operation just concluded.[8]

On 16 August, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was located in an assembly area at Miryang, having moved from the south by road and rail. During the day, officers from the 5th Marine Regiment went forward to reconnoiter the positions of the 34th Infantry and Company F, 9th Infantry. Lying on the south side of the Yongsan-Naktong road, these positions were crucial to holding the route back to Yongsan. During the planning conference at Kyun'gyo, General Church emphasized this fact to General Craig, who incorporated it into his own plan for the following day. While meeting with Church, Craig also requested the loan of 144 trucks to transport his infantry from Miryang to the vicinity of Yongsan. This movement was scheduled to begin at 1600. Meanwhile, the air support section of the Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron met with the air section of the 24th Division to devise a plan for controlling air support for the coming counterattack. Since organic Marine air assets heavily outnumbered those released to the 24th Division by Eighth Army, it was agreed that the Marines would control all aircraft in the sector.[9]

According to General Craig's plan, the three infantry battalions of the 5th Marine Regiment were scheduled to depart Miryang by truck at 1600 on 16 August. When the 539th Truck Company arrived three hours late, however, it consisted of only 43 trucks, instead of the 144 requested by the Marines. By scavenging vehicles from various support elements, the 24th Division provided an additional 29 trucks, but the total was still insufficient to move the brigade on schedule in one lift. An improvised shuttle system was placed in operation after nightfall, but this had transported only two

Brig. Gen. Edward Craig, U.S. Marine Corps, and Maj. Gen. John H. Church, U.S. Army, in conference

battalions to Yongsan by midnight. The delay in moving the Marines forward meant that their relief of the 34th Infantry would also be delayed. In turn, the 34th would be delayed in relieving the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry. The counterattack had not even begun, and already the plan was beginning to unravel.[10]

Not long after midnight on the night of 16—17 August, Lt. Col. Robert Taplett's 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, began to arrive in the vicinity of the positions held by the 34th Infantry. Company G relieved the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, on high ground about a mile south of the Yongsan-Naktong road, while Company H relieved the 34th's 1st Battalion from its ridgetop location behind the 9th Infantry. General Church had specifically instructed General Craig to occupy these positions in order to protect the road to Yongsan. An additional reason, in Craig's mind, for holding this ground was his belief that the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, was too far away to safeguard the left flank of the Marine brigade. Thus, Craig elected to use one-third of his striking force to protect his flank and rear. At 0400, Taplett's battalion was in position, and the two battalions of the 34th Infantry moved to the rear. By now, they were several hours behind schedule, and H-hour was only four hours away.[11]

Following Taplett's men was Lt. Col. Harold Roise's 2d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. Although scheduled to be the leading assault elements, Roise's troops had to walk most of the way from Yongsan because of the shortage of trucks. Weary from their night march, they were nevertheless able to reach their start positions and relieve Company F, 9th Infantry, which moved northward across the road and prepared to lead its parent 2d Battalion in the 9th's attack. As for Lt. Col. George Newton's 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, it was still in Miryang awaiting transportation. Its trucks did not arrive until 0615, and it did not reach the front until midmorning.[12]

The first objective assigned to Col. Raymond Murray's 5th Marine Regiment was Obong-ni Ridge. Gradually curving southeast from the Yongsan-Naktong road for a mile, the ridge had at least six identifiable knobs. From north to south, these were Hills 102, 109, 117, 143, 147, and 153. The ridge had long been used by the North Koreans to cover their movements to the southeast, and aerial observers had noticed North Koreans entrenching on the ridge as early as 13 August. Some of this information was available to Marine planners, but apparently little or none of it reached battalion level. Colonel Murray, in fact, believed that Obong-ni was not the enemy's main defensive position, a distinction he reserved for Hill 207, the Marine brigade's second objective. Thus, he considered Obong-ni to be the optimum line of departure for what he thought would be the much harder fight for Hill 207 (see maps 17 and 18).[13]

During his reconnaissance of the North Korean positions on the previous day, Colonel Murray had noted that the objective assigned to the 9th Infantry north of the road lay farther west than Obong-ni Ridge. Colonel Hill's regiment was scheduled to move forward at the same time as the Marines and seize the high ground west of the village of Tugok. Tugok itself lay in a depression directly north of the tip of Obong-ni. Believing that Obong-ni was lightly defended, Murray reasoned that the advance would proceed more smoothly if the Marines seized the ridge before Hill's 9th Infantry began its attack. Although Hill claimed that his troops were in good shape and "hot to go," Murray held a different opinion from his personal observation of the 9th Infantry, and this may have influenced his subsequent actions. In a meeting with Hill, Murray suggested that the Marines make their assault first, and Hill accepted the idea. The original plan, which had called for a simultaneous advance, was thus modified by the two regimental commanders. General Craig was not informed of the change, but apparently General Church was notified. Deferring to his field commanders, Church reluctantly gave his approval.[14]

Having been permitted to fight the battle his own way, Murray made his attack plan. Since Obong-ni's southern end was the highest part of the ridge and the terrain south of it was extremely rough, Murray elected to make a frontal assault on Obong-ni's northern half. The attack would be made in column of battalions, with the 2d Battalion in the lead, the 1st Battalion in the second line when it arrived, and the 3d Battalion guarding the left and rear. A platoon of four tanks from Company A, 1st Tank Battalion, would provide fire support with their 90-mm main guns. Also in support were the mortars of the 2d Battalion's Weapons Company and the three batteries of 105-mm howitzers belonging to the 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment. The artillery had been in place since late on the previous day and had already fired a few rounds for registration purposes. Air strikes were to be available as needed. By 0730, everything was in place except for the 1st Battalion, which was still en route from Miryang.[15]

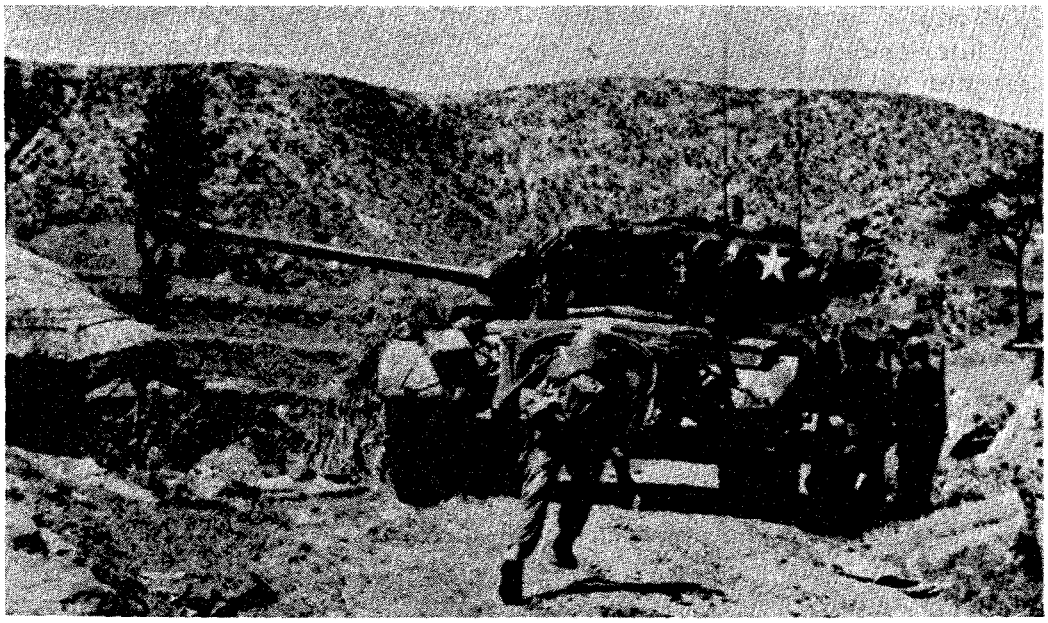
At 0730, a short artillery preparation began on schedule. It ended at 0735, so that aircraft could strike Obong-ni. Five minutes later, eighteen Marine F4U Corsairs appeared and blasted the target with napalm and

1,000-pound bombs. From a distance, the effect appeared to be devastating, but later events would prove that the North Korean defenders, deeply entrenched on the reverse slope, had not been badly hurt. Once the planes had finished their runs, the artillery was scheduled to fire a ten-minute bombardment. It did so, but either through poor registration or mistakes by the forward observers, few rounds, if any, fell on Obong-ni. Thus, the North Koreans gained an opportunity to recover before the 2d Battalion crossed the line of departure at 0800.[16]

Roise's battalion moved to the attack with Company D on the right and Company E on the left. Company E headed first for Obong-ni village, nestled at the foot of the ridge below the knobs numbered 117 and 143. Delayed by enemy outposts in the village, it fell behind Company D. That unit crossed the Yongsan-Naktong road and began to ascend the slopes leading to knobs 102 and 109. Company D advanced initially with two platoons in line, while a third remained in reserve at the line of departure. At first, the platoons encountered little difficulty, but as they moved higher up the slope, they were assailed by fire from above and on both flanks. The flanking fire from the left dissipated somewhat when Company E began its own climb up the ridge, but the fire from the right flank raked the Marines mercilessly. Most of it came from the village of Tugok, which remained in North Korean hands because of the preassault agreement between Murray and Hill. Even after the reserve platoon was committed, Company D was unable to gain a secure foothold on the top of Obong-ni, although some of its men reached the crest several times. Farther south, Company E experienced similar difficulties and stalled two-thirds of the way up the ridge (see map 18).[17]

The situation called for supporting arms to aid in breaking the impasse, but all efforts to employ them failed. Company E lost touch with its mortars and Company D's mortars were unable to drive the North Korean machine gunners from Tugok. Similarly, the Marine artillery proved unable to assist the infantrymen. The forward observer with Company E was unable to make contact with his assigned artillery battery. Company D's forward observer requested a fire mission on Tugok, and it was begun. Someone quickly noticed, however, that the target lay in the sector of the 9th Infantry, and the mission was aborted before it could do any good. Through either a procedural or communications lapse, the 24th Division's artillery did not pick up the mission and remained silent. Only the platoon of tanks added their fire to that of the 2d Battalion, and they were forced to concentrate on enemy antitank gunners on Obong-ni. The four tanks were hit by a total of twenty-three rounds of antitank rifle fire, but none penetrated their armor. Although the tanks materially aided the infantry in suppressing the fire from Obong-ni, they were unable to strike the North Koreans in Tugok because of intervening hills. None of the aircraft circling overhead hit Tugok either, being directed instead to targets both south and west of Obong-ni.[18]

By late morning, it was clear that the 2d Battalion could go no farther without assistance. Both companies pulled back slightly, so that an air



M-26 tank preparing to fire in support of the Marine attack on Obong-ni Ridge

strike could hit the North Koreans on the crest of Obong-ni. The strike was ineffective. Only two napalm bombs were dropped: one landed on another ridge, and the second failed to ignite. Companies D and E then resumed their efforts to seize the crest of the ridge, but success still eluded them. By noon, the battalion had lost 23 killed and 119 wounded, including 5 officers. Several platoons had been reduced to no more than 15 men each. These heavy losses only intensified General Craig's concern about the lack of progress in both his own sector and that of the adjoining 9th Infantry. Upon conferring with Murray, he learned for the first time the cause of the 9th Infantry's inactivity. Concluding that his original analysis of the tactical situation had been in error, Murray attempted to contact Colonel Hill in an effort to get some relief from the vicious flanking fire emanating from Tugok. Maddeningly, now that he wanted the 9th Infantry to advance, communications difficulties kept Murray from reaching Hill immediately. With no other recourse, he decided to commit his 1st Battalion to the attack.[19]

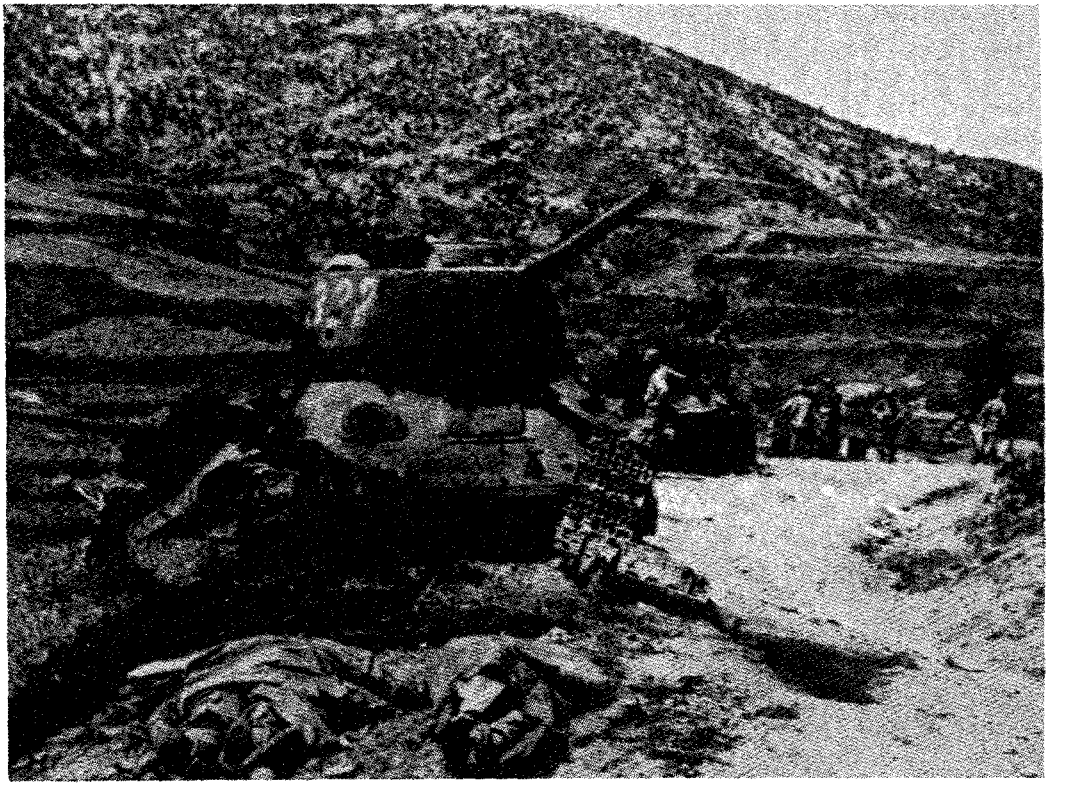
Lieutenant Colonel Newton's 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, had finally arrived from Miryang by midmorning. At 1245, Colonel Murray ordered Newton to pass through the battered 2d Battalion's positions and continue the assault. Newton received Murray's order at 1330 and quickly moved his men forward. Establishing his CP with that of Roise, at 1500 he sent Companies A and B across the valley and up the ridge. While the mortars and machine guns of Weapons Company provided covering fire in concert with the tanks on the road, the two companies of the 1st Battalion climbed the steep slopes. Soon they passed through the depleted ranks of the 2d Battalion and continued toward the knobs that comprised the crest

of Obong-ni. Finally, at 1710, the 1st Platoon of Company B gained Hill 102. Not long thereafter, the 1st Platoon of Company A stormed onto Hill 117, two knobs to the south. Unable to push along the ridge southward toward Hill 143 because of heavy North Korean fire, the platoon soon was forced to withdraw from the top of 117 itself. Efforts by Company A's 2d Platoon to gain Hill 143 were also unsuccessful. Company B, however, was able to secure Hill 109 to the north. Thus, by nightfall, the Marines held the two northernmost knobs of Obong-ni, Hills 102 and 109. From there, the Marine lines ran down the slope of Hill 117 toward the original line of departure (see map 18).[20]

North of the road, Colonel Hill's 9th Infantry finally launched its own attack around 1300. Led by Companies F and G, the 2d Battalion slowly worked its way toward Tugok. In a fight that lasted all afternoon, the battalion gradually cleared the village and assaulted the ridge beyond. Several attacks were thrown back, but just before nightfall, the two companies gained the ridge crest and were not pushed off again. Like the Marines, they dug in for the night on the ground gained, while Company E occupied a reserve position at the original line of departure. To the north, the 1st Battalion remained in the positions it had held for several days. With its single objective secured, the 9th Infantry had concluded successfully its part of the operation. Although some facts remain obscure, available evidence suggests that if the regiment had made its assault in conjunction with the attack of the Marines, both units could have achieved their objectives more rapidly and at a lower cost.[21]

Around 2000, while both the Marines and the 2d Battalion, 9th Infantry, were preparing defensive positions for the night, the North Koreans mounted a counterattack straight down the road that curved around the north end of Obong-ni. Three T-34 tanks led the attack, followed by a fourth some distance behind with infantry support. From their position high on Obong-ni, Marines of Company B saw them coming and sounded the alarm. As the leading tanks clanked slowly down the road, Marines from the regimental antitank company hastily prepared an ambush by positioning 3.5-inch rocket launchers and 75-mm recoilless rifles around a curve in the road. The Marine tank platoon, which had gone to the rear to rearm and refuel, was also called back to the front. The Pershings were momentarily delayed by several trucks that had been abandoned in the road by their drivers, but the tankers drove the trucks aside and continued forward. They arrived just as the first T-34 rounded the curve in the road.[22]

As the leading North Korean tank passed through the ambush zone, it was hit first by a 3.5-inch rocket but continued to advance. Several 75-mm projectiles from the recoilless rifles brought it to a halt, just as the leading Marine tank appeared and fired at a range of 100 yards. The T-34 burst into flames. Behind it, the second North Korean tank also took hits from the rocket launchers and recoilless rifles, one of which broke a track. The tank slewed off the road to the right and went into a ditch. Like the first T-34, it continued to fire its gun even though it was immobilized. A second M-26 Pershing now joined the first. Aligned hub to hub in the narrow road,



Three North Korean T-34 tanks destroyed in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge. The northern tip of Obong-ni Ridge is in the background.

assembly area about 500 yards behind the 3d Battalion, and both units prepared to participate in the counterattack. The plan called for the 34th Infantry to support by fire the assault of the 19th Infantry on Ohang Hill, then to proceed on its own to Objectives 2 and 3. Thus, until the 19th Infantry jumped off, the 34th remained inactive.[24]

Colonel Moore of the 19th Infantry anticipated that his 1st Battalion could reach its line of departure in a relatively short time, but this proved not to be the case. Taking a roundabout route through the tangle of hills behind the front lines, the exhausted men of the 1st Battalion fell further and further behind schedule. Their progress was marked by a succession of messages announcing postponement of the time for assault. The 1st Battalion did not arrive at its assembly area behind the 2d Battalion's position until 1330, and only then did preparations for the assault begin. While waiting, the 2d Battalion conducted patrols toward the North Korean positions on Ohang Hill. These patrols found the enemy still present in force. Finally, the 1st Battalion's assault was scheduled for 1700. Several attempts were made to arrange an air strike on Ohang Hill just before the attack, but no aircraft were available at that hour. Fire support was provided by several artillery batteries, the regimental Heavy Mortar Company, and the 1st Battalion's own Weapons Company. Precisely at 1700, the battalion crossed the line of departure, with Company B on the right, Company C on the left, and Company A in reserve (see map 19).[25]

While the heavy machine guns of Weapons Company played back and forth across the crest of Ohang Hill, Company B's 117 officers and men left the safety of their own positions, crossed the intervening valley, and began to climb the slopes of their objective. The 1st Platoon was on the left, with the 2d Platoon on its right, while the 3d Platoon trailed the 2d as company reserve. When the platoons climbed high enough to mask their own supporting weapons, the North Koreans opened a withering fire upon the struggling infantrymen. The 1st Platoon was immediately pinned down, and the 2d Platoon was halted as well. Rather than allow the attack to stall, a sergeant from the 2d Platoon charged forward alone and knocked out an enemy machine gun position on the crest. He then called his squad to the top of the hill. Even though the rest of the platoon maneuvered to the right, it remained pinned down and was unable to join the handful of men on the crest. When the 3d Platoon moved up between the other two, it also was halted by the wall of fire. Again, one man took action to break the impasse. The company commander ordered the 3d Platoon to pull back, maneuver to the left, and reinforce the 1st Platoon's push. Energized by this assistance, the 1st Platoon finally forced its way to the crest. After driving back an enemy counterattack, the 1st and 3d Platoons wiped out the North Korean machine gunners holding up the 2d Platoon, and that platoon joined them on the crest.[26]

On the southern end of Ohang Hill, Company C, 144 strong, experienced similar difficulties in gaining the top of the ridge. Forced to keep their heads down because of the covering fire, the North Koreans leaped into action once the machine guns of Weapons Company were masked by their

own infantry. The 1st Platoon on the left and part of the 3d Platoon on the right were pinned down by the galling automatic weapons fire and the showers of hand grenades that rained down upon them. The part of the 3d Platoon that was not under direct fire moved laterally to the right, and two of its men crawled to the crest. Finding only a lone machine gun crew nearby, they destroyed it. The diminution of enemy fire allowed the rest of the company to gain the top of the hill. Unwilling to surrender the high ground without further struggle, the North Koreans counterattacked with twenty men. They were easily repulsed. As night fell, Company C tied in with Company B on the right and the sixty-five men of Company A, which had come up on their left. After enduring an hour-long barrage of shells from North Korean 120-mm mortars, they settled in for the night on their newly won ground. Even then, the North Koreans were not finished and counterattacked after dark with 100 men. When this assault, too, was thrown back, quiet finally descended on Ohang Hill.[27]

While most of the day's fighting occurred in the Naktong Bulge, other elements of the 24th Division encountered the enemy as well. Both the 21st Infantry and the 3d Engineer (C) Battalion engaged North Korean patrols with fire before dawn. Several units reported small enemy groups roaming throughout the division's rear, one of which attacked a medical detachment of the 21st Infantry. This group of infiltrators was driven into the hills by the regimental I and R Platoon and South Korean police but was not destroyed. Around Hill 409, the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, continued to probe the positions held by the North Korean 29th Regiment. Supported by air strikes and artillery fire, Company A cautiously explored the eastern approaches to the towering hill mass. The enemy responded vigorously with small arms, machine guns, and light mortars but employed no heavier weapons. A prisoner captured in the area reported that his unit suffered from a lack of ammunition, thus providing a possible explanation for the strange behavior of the North Korean regiment on Hill 409.[28]

The results of the day's counterattack, while less favorable than expected, nevertheless were gratifying to General Church. The initial objectives of the Marines, the 9th Infantry, and the 19th Infantry had all been achieved, with gains of approximately 1,000 yards in each sector (see map 20). Marine casualties had been heavy, the 2d Battalion alone losing 142 men. In contrast, the 9th Infantry lost 73 men, while the 19th Infantry suffered only 10 casualties.[29] As had so often been the case, the coordinated movements so carefully written into the plan had not been achieved. Instead, the attack had occurred in sequential order across the front of the Bulge. There had also been communications problems, since the heavy Marine tanks had inadvertently cut the wires leading back to the division headquarters at Kyun'gyo during their move to the front. This problem had not proved insurmountable, however, since an advance division command post had been established earlier at Yongsan. Other difficulties had been discovered in the air strike control arrangements, and several ground units had been mistakenly attacked by friendly aircraft. Fortunately, no serious damage had been done. Given the fact that ground units from two Army

divisions and a Marine brigade were supported by both Air Force and Marine strike aircraft in the same zone of operations, the degree of coordination actually achieved could be considered satisfactory, if not remarkable. Although the disparate elements of his team were not yet working in complete harmony, Church believed the North Korean 4th Division had finally lost the initiative. Accordingly, he ordered that the counterattack be resumed at first light on 18 August.[30]

Unwilling to surrender the initiative totally to their opponents, the North Koreans mounted a series of limited counterattacks during the hours of darkness. These attacks centered on the ground gained earlier by the Americans on both sides of the Yongsan-Naktong road. At 0335, Company F, 9th Infantry, repulsed an enemy thrust against its positions on the hill west of Tugok, but only after withdrawing about 100 yards. South of the road, on Obong-ni Ridge, another enemy counterattack rolled down from Hill 117 and split Company A of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. Because of the circumstances of the previous day's battle, this company's defensive position was badly sited on the lower slopes of Hill 117 and in the saddle between it and the next knob to the north. When the North Koreans charged down the hill behind a curtain of bullets and grenades, they crashed through the center of the company and drove the company commander from his CP. The left and right platoons clung to their positions, but the shattered remnants of the center platoon were driven to the bottom of the ridge. Just when the Marines' situation appeared most hopeless, the enemy assault faltered and then receded. No attempt had been made to exploit Company A's open left flank or even to destroy its isolated left platoon. This unusual behavior led some observers to conclude that the North Korean attack was not a serious offensive movement but was only a ploy intended to cover a withdrawal.[31]

With the coming of dawn, Company A reorganized itself and began a new assault on Hill 117. This time, supporting fires were better coordinated than those of the previous day. Mortars and machine guns from the 1st Battalion's Weapons Company raked the crest, while Company B added its fire from Hill 109 to the north. When the North Korean resistance did not slacken, the commander of Company A called for an air strike. A lone Marine Corsair roared in and dropped a 500-pound bomb within seventy-five yards of the forward positions of the Marines. The tremendous blast destroyed several North Korean machine guns and crews, but the concussion unfortunately also killed a Marine. Limited as it was, this strike suppressed enemy resistance on Hill 117. When Company A resumed its assault, it easily gained the crest. The next knob to the south, Hill 143, now became the focal point of the North Korean defense. Under the combined blows of the 81-mm and 4.2-inch mortar sections and supplemented by another air strike, the North Korean defenses were smashed, and this peak also fell to Company A. Hills 147 and 153 to the south next received similar treatment from the Marines' supporting arms. By 0900, Company A was securely in possession of Hills 117 and 143, with the North Korean defenders in full view retreating across the valley to the hills beyond. As

the morning progressed, Company A continued to advance southward on Obong-ni Ridge, mopping up small pockets of enemy resistance. Left behind on the ridge were 43 machine guns, 63 rifles and submachine guns, 8 antitank rifles, and 150 North Korean dead. When their own losses were tallied, Companies A and B of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, numbered only 216 officers and men (see map 21).[32]

Once it was clear that Obong-ni was securely in Marine hands, Colonel Murray ordered his 3d Battalion to move forward from its reserve position and to prepare to assault Marine Objective 2, Hill 207. At 0945, Lieutenant Colonel Taplett passed his troops through the 1st Battalion and began the attack. Supported by a platoon of Marine tanks, Company H crossed the valley and started the climb to the crest. Initially following behind H, Company G soon swerved to the right and came into line beside it. Ahead of the two companies, the objective erupted in fire and smoke from the pounding of hundreds of artillery, mortar, and tank rounds. Overhead, Marine tactical air coordinators directed Corsairs against both Hill 207 and the surrounding area. When forty North Koreans attempted to outflank the companies toiling up the slope, the Marine Pershings opened fire on them from a distance of 300 yards and shattered the counterattack. Under cover of this pounding attack, the Marine infantry made rapid progress. Company H gained the summit of Hill 207 by 1130, and Company G joined it an hour later.[33]

Driven from the high ground, North Korean soldiers in large numbers fled toward the rear. As they crossed the valley containing the Yongsan-Naktong road, they made perfect targets for the Marine tanks. The Pershings fired continuously for several hours with their main guns, .50-caliber machine guns, and .30-caliber machine guns. Some North Koreans ran down the road toward the Naktong, while others climbed Hill 311 in hopes of making a stand. Many were so panic stricken that they threw away their weapons and equipment in their mad dash to safety. They were spurred on not only by the tanks but also by artillery fire and air strikes mercilessly called down upon them by both aerial and ground observers. The North Koreans, who had fought so tenaciously as late as the previous day, now seemed to have lost all cohesion and most of their will to resist.[34]

While the Marines were wresting Obong-ni Ridge and Hill 207 from the North Koreans, the units of the 24th Division made similar progress north of the Yongsan-Naktong road. The two battalions of the 9th Infantry immediately north of the Marines had no assigned objective on 18 August, since they were due to be "pinched out" by the units advancing on both flanks. Nevertheless, they supported adjacent units with fire. North of the 9th, the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments intended to make a coordinated attack on Hill 240, but like so many of the 24th Division's previous attacks, this one, too, went awry. Beauchamp's 34th Infantry moved forward on schedule, but Moore's 19th Infantry, on the right, did not immediately join it. By now located several thousand yards from the nearest road, the 1st Battalion of the 19th had great difficulty in transporting a fresh stock of ammunition forward to its assault companies on Ohang Hill. This back-

breaking but essential task was not completed until some time after daylight, and the 19th's attack was delayed accordingly.[35]

At 0630, Companies K and L of the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, crossed the line of departure and headed downhill into the valley separating them from their objective, the left end of a high ridge running northwest 2,500 yards toward the Naktong. The immediate goal of the 3d Battalion was Hill 240, the highest point on the ridge, while the 19th Infantry had responsibility for the rest of the ridge and a nearby peak, Hill 223. With Company K on the left and Company L on the right, the 3d Battalion initially made good progress against moderate to light resistance. The battalion's third company, I, was not available for support, since it remained detached, guarding the Naktong shore north of the 19th Infantry. Support initially seemed unnecessary, since both assault companies reached their assigned sectors of the ridge crest without difficulty around 0800. Suddenly, however, Company L was struck by a heavy counterattack on its front and open right flank. Hit from an unexpected direction (the sector that should have been covered by the tardy 19th Infantry), Company L was thrown back down the ridge several hundred yards. The unit sustained more than twenty casualties in only a few minutes. At 0920, Colonel Beauchamp was told: "L company is cut up bad—do not think they will be able to do anything. . . . They are picking L Co. off like flies."[36]

Company K made an effort to relieve the pressure on Company L, but the primary assistance could only come from the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry. This unit finally began its own assault just as Company L withdrew from Hill 240. Moving slowly down from Ohang Hill and across the valley, Companies A and C initially suffered little from the North Korean fire, which continued to beat upon the hapless Company L. Covered by the base of fire provided by Company B from Ohang Hill, the 1st Battalion's assault companies began to struggle up the steep slope of Hill 240. By 1000 hours, they were one-third of the way to the top and nearly abreast of Company L, which was now being pounded by mortar fire. Continuing their climb, the sixty-one men of Company A scrambled to the top of the ridge with little opposition. Nearer the river, Company C encountered stiffer resistance, as heavy automatic weapons fire briefly halted the two leading platoons. A sergeant who charged forward with a .30-caliber machine gun finally broke the deadlock, and Company C surged to the top of the hill. By 1145, the 1st Battalion's two assault companies securely held their portion of the ridge. To their left, the badly mauled Company L, 34th Infantry, rejoined Company K on Hill 240. By noon, Objective 2 was in American hands, and troops on Hill 240 could see masses of North Korean soldiers fleeing toward the river. Just as in the Marines' sector, both artillery fire and air strikes took a heavy toll as the North Koreans withdrew (see map 21).[37]

During the afternoon, General Church's leading elements paused to regroup, resupply, and pass fresh units to the front before resuming the drive to completely erase the North Korean bridgehead east of the Naktong. South of the Yongsan-Naktong road the 2d and 3d Battalions, 5th Marines, continued to mop up scattered resistance on Hill 207, while Marine tanks

Marines on top of Hill 311, with the valley of the Naktong in the distance

pounded their final objective, Hill 311, north of the road. In the 34th Infantry's zone, Colonel Beauchamp positioned his 1st Battalion to assault the regiment's Objective 3, a series of slightly lower crests west of Hill 240. Similarly, Colonel Moore's 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, began to displace forward to serve as the 19th's spearhead in the afternoon advance. Moore also requested an airdrop of rations, water, and ammunition for the troops of the 1st Battalion. Sadly, the number of individual rations required was only 300.[38]

Shortly after 1500, the American advance toward the banks of the Naktong resumed. Each unit now moved independently of its neighbors. Previously, such a lack of coordination had caused difficulties, but by now the North Korean 4th Division had become so fragmented that no main line of resistance could be identified. Once again, the Marines were first to jump off. Companies G and H of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, crossed the Yongsan-Naktong road at 1535 and slowly began to work their way up the lower slopes of the towering Hill 311. As the infantry inched forward, massive supporting fires devastated the crest far above them. Unlike the previous day's experience at Obong-ni Ridge, the Marines were now able to orchestrate a coordinated bombardment by mortars, recoilless rifles, tanks, artillery, and aircraft. Assisted by this awesome display of firepower, Company G gained the left half of Hill 311 at 1725 and easily secured its sector fifteen minutes later. On its right, Company H had a more difficult time. At 1825, the company was pinned down by automatic weapons fire from

an estimated twenty North Koreans on the eastern end of the hill. All efforts to eliminate this pocket by nightfall were unsuccessful. Rather than blunder about in the darkness, the Marines resolved to wait until the following morning to conclude their mopping-up operations.[39]

Fifteen hundred yards north of Hill 311, the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments began their assaults on their own final objectives some time after the Marines. Late in the afternoon, Companies A and B of the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, passed through the positions of the 3d Battalion on Hill 240 on their way to Objective 3. Company C, now numbering only thirty-seven men, remained behind. The assault companies arrived at the objective by 1840 but then encountered several pockets of stubborn enemy resistance that prevented them from securing the position until after dark. North of them, the 19th Infantry was again late in crossing its line of departure. The 2d Battalion did not even begin its advance until Beauchamp's men were already on top of their half of the objective. By the time the 2d Battalion reached Objective 3, it had been dark for over an hour (see map 21).[40]

By the end of 18 August, most of the North Korean bridgehead had been eliminated. Everywhere, the enemy was in frantic retreat. The hills were littered with discarded weapons and equipment. Before darkness, both aerial and ground observers reported hundreds of North Korean soldiers gathering at various points along the river bank in hopes of getting across to safety. Artillery fire and air strikes were directed upon them until darkness put an end to the slaughter. According to the division's war diary, 18 August was "by far the most successful day of combat for the 24th Division in the Korean War." Only in the division's northern sector was there any cause for concern. There, the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, had continued its series of probes against the North Korean regiment on Hill 409. In the process, its Company B had run into heavy opposition and had suffered sixteen casualties. Yet even there, the enemy displayed no inclination to act offensively.[41]

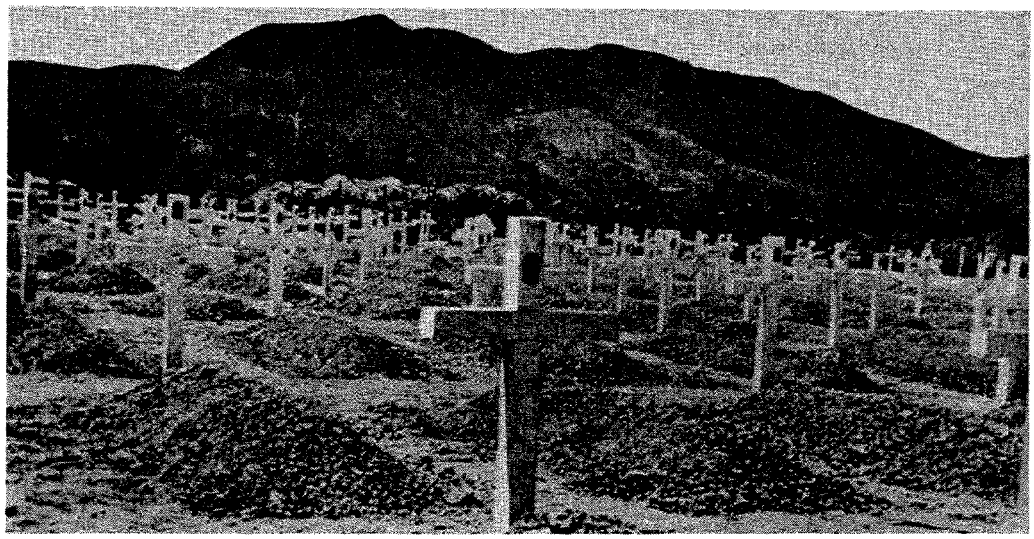
During the night, while artillery interdicted known crossing points, the 24th Division staff planned a series of movements designed to complete the reconquest of the Naktong Bulge on the following day. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was ordered to secure Hill 311, patrol to the river, then assemble behind the Bulge as division reserve. After the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments consolidated their own final objectives, they, too, were to advance to the Naktong and prepare to defend their assigned zones. The 9th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, meanwhile would sweep through the rough terrain south of the Marine sector and secure the lower part of the Bulge from Namji-ri to the tip of the salient. North of the Bulge, the 21st Infantry, the 3d Engineer (C) Battalion, and the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, were all to hold their original defensive positions while closely watching the North Korean regiment on Hill 409. The 24th Recon Company would continue to provide security for the division's rear areas.[42]

At 0617 on 19 August, the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, launched the 24th Division's final assault on the North Korean 4th Division's shrinking posi-

tion east of the Naktong River. Within an hour, the Marines had secured the remainder of Hill 311, which overlooked the river. At 0845, Marine patrols made contact with elements of the 34th Infantry on their right. Throughout the morning, both Marine and Army patrols combed the foothills leading down to the Naktong. Everywhere they found evidence of the enemy's hasty flight to safety. Small arms, equipment, and even documents were scattered over the hills and gullies. On a little knoll just off the Yongsan-Naktong road near the river, the Marines found a large artillery park. They tallied nine undamaged crew-served weapons in the immediate area, including 76-mm guns, U.S. 105-mm howitzers, and Soviet 122-mm howitzers. These and other artillery pieces found elsewhere in the Bulge were gathered in an assembly area near Yongsan. Three of the guns were American howitzers captured earlier in the war or in the initial North Korean assault on 6 August. As for small arms, three truckloads were collected from the battlefield in the Marines' sector alone.[43]

By late afternoon, the mopping-up process was virtually finished. In the northern sector of the Bulge, both the 34th and 19th Infantry regiments completed their sweeps through the hills to the river bank, as did the Marines at the center of the salient. To the south, the troops of the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry, and 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, tramped through similar terrain, gathering North Korean stragglers and collecting discarded weapons and equipment. With their task done, the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 5th Marines, at 1600, boarded trucks that carried them to an assembly area near Yongsan. Around sunset, the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, was relieved by elements of the 19th Infantry and moved to join the rest of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. The 19th Infantry occupied the southern half of the Bulge, while the 34th Infantry established defensive positions in the northern half. The 9th Infantry assembled in the afternoon near Yongsan as division reserve (see map 22).[44]

On 20 August, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade departed Yongsan en route to an Eighth Army reserve position at the southern end of the Pusan Perimeter. Two units of the 2d Division—the 9th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry—remained with the 24th Division. During the day, an operational directive from Eighth Army announced that the 24th Division would be relieved by the 2d Division on the Naktong line as soon as the remainder of the 2d Division arrived at the front. Planning for the change began immediately. On 22 August, the 38th Infantry of the 2d Division arrived and relieved the 21st Infantry and the 3d Engineer (C) Battalion. During the next two days, the 9th Infantry of the 2d Division occupied the defensive positions of both the 19th and 34th Infantry regiments. The opposing North Korean forces remained inactive during the changeover, although they retained their bridgehead in the vicinity of Hill 409. On 24 August, most elements of the 24th Division left the sector they had defended since early August and began their move northward to a reserve position near Kyongsan. There, on the next day, after fifty-five days of combat, the division began a much needed period of rest, refit, and rehabilitation.[45]



The 24th Division cemetery, Pusan Perimeter

Although the 24th Division had departed the Naktong Bulge forever, it left behind at least one tangible reminder of its victory and the cost associated with it. At the Miryang Experimental Farm, in the rear of the division's old sector, a cemetery had been established as a temporary resting place for American casualties of the fight. By 23 August, the cemetery contained 365 interments. On that date, a formal dedication ceremony was held, with a flag raising, rifle volleys, and taps played by a 2d Division bugler. Ironically, a photographer from the 24th Signal Company was barred from recording the ceremony because of the division quartermaster's earlier prohibition of photographs of American graves. Afterward, the cemetery, like the battlefield itself, was formally transferred into the keeping of the 2d Division.[46]

The Naktong Bulge remained quiet for only a week after the departure of the 24th Division. On the night of 31 August, a fresh North Korean division crossed into the Bulge and assaulted the positions thinly held by the 9th Infantry. At the same time, elements of two other North Korean divisions forded the Naktong in the northern part of the 2d Division's sector. In the south, the enemy penetrated as far as Yongsan and even gained control of the town briefly before being driven out. To the north, Ch'angnyong was threatened, but the 2d Division managed to retain possession. Once again, General Walker ordered the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade to join the fight in the Naktong Bulge. Entering combat around Yongsan, the Marines advanced almost to Obong-ni Ridge before being withdrawn to prepare for the amphibious landing at Inchon. By itself, the depleted 2d Division proved unable to advance farther. In the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, the 24th Division, with much assistance from other units, had restored its original front and claimed a victory over the North Korean 4th Division. Such would not be the case in the Second Battle of

the Naktong Bulge. There, the 2d Division was able to halt the North Korean attack, but it was unable to regain the river line. This time, the Bulge would not be free of North Korean forces until the final enemy retreat precipitated by the Inchon landing of 15 September 1950. Spearheading the breakout from the Pusan Perimeter that accompanied the landing was the now rejuvenated 24th Division.[47]

Lessons of the Battle

8

The operations of the 24th Infantry Division on the Naktong River in August 1950 represent a case study of light infantry acting on the defensive in mountainous terrain. Although then-current tables of organization and equipment (TOE) called for an infantry division to be heavier than those of the World War II era, circumstances had reduced the division to a light infantry formation. Because of its peacetime organizational structure, the 24th Infantry Division had almost none of the armored components normally organic to an infantry division in 1950. Due to the rigors of its operations prior to 6 August, the division had lost much of its heavy equipment. The number of vehicles of all types, from prime movers to jeeps, was far below the total authorized in the TOE. The division's artillery component was greatly reduced as a result of both the peacetime practice of deleting one firing battery from each battalion and the wartime losses associated with forced retrograde movements. Thus, the 24th Infantry Division's fighting power was concentrated almost exclusively in its infantrymen and the relatively light weapons with which they were armed. Unfortunately, the twin processes of peacetime skeletonization and wartime attrition had taken their toll upon the division's infantry component as well. Thus, the 24th Infantry Division was not only light in equipment but also weak in numbers.[1]

The position assigned to the 24th Infantry Division for defense in early August provided many theoretical advantages. The Naktong River flowed directly in front of the division's defensive trace and, indeed, defined that trace. While the river served as something of a moat and an antitank ditch, it was more a hindrance to the crossing of infantry than an impassable obstacle. Nevertheless, its value to the defense was twofold. First, if the river bank could be held in strength, the attacker's assault problem would be complicated by the water barrier. Second, until a bridge or ferry system could be established, a successful initial assault could not be rapidly exploited because of the difficulty of moving heavy weapons and supplies across the river. Unfortunately for the 24th Division, the Naktong's sinuous twists and turns, especially in the Bulge area, greatly extended the river frontage to be defended. This factor, when coupled with the division's general weakness in combat personnel, served to negate the river line as a defensive advantage during the initial enemy assault.

In theory, the cluster of steep hills stretching eastward from the Naktong shoreline almost to Ch'angnyong and Yongsan gave the defense an additional advantage. Only two roads of consequence penetrated the hills eastward from the river. These provided relatively high-speed access to the division rear, but their small number did not unduly complicate the division's defensive arrangements. Much more important were the large areas of hills, ridges, gullies, and small valleys that characterized the terrain between the river and the lateral road connecting Ch'angnyong and Yongsan. Again, if sufficient numbers of troops had been available, these hills and ridges could have provided a succession of defensive positions to blunt and eventually halt any enemy attack in strength. Defense of such terrain, however, was unit intensive. While lines of sight were good from the hills nearest the river, elsewhere they were abysmal from all but the highest peaks. Back from the river, dead ground abounded. A unit on one hill could not cover territory in any way commensurate with the effective range of its weapons because its lines of sight were blocked by intervening hills and undulations of the ground. Several gullies and ravines penetrated almost every battalion-size defensive sector that could be established.

By the time the 24th Division reached the Pusan Perimeter in early August, Eighth Army's situation had momentarily stabilized. For the first time, the 24th Division's flanks were covered by other American units, although divisional sectors were so large that the presence of neighboring units prevented only the widest enemy enveloping maneuvers. Well aware of his unit's condition, terrain considerations, and his defensive mission, General Church adopted a defensive plan well suited to his situation. With three depleted American regiments and an ROK regiment at his disposal to guard a frontage of thirty-four miles, Church clearly saw that his forces were inadequate for a conventional positional defense along the Naktong shoreline. He therefore decided to outpost the river line lightly, while retaining relatively large reserves for the purpose of counterattacking enemy penetrations. The 34th and 21st Infantry regiments of the 24th Division and the 17th ROK Regiment each received a sector to defend. Since each of the American regiments had only two battalions, they were unable to deploy in the doctrinally approved and experience-tested formation of two battalions forward and one in reserve. Instead, the 34th and 21st Infantry regiments each placed one battalion in frontline positions overlooking the river and a second in the rear as a counterattack force. As a result, frontages of individual companies were enormous, the small number of men in each position being virtually swallowed up by the maze of hills and ravines. As a general reserve, to be used in case of a major enemy penetration, the 19th Infantry was held by Church in a central location near Ch'angnyong.

Church's defensive scheme was not intended to halt a North Korean attack at the water's edge. The wide frontage and the limited number of defenders precluded that option. Instead, any penetration would be dealt with by units in reserve, which would respond swiftly to the enemy thrust. The reserve battalions would blunt any small-scale breakthroughs, and the reserve regiment would repulse anything larger. The key to the 24th Divi-

sion's defensive plan, therefore, was counterattack. Doctrinally, Church's solution to the division's defensive problem was sound, adhering closely to the advice given in the 1949 edition of FM 100—5, *Operations*. In only one provision was the manual violated—the requirement that every effort be made to gain "early information of hostile offensive movements." Prior to 6 August, only one ground patrol of the 24th Division intruded briefly on the enemy's side of the Naktong, and aerial reconnaissance proved utterly inadequate to track an enemy who moved primarily at night and was a master at camouflage. This lapse aside, Church's defensive plan made the best possible use of the means available to accomplish his mission.[2]

On the night of 5—6 August 1950, elements of the North Korean 4th Division penetrated the front of the 24th Division in the sector defended by the 34th Infantry. This event precipitated the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, which from the American perspective consisted of a two-week series of counterattacks mounted to regain the original river line. During the fourteen days of battle, elements of the 24th Division, or units attached to it, attempted no less than sixty-one counterattacks of battalion or company size. Some of these were scheduled but never executed, while others were delivered only halfheartedly. Most failed to achieve the objectives set for them by the planning staffs. Yet, ultimately, the final counterattacks succeeded in crushing the North Korean 4th Division and regaining the 24th Division's original positions. What lessons, if any, can be drawn from the 24th Division's operations in the Naktong Bulge? How relevant are these lessons for today's Army? The answers to these questions can be organized into two categories, the first dealing with counterattack and the second comprising more general observations on the conduct of the division's defensive battle.

In the section entitled "Conduct of the Defense," the 1949 edition of FM 100—5 identified several key principles to be considered during the planning of a counterattack. First, the timing of such an attack was crucial to the success of an operation. If launched too soon, the counterattack might dissipate its force before the enemy's momentum was spent; if launched too late, the counterattack would be too weak to deprive a tenacious enemy of the advantage and terrain he had already gained. A second major consideration was the axis upon which the counterattack should be launched. According to the manual, the defender's response should be directed against the flank of the penetration if at all possible, rather than against the nose. Third, the manual emphasized the need for coordination of all elements committed to the counterattack mission. This coordination could only be achieved by establishing a single command structure with clearly defined authority over all participating components.[3]

A useful method of characterizing counterattacks is by time of delivery. In some armies, a unit driven from a position will attempt to regain the lost ground almost at once, before the enemy can organize the newly won terrain for defense. This type of counterattack is usually conducted by the original defenders without the assistance of significant reinforcements. For want of a better term, it can be classified as a hasty counterattack. The

German Army in World War II was noted for this type of response, and North Korean units often employed it in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge. Examples are the North Korean counterattacks against the Marines on Obong-ni Ridge and against the 19th Infantry during the seizure of Ohang Hill. Units of the 24th Division almost never employed this tactic of hasty counterattack, the sole exception being the successful counterattack of the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, on 16 August.

Most of the 24th Division's counterattacks during the battle occurred many hours after the loss of the original position. Virtually all of these ripostes were based upon prior planning, either prebattle counterattack plans or plans devised after the enemy had made his gains. Such counterattacks can best be characterized as deliberate counterattacks, entailing significant amounts of planning time and elaborate efforts to coordinate both the actions of adjacent units and available supporting fires. Unfortunately, no matter how much planning and preparation time was available prior to H-hour, the 24th Division proved unable to mount a fully coordinated counterblow in which all elements jumped off at the appointed time. The reasons for this state of affairs varied widely: inability to obtain timely resupply, inadequate knowledge of the terrain, shortage of transportation, misreading of the tactical situation, and the debilitated condition of the assaulting units. Time after time, a unit would begin its assault on schedule, while a neighboring unit, which had a crucial role to play, did not. The invariable result was unnecessary casualties.

Besides being characterized as either hasty or deliberate, counterattacks may also vary in scope. Those with narrowly defined objectives, conducted by relatively small units, and lacking wide implications for the larger battle can be defined as local counterattacks. These often correspond to the hasty counterattack described above, although there are exceptions. Such counterattacks were seldom employed by the 24th Division. The operations of the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, early on 6 August provide one example, and those of the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, on 16 August represent another. Counterattacks on a wider front, with larger numbers of participating units and with sector-wide implications, can be styled general counterattacks. During August 1950, this type of response became the normal method of operation for the 24th Division.

As the battle for the Naktong Bulge intensified and more units joined the fight, the task of coordinating the employment of forces available to the 24th Division became increasingly difficult. Gradually, a command and control system evolved to alleviate this problem, but the response could have been more rapid had the advice offered by FM 100—5 been adopted from the beginning. Initially, the enemy penetration was treated as a local problem to be handled by the 34th Infantry. When the regimental reserve proved inadequate to deal with the situation, General Church committed his division reserve, the 19th Infantry. This response, too, failed to erase the North Korean penetration and left the division without any reserve of its own. Fortunately, Eighth Army released a succession of units, beginning with the 9th Infantry, to assist the 24th Division. The three regimental

commanders—Beauchamp, Moore, and Hill—next conducted independently a series of general counterattacks. Their relatively unsuccessful efforts led Church to attempt coordination through the personal presence of the assistant division commander. This, too, failed to achieve the desired result. Finally, Church created Task Force Hill to impose order among the various units attempting to reduce the salient. This improved the planning process but seemed to have little effect upon battle performance, since by that time, most of the task force's components were too battle weary to respond coherently. During the final stage of the battle, the arrival of Brigadier General Craig's 1st Provisional Marine Brigade forced the dissolution of Task Force Hill. All units, thereafter, operated directly under division control, with coordination being arranged through the division operations officer at a forward CP at Yongsan. Air and artillery support for the final counterattacks were also coordinated from Yongsan.

Since the 24th Division's zone encompassed terrain and units some distance from the fighting raging in the Bulge, the division commander in the rear was hardly the man to guide the general counterattacks necessary to evict the North Koreans. The task force concept of a sole counterattack commander, as prescribed in the doctrinal manuals of the day, was sound and should have been implemented as soon as the initial counterattacks of 6 August had failed to regain the river line. Such a concept, however, was not employed for several days, during which time the counterattacking forces suffered significant reductions in their fighting power without commensurate gains of territory. By the time centralized command and control procedures were established, the counterattacking units had suffered heavy losses, and the North Koreans had begun to consolidate their position east of the Naktong.[4]

No matter at what level the counterattacks were controlled, they tended to violate another significant principle emphasized in FM 100—5. According to the manual, counterattacks should generally be directed toward the flanks of a penetration, rather than the nose, in order to seal the break in the defensive line or, at worst, to prevent it from growing wider. Little effort was made by the 24th Division to do this during the battle. The initial counterattack on 6 August, that of Ayres' 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, struck the North Korean drive head-on. It can be argued that this approach was necessary in order to place a blocking force in the path of an advancing enemy to buy time for later attacks on their flanks. Even if this point is conceded, Ayres' methods, involving inadequate security and incomplete knowledge of the enemy's location, temporarily wrecked his battalion and delayed the North Koreans only slightly. The afternoon counterattack by the 19th Infantry adhered to the doctrinal formula more closely and, indeed, established a firm shoulder north of the penetration that remained in place throughout the battle. Elsewhere, there was little effort to maneuver in accordance with doctrine.

Both postwar authors and participants in the conflict have commented upon the predilection of American units in Korea to tailor their maneuvers to the available road net and to avoid the generally trackless regions.[5]

Such a region existed in the Bulge south of the Yongsan-Naktong road. Throughout the battle, North Korean units maneuvered freely through this sector and ultimately used it to introduce units into the vulnerable rear of the 24th Division. In contrast, the few American units that operated in this region either remained passive, like Companies K and L, 34th Infantry, or were too small for the assignment given them, like the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry. Only one attempt was made to sweep around the North Koreans' southern flank through this rough terrain. The two rifle companies of the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, were entirely too small a force to secure such a large area or even seriously to affect enemy operations. As it happened, they did not even make the effort, being overrun in their assembly area by a preemptive North Korean attack. After this abortive attempt to strike the North Korean penetration on its southern flank, no further operations occurred in the southern sector of the Bulge until the final mopping-up phase of the battle.

American operations against the North Korean penetration almost invariably took the form of frontal attacks against the enemy positions on the hills flanking the Yongsan-Naktong road. The major reinforcements received during this phase of the 24th Division's fight—the 9th Infantry and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade—were committed along this road. The battle thus degenerated into a series of vicious fights for hill masses in the center of the Bulge. North of the road, the 9th Infantry struggled to gain control of Maekkok Hill and Hill 165. South of the road, first the 34th Infantry and then the Marines fought similar battles for possession of Obong-ni Ridge. Both of these counterattack series, as well as those of the 19th Infantry around Ohang Hill, were simply frontal assaults. Whenever a new unit arrived to reinforce the 24th Division's general counterattack, it was committed near the Yongsan-Naktong road. No attempt was made to maneuver either the 9th Infantry or the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade around the North Korean southern flank. Instead, the road served both as a magnet and a funnel for American reinforcements. Drawn to the road because of their motorized transport, the American units were funneled along it to a point a mile and one-half beyond the village of Kang-ni, where they invariably established lines of departure north or south of the road and entered the battle. Unhampered by such a road fixation, the more agile North Koreans used the roadless area to the south to good advantage, sending units through it to sever the 24th Division's main supply route. The Americans' lack of imagination in their scheme of maneuver and their failure to employ existing doctrinal concepts cost them heavily in both lives and lost oportunities.

The defensive doctrine found in American manuals current in August 1950 was sound.[6] For a unit forced to defend on a wide front with inadequate numbers, a defensive scheme consisting of lightly held frontline positions backed by large counterattack reserves represented a viable solution to a difficult defensive problem. American counterattack doctrine also was sound, correctly identifying and emphasizing certain key elements necessary for success: good preliminary intelligence, timely commitment of reserves,

flank attacks, and unified command and control. The 24th Division, during the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, regularly violated the first and third of these tenets and for a time neglected the fourth. It ultimately won the battle, but only with the assistance of most of Eighth Army's reserve formations. Rather than a battle of maneuver, the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge became a battle of attrition. In such a fight, the side with the largest reserves has a decided advantage. During the course of the battle, the 24th Division was reinforced at one time or another by six Army infantry battalions and a Marine brigade. In contrast, the North Korean 4th Division received no reinforcements of consequence. Had the 24th Division been more familiar with its own counterattack doctrine and employed it more rigorously, it might have been able to defeat the North Korean thrust without all of the assistance it ultimately required. Certainly, Eighth Army's reserves need not have been depleted so severely and so unnecessarily.

The First Battle of the Naktong Bulge is rich in lessons other than those involving counterattack. The battle exposed several flaws in the operations of the 24th Division's staff. Intelligence estimates of North Korean capabilities and intentions were extremely conservative. Even though sightings of enemy groups moving progressively around the division's left flank and into its rear were included in the intelligence summaries, no glimmer of what this meant is apparent in the estimates. Although notations on the sighting reports indicate they were posted on the daily situation map along with the division's own dispositions, no one seems to have noted the yawning gap on the division's left flank or that the North Koreans were exploiting it. Even an attack by infiltrators on an artillery battery some distance behind the front was disregarded. Only when North Korean units cut the division's MSR was any concern shown, and even then it was reported in the division war diary that the intruders must have passed through an adjacent division's sector. In fact, the North Korean 4th Division was simply following the same pattern of operations it had been using since the war's outbreak.[7] Even had the information of North Korean movement through the gap not been available, the lack of concern for an open flank would hardly have been excusable. With the information in their hands, the G2 and G3 sections were clearly negligent in failing to identify a serious threat to the MSR before the road actually was lost.

A possible explanation for the lapse in the 24th Division staff's understanding of the enemy's operations may be the fact that the division moved its headquarters from Ch'angnyong to Kyun'gyo during the most crucial phase of the North Korean turning movement. Ironically, this movement of headquarters was initiated because of a potential threat to the headquarters at Ch'angnyong from small bands of infiltrators. But instead of making the headquarters more secure, the move actually brought it into the path of a much larger North Korean force. Indicative of the division staff's misreading of the situation, this move disrupted operations of the division headquarters for at least twenty-four hours. In addition, locating the division CP at Kyun'gyo meant that all wire communications ran along the narrow road that served as the MSR. When that road was cut by the North

Koreans, so were all of General Church's ground communications links with forward units. As necessary as the movement of the division headquarters may have been, the time and manner in which it was accomplished materially aided the North Koreans by distracting the division staff and disrupting their routine. Modern division headquarters will have to move far more often than General Church's headquarters. The implications of even a relatively simple relocation such as Church's should be understood by modern planners as they contemplate even more rapid shifts of position.

The fluid conditions that prevailed on the 24th Division's left flank provided opportunities for both offensive and defensive rear area combat operations. Offensively, on two occasions, American units were in the rear or on the flank of North Korean units operating against the 24th Division's main defensive positions. Units of the 34th Infantry were involved both times—Companies A, C, and L on 6—8 August and Companies K and L on 10—13 August. Rather than aggressively attempt to disrupt North Korean resupply and troop movements, these units instead opted for passive defense of their enclaves, hoping thereby to remain inconspicuous until extracted. Self-preservation thus became paramount, taking precedence over inflicting maximum damage and discomfort upon the enemy. In the far more fluid situations envisioned for the modern battlefield, many more units will find themselves in positions similar to that of Captain Alfonso's two and one-half companies on the Naktong. How will they respond—aggressively as the manuals suggest or passively as did the men of the 24th Division?

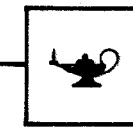
Defensive operations in the rear of the 24th Division centered around protecting the MSR from Yongsan to Kyun'gyo and reopening it after the North Koreans closed the road. Initially, the situation at the front precluded detaching any combat units to deal with the threat to the MSR. This meant that units whose primary missions were noncombat were required to take up arms and defend the road. At the Yongsan end of the road, a company of engineers received the call, while at the Kyun'gyo end a far more heterogeneous organization was created ad hoc for the same purpose. Task Force Hafeman included soldiers from the division's headquarters company, MP company, ordnance maintenance company, and band, among others. Together with the engineers, Task Force Hafeman valiantly did its best to preserve the 24th Division's supply line until reinforcements could arrive. If nothing else, the operations on the MSR demonstrated that all units, no matter how far in the rear or how divorced from normal combat activity, should have a residual combat capability. As the 24th Division discovered in the Naktong Bulge, a combat unit may not always be available for rear area protection. In such situations, the personnel of the rear echelon must fend for themselves, and they should be prepared to do so.

The 24th Division's general performance in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge and its relative lack of success is mitigated somewhat by the circumstances under which it went to war. No doctrine manuals provided guidance on how a tactical system predicated upon three maneuver elements per regiment and battalion could be made to function with only two.[8] Tactical fire support doctrine presupposed three firing batteries per artillery bat-

talion rather than the two per battalion that the 24th Division took to Korea. The manuals were silent on how to deal with an utterly inadequate supply of illuminating shells and mortar rounds. Personnel who had spent their careers in garrison were physically unprepared for hill climbing in the heat of a Korean summer or for the tempo of field operations against a tireless and resourceful enemy. All of these problems had solutions, some of them relatively simple ones, but in peacetime it had not seemed necessary to think about them. The crucible of war would eventually resolve these problems, but until the necessary thinking was done, men in units committed to the fight early, such as the 24th Division, would pay a heavy price for the Army's unpreparedness. Whenever the state of peacetime doctrine, war stocks, and unit conditioning is similar to that of 1950, a similar price will have to be paid.

More than thirty years have passed since the 24th Division stood on the defensive along the Naktong River in Korea. Much has changed since then in terms of both technology and doctrine. Today, sensors detect an enemy's approach more easily than in 1950, and new communications gear is available to call down upon him far greater firepower in a much shorter time. Modern operations are also envisioned as being far more fluid than the relatively simple linear defensive scheme of the Pusan Perimeter, giving less meaning to such terms as "the rear." The current editions of FM 100—5 and supporting manuals give considerably less emphasis to topics like counterattack than do the editions operative in 1950. No longer are the principles of timing, centralized command, and flank attacks so explicitly set forth.[9] Perhaps, today, these principles need not be drummed so heavily into the minds of officers. Perhaps that is indeed the case. The long history of warfare, however, and certainly the experience of the 24th Division in the Naktong Bulge, presents evidence to the contrary.

Notes



Chapter 1

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7. Mahon and Danysh, *Infantry,* 76; James F. Schnabel, *Policy and Direction: The First Year,* U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 1972), 43, 53; Weigley, *History,* 503.

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9. Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, (June—November 1950),* U.S. Army in the Korean War (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1961), 180; Schnabel, *Policy,* 54; Weigley, *History,* 503—4; Mahon and Danysh, *Infantry,* 77.

10. Weigley, *History,* 503; Schnabel, *Policy,* 46, 54—59, 60.

11. John W. Spanier, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II,* 3d rev. ed. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 89—90; Schnabel, *Policy,* 2—36; Appleman, *South,* 1—4.

12. Schnabel, *Policy,* 24—25, 36—39; Appleman, *South,* 5—12.

13. Appleman, *South,* 10—18; Schnabel, *Policy,* 38—40.

14. Appleman, *South,* 19—35, 52—55.

15. Ibid., 59; Schnabel, *Policy*, 41, 61—79.

16. Schnabel, *Policy*, 80n; Appleman, *South*, 50n, 59, 133, 180; William F. Dean, *General Dean's Story* (New York: Viking Press, 1954), 13.

17. Schnabel, *Policy*, 81, 82; Appleman, *South*, 59, 65—99, 122.

18. Appleman, *South*, 123—79. In every instance, North Korean operational concepts and tactics reflected the training the North Koreans had received from their Soviet mentors. For a good discussion of this, see Daniel S. Stelmach, "The Influence of Russian Armored Tactics on the North Korean Invasion of 1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1973), iv—v, 51—52, 122—27, 167—69, 252—54, 274—79.

19. Appleman, *South*, 179—80.

20. Schnabel, *Policy*, 89; T. R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1963), 128.

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24. Appleman, *South*, 205—9.

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2. The contemporary terrain maps are Army Map Service, series L751 (Korea, 1:50,000), type A (AMS 1), 1945, sheets 6820 I (Ch'angnyong) and 6820 II (Namji-ri). More accurate are Defense Mapping Agency, series L752 (Korea, 1:50,000), edition 1-KAMS, 1970, sheets 3817 II (Hyonp'ung) and 3816 I (Uiryong).

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4. 24ID OIs, no. 17, 4 August 1950; 24ID WD, Narrative Summary; Appleman, *South*, 254.

5. 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, Daily Logistics Report no. 25, 051800 August 1950, Logistical Report no. 7, 6 August 1950 (data for 5 August 1950 taken from "Previously Short" column), Lieutenant Colonel Dixon to Lieutenant Colonel Sibert, 051915 August 1950, and Lieutenant Colonel Dixon to Lieutenant Colonel Witter, 042300 August 1950; 24ID WD, Engineer Officer Daily Diary, 5 August 1950; 24ID WD, Narrative Summary. The equipment shortages as of 5 August 1950 were based on the 24th Division's peacetime table of organization rather than on its authorized wartime strength.

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August 1950, and "Plan for Relief of 24th Inf. Div.," 4 August 1950; Schnabel, *Policy,* 127. Combat efficiency was a subjective assessment of a unit's capability, was usually expressed in percentages, and was recorded in a unit's Periodic Operations Report. It included a consideration of such factors as strength, morale, status of training, status of health, status of supplies and equipment, and length of time the unit had been in contact.

7. "34th Infantry Regiment Unit Reports," no. 23, 5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 34IR URs); Appleman, *South,* 84, 147; Roy E. Appleman to Richard W. Stephens, 4 April 1952, in folder entitled "Correspondence 1952," Charles E. Beauchamp to Roy E. Appleman, 20 May 1953, in folder entitled "XVI. The First Battle of Naktong Bulge," and Roy E. Appleman to Charles E. Beauchamp, 25 May 1953, in folder entitled "Correspondence 1953," all in U.S. Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, Collection on *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (hereafter cited as OCMH Collection).

8. U.S. Department of the Army, FM 7—40, *Infantry Regiment* (Washington, DC, January 1950), 237; "34th Infantry Regiment, S-3 Journal File," Operations Order no. 6, 032200 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 23, 5 August 1950; 34IR WD, Summary and 3—5 August 1950; 34IR URs, Overlay to Accompany Unit Report 021700 August 1950, Overlay, 34th Infantry Fire Plan (undated but approximately 3 August 1950), Overlay, Listening Posts Established, 3 August 1950, Overlay, Positions of 1st Battalion (undated but approximately 3 August 1950), Overlay Showing Positions of 3d Battalion, 031300 August 1950; "Btry A, 26th AAA (AW) Bn War Diary, for the Period 23 July 1950 to 25 August 1950" 1—5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as Btry A, 26AAA [AW] Bn WD); "War Diary, 11th Field Artillery Battalion, from the Period 23 July 1950 to 25 August 1950," Baker Battery Chronology, 4—5 August 1950, and Daily Diary, 6 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 11FA Bn WD); "13th Field Artillery Battalion War Diary, for the Period 23 July 1950 to 25 August 1950," Daily Diary, 27 July and 4—5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 13FA Bn WD); "3rd Engineer Combat Battalion War Diary, for the period 23 July 1950 to 25 August 1950," Daily Diary, 3—5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 3E(C) Bn WD); Overlay no. 1, Demolitions and Minefields, 3d Engineer (C) Battalion.

9. 21IR URs, no. 27, 4 August 1950, and no. 28, 5 August 1950; 21IR WD, Summary, 24 July, 28—29 July, 3—5 August 1950; 21IR WD, Situation Overlay, 051700 August 1950; "14th Engineer Combat Battalion War Diary, 1 August 1950—31 August 1950," 1—5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 14E(C) Bn WD); "52nd Field Artillery Battalion War Diary for the Period 23 July 1950 to 25 August 1950," 4 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 52FA Bn WD); "63rd Field Artillery Battalion War Diary for the Period 1 August 1950 to 26 August 1950," 5 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 246, 040700 August 1950, entry 343, 051205 August 1950, and entry 356, 051345 August 1950.

10. Appleman, *South,* 250; 21IR URs, no. 27, 4 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, Daily Logistics Report no. 25, 051800 August 1950; 24ID PORs, Overlay to Accompany POR no. 29, 042400 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 4 August 1950; 11FA Bn WD, Able Battery Chronology, 5 August 1950, and Daily Diary, 6 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, 4—5 August 1950; 21IR WD, 5 August 1950.

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Period 23 July 1950 to 25 August 1950," 3—5 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 3 August 1950, and Division Surgeon Staff Historical Report, 3 August 1950.

13. 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 4 August 1950, G-4 Journal, Daily Summary, 3—4 August 1950, and Quartermaster Daily Diary (Historical Report); "War Diary, 24th Medical Battalion," 5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 24 Med Bn WD).

14. 24ID WD, Narrative Summary; Appleman, *South,* 290, 293; Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War,* 176.

15. Headquarters, Far East Command, Military Intelligence Section, General Staff, "History of the North Korean Army," 31 July 1952, 57—59, 95—96, and charts 4—7; General Headquarters, Far East Command, Military Intelligence Section, General Staff, "Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, Research Supplement, Interrogation Reports, Issue no. 94, North Korean 4th Inf. Div.," 41—48; "Headquarters, Eighth United States Army, Korea, Operational Directive," 6 August 1950, annex A (Intelligence); Appleman, *South,* 11, 264, 293.

16. 24ID WD, Narrative Summary, Daily Diary, 4—5 August 1950, Air Operations Reports, nos. 2—3, and G-2 Journal, entries 348, 399, 403—6, 5 August 1950; "24th Infantry Division Periodic Intelligence Reports," nos. 23—25, 3—5 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 24ID PIRs); 21IR WD, 4—5 August 1950; 21IR URs, nos. 27—29, 3—5 August 1950; 34IR WD, 5 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 23, 5 August 1950; "34th Infantry Regiment Message Journal," Duke 3 to CO, 34 Inf, 0600 5 August 1950.

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2. 13FA Bn WD and UJ, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 415, 060205 August 1950; 34IR WD, 6 August 1950 and 7 August 1950 (latter entry contains 6 August information).

3. Harold B. Ayres to Roy E. Appleman, 5 June 1953, in folder entitled "XVI. The First Battle of Naktong Bulge," OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 570, 060430 August 1950, entry 571, 0520 6 August 1950, and entry 572, 060545 August 1950; 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 4, 6 August 1950.

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7. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 580, 060900 August 1950, and G-2 Journal, entry 432, 060900 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD and UJ, 6 August 1950.

8. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 4, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 438, 060838 August 1950, entry 444, 061045 August 1950, entry 472, 061245 August 1950, and entry 516, 062020 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 616, 061725 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, nos. 90 (11), and 91 (4), 6 August 1950; 34IR S-2 Journal, no. 33 (18), 1130 6 August 1950; 34IR WD, 6 August 1950.

9. Ayres to Appleman, 5 June 1953, OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 452, 061056 August 1950, entry 477, 061350 August 1950, and entry 480, 061430 August 1950; A. F. Alfonso to Harold B. Ayres, 27 November 1954, in folder entitled "XVI. The First Battle of Naktong Bulge," OCMH Collection; 24ID Arty WD, Summary; 13FA Bn WD and UJ, 6 August 1950.

10. "21st Infantry Regiment S-3 Journal," 6 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 21IR S-3 Journal); 21IR WD, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 592, 061115 August 1950, entry 593, 061120 August 1950, entry 594, 061130 August 1950, entry 595, 061130 August 1950, and entry 596, 061150 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, Summary and 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 6 August 1950, and Ordnance Officer Daily Diary, 6 August 1950; 24th Signal Co WD, 6 August 1950; 24ID HQ Co WD, 6 August 1950.

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13. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 604, 061500 August 1950, entry 609, 061600 August 1950, entry 613, 061715 August 1950, and Overlay, Scheme of Maneuver, 2d Bn, 19th Inf, 6 August 1950.

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16. 21IR S-3 Journal, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 429, 060800 August 1950, entry 492, 061510 August 1950, and entry 526, 062210 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 573, 0545 6 August 1950, and entry 601, 061035 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 31, 6 August 1950; 24ID OI, no. 18, 061900 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, Narrative Summary and 6 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 6—7 August 1950.

17. 21IR WD, Summary and 6 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 6 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 29, 061700 August 1950, and no. 30, 071700 August 1950; 24ID WD, Narrative Summary;

24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 470, 061200 August 1950, entry 495, 061515 August 1950, entry 500, 061635 August 1950, entry 517, 062020 August 1950, and entry 532, 062300 August 1950.

18. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 6 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 626, 062130 August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 26, 062130 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 31, 6 August 1950; 24ID OIs, no. 18, 061900 August 1950.

19. Appleman, *South,* 77; Ayres to Appleman, 5 June 1953, OCMH Collection.

20. 24ID PIRs, no. 27, 072130 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 547, 070150 August 1950, and entry 553, 070555 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 30, 071700 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 7 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; Alfonso to Ayres, 27 November 1954, OCMH Collection.

21. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 6—7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 601, 061035 August 1950, and entry 615, 061125 August 1950; "Headquarters Second Infantry Division War Diary," 6 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 2ID WD); "Headquarters 2d [Infantry] Division Artillery War Diary," entry 34, 061130 August 1950; "War Diary, Headquarters Fifteenth Field Artillery Battalion," 6 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 15FA Bn WD); 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 6—7 August 1950.

22. Alfonso to Appleman, 27 November 1954, OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, Daily Summary, 071800 August 1950, entry 18, 070310 August 1950, and entry 14, 071305 August 1950; 34IR WD, 7 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 25, 071700 August 1950.

23. 34IR WD, Summary and 7 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 25, 071700 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 071320 August 1950 and 071355 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 565, 071030 August 1950, and entry 579, 071240 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 7 August 1950. The 30 percent combat efficiency figure mentioned was based on a three-battalion regiment.

24. 1/19 Narrative; 19IR UJ, 7 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 28, 071700 August 1950; 19IR WD, Summary; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 568, 071115 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 640, 070700 August 1950, and entry 646, 071115 August 1950.

25. 1/19 Narrative; 19IR UJ, 7 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 29, 081700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 646, 071115 August 1950, entry 656, 071200 August 1950, entry 658, 071455 August 1950, entry 662, 071830 August 1950, and entry 665, 072210 August 1950.

26. 21IR S-3 Journal, 7 August 1950; 21IR WD, 7 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 30, 071700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, "Signal Supply, 24th Div.," 071800 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, 7 August 1950. Company C, 14th Engineers, is listed in some documents as Company D.

27. 21IR S-3 Journal, 7 August 1950; 21IR WD, Summary and 7 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 30, 071700 August 1950, and no. 31, 081700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 562, 071010 August 1950, entry 570, 071115 August 1950, and entry 599, 071610 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 661, 071725 August 1950.

28. 21IR S-3 Journal, 7 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 31, 081700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 630, 072245 August 1950, and entry 635, 072312 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 666, 072230 August 1950.

29. 3E(C) Bn WD, Narrative Summary and 7 August 1950; 21IR WD, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 650, 071155 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 32, 072400 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 7 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 7 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 7 August 1950.

30. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 538, 070005 August 1950, entry 548, 070230 August 1950, entry

571, 071130 August 1950, entry 580, 071240 August 1950, entry 620, 072100 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 654, 071350 August 1950, entry 664, 072020 August 1950, entry 667, 071943 August 1950, entry 668, 072325 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 7 August 1950.

31. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 644, 071055 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 7 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 071115 August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 27, 072130 August 1950.

32. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 7 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 634, 062255 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, Daily Logistics Report no. 27, 071800 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 32, 072400 August 1950; 2ID WD, 7 August 1950; 24ID HQ Co WD, 7 August 1950; 24 Signal Co WD, 7 August 1950.

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1. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 649, 080230 August 1950; 21IR WD, 8 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 8 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 31, 081700 August 1950.

2. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 663, 080700 August 1950; 15FA Bn WD, August 1950; 2ID Arty WD, 8 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 8 August 1950.

3. 24ID PIRs, no. 28, 082130 August 1950; 24ID WD, Narrative Summary, and Daily Diary, 8 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 661, 080630 August 1950, entry 664, 080710 August 1950, entry 666, 080730 August 1950, and entry 668, 080800 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 26, 081700 August 1950; 34IR S-2 Journal, 8 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 8 August 1950; Alfonso to Ayres, 27 November 1954, OCMH Collection; 19IR URs, no. 29, 081700 August 1950.

4. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 8 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 709, 081719 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 680, 080330 August 1950, and entry 683, 080445 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 31, 081700 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 8 August 1950; 3E (C) Bn WD, 8 August 1950.

5. 24ID WD OIs, no. 19, 082400 August 1950; 34IR WD, 8 August 1950; Alfonso to Ayres, 27 November 1954, OCMH Collection.

6. Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, Narrative Summary, and 8 August 1950.

7. 19IR WD, 8 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 29, 081700 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 8 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 688, 080830 August 1950.

8. 24ID WD OIs, no. 19, 082400 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 685, 080720 August 1950, and entry 689, 081005 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 8 August 1950.

9. 19IR UJ, 8 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 692, 081230 August 1950.

10. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 675, 080115 August 1950, and entry 679, 080510 August 1950; Historical Section, G-2, HQ 2d Infantry Division, "The 2d Infantry Division and the Korean Campaign," vol. 1, "8 July 1950—31 August 1950," 28—29 (hereafter cited as 2ID, "Korean Campaign"); John G. Hill comments for Roy E. Appleman, 2 January 1958, Appleman Ms—External Review, OCMH Collection; 15FA Bn WD, August 1950.

11. 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 29; 9th Infantry Regiment Unit Reports, no. 1, 8 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 9IR URs); 9th Infantry Regiment Periodic Operations Reports, no. 12, 081800 August 1950, and no. 13, 082400 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 9IR PORs); 9th Infantry Regiment Operations Orders, no. 4, 081315 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 9IR OOs).

12. 2ID "Korean Campaign," 29—33; 9IR URs, no. 1, 8 August 1950; 9IR PORs, no. 13, 082400 August 1950, and no. 14, 090600 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 716, 081840

August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 700, 081650 August 1950, and entry 701, 081815 August 1950; 19IR WD, Summary; 19IR UJ, 8 August 1950.

13. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 688, 081150 August 1950, and entry 729, 082255 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 694, 081330 August 1950, and entry 696, 081435 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 8 August 1950.

14. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 8 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 33, 082400 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, Daily Logistics Report no. 28, 081800 August 1950, Logistical Report no. 9, 8 August 1950, and entry 20, 080930 August 1950; 24ID WD, Ordnance Officer Daily Diary, 8 August 1950; "24th Replacement Company War Diary," 8 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 24 Repl Co WD); 9IR PORs, no. 13, 082400 August 1950.

15. Ayres to Appleman, 5 June 1953, OCMH Collection; Alfonso to Ayres, 27 November 1954, OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 781, 091545 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 732, 091400 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 8 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 9 August 1950; 34IR WD, 9—10 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 27, 091700 August 1950.

16. 34IR WD, 9 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 27, 091700 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 9 August 1950; 34IR S-2 Journal, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 815, 091545 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 725, 090730 August 1950, entry 732, 091400 August 1950, and entry 13, 091545 August 1950.

17. 19IR UJ, 9 August 1950; 9IR PORs, no. 13, 082400 August 1950, and no. 14, 090600 August 1950.

18. 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 7, 091700 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 9 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 755, 090950 August 1950, entry 758, 091030 August 1950, entry 760, 091055 August 1950, entry 763, 091020 August 1950, and entry 767, 091230 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 723, 090655 August 1950, entry 728, 090835 August 1950, and entry 731, 091210 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 9 August 1950; Hill comments for Appleman, 2 January 1958, OCMH Collection; 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 33; Clark C. Munroe, *The Second United States Infantry Division in Korea, 1950—1951* (Tokyo, Japan: Toppan Printing Co., 1952), 9. The 24ID WD Daily Diary entry for 9 August 1950 is especially misleading about the operations of the 9th and 19th Infantry regiments on the date in question.

19. 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 33; Munroe, *Second Division*, 9—10; 34IR Message Journal, 9 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 9 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 30, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 733, 090145 August 1950, and entry 779, 091435 August 1950.

20. 1/19 Narrative.

21. 21IR S-3 Journal, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 736, 090430 August 1950, entry 759, 091045 August 1950, and entry 761, 091125 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 718, 090437 August 1950, entry 719, 090455 August 1950, entry 720, 090510 August 1950, and entry 722, 090600 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 13, 091145 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID PIRs no. 29, 092130 August 1950; "24th Military Police Company War Diary," 9 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 24 MP Co WD).

22. 24ID HQ Co WD, 8—9 August 1950 [entry for 8 August 1950 is misdated]; 24 Signal Co WD, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, Signal Officer Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-1 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 796, 091600 August 1950, and entry 797, 091800 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 1, 091800 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 1, 091801 August 1950.

23. 13FA Bn WD, 9 August 1950; 13FA Bn UJ, 8—9 August 1950; 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 7, 091700 August 1950.

24. 19IR UJ, 9 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 31, 101700 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative, 24ID WD, G-1 Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 9 August 1950.

25. 9IR PORs, no. 15, 091800 August 1950, and no. 16, 092400 August 1950; 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 34—35; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 18, 092005 August 1950, and entry 41, 092330 August 1950.

26. 21IR S-3 Journal, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 783, 091735 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 41, 092330 August 1950.

27. 19IR UJ, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 794, 092150 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 33, 092227 August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 30, 102200 August 1950.

28. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 41, 092330 August 1950; "34th Infantry Regiment S-1 Journal," 10 August 1950; 34IR WD, 10 August 1950.

29. 24ID WD, G-1 Daily Diary, 10—11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 9—10 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 9—10 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 9—10 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 34, 092400 August 1950.

30. 19IR UJ, 9 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 794, 092150 August 1950, and unnumbered entry, 100400 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 33, 092227 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 10 August 1950.

31. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 9 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 34, 092400 August 1950; 24ID Arty WD, 10 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 10 August 1950.

32. 19IR UJ, 10 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 31, 101700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 799, 100730 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 37, 100650 August 1950, and entry 57, 101050 August 1950; Appleman, *South,* 301n; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 10 August 1950.

33. 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 35; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 798, 100633 August 1950, and entry 800, 100804 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 10 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 28, 101700 August 1950.

34. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 807, 101003 August 1950, and entry 816, 101145 August 1950; 34IR WD, 10—11 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 28, 101700 August 1950; 9IR PORs, no. 18, 101800 August 1950; 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 35; Hill comments for Appleman, 2 January 1958, OCMH Collection.

35. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 848, 101950 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Order of Battle Journal, entry 23, 111300 August 1950.

36. 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 10 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 10 August 1950; 21IR UJ, 10 August 1950.

37. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 20, 101340 August 1950; 21IR WD, 10 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 33, 101700 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 10 August 1950.

38. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 24, 101610 August 1950, entry 25, 101620 August 1950, and entry 26, 101600 August 1950; Gordon E. Murch comments for Roy E. Appleman, 7 April 1954, in folder entitled "XVI. The First Battle of Naktong Bulge," OCMH Collection.

39. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 26, 101600 August 1950, entry 31, 101705 August 1950, and entry 32, 101715 August 1950; 34IR WD, 10 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 28, 101700 August 1950; Beauchamp comments for Appleman, 20 May 1953, OCMH Collection; "Historical Report—August 1950, 27th Infantry Regt'l Combat Team," 2d Battalion Summary of Activities (hereafter cited as 27IRCT, "Historical Report").

40. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 846, 101855 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 36, 101850 August 1950, entry 42, 101950 August 1950, and entry 43, 102000 August 1950.

41. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 46, 102210 August 1950, and entry 50, 110430 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, Summary and 10 August 1950.

42. 27IRCT, "Historical Report," including 2d and 3d Battalions' Summaries of Activities, August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 44, 102030 August 1950, entry 49, 102200 August 1950, and entry 51, 110515 August 1950; Murch comments for Appleman, 7 April 1954, OCMH Collection.

43. 19IR UJ, 10 August 1950; 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 35; 9IR PORs, no. 18, 101800 August 1950, and no. 19, 102400 August 1950.

44. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 10 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 35, 102400 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 20, 102400 August 1950; John Church to Roy E. Appleman, 7 July 1953, in folder entitled "XVI. The First Battle of Naktong Bulge," OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 43, 102000 August 1950.

45. Hill comments for Appleman, 2 January 1958, OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 10 August 1950.

46. 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, Daily Logistics Report no. 30, 101800 August 1950, and Logistical Report no. 11, 101840 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 10 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 22, 101410 August 1950; 24 Repl Co WD, 10 August 1950.

47. 24ID PIRs, no. 30, 102200 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 10 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 15, 102357 August 1950.

Chapter 5

1. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 10 August 1950; "19IR OOs, no. 6," 11 August 1950.

2. 27IR URs, 111800 August 1950; 27IRCT, "Historical Report," 2d Battalion Summary of Activities; Murch comments for Appleman, 7 April 1954, OCMH Collection; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 63, 110900 August 1950, entry 71, 111115 August 1950, entry 77, 111155 August 1950, entry 80, 111215 August 1950, entry 81, 111300 August 1950, and entry 90, 111530 August 1950.

3. 24th Recon Co WD, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 50, 110430 August 1950, entry 58, 110740 August 1950, entry 61, 110830 August 1950, entry 65, 110940 August 1950, entry 67, 111000 August 1950, and entry 68, 111000 August 1950.

4. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 70, 111040 August 1950, and entry 85, 111330 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 11 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 34, 111700 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 11 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, Narrative Summary.

5. 24th Recon Co WD, 11 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 11 August 1950; 13FA Bn UJ, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 904, 111350 August 1950; Btry A, 26AAA (AW) Bn WD, 11 August 1950.

6. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 85, 111330 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 29, 111800 August 1950; 34IR WD, 11—12 August 1950; 19IR OOs, no. 6, 11 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 11 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 32, 111700 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative.

7. 24th Recon Co WD, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 91, 111540 August 1950.

8. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 96, 111755 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 921, 111845 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 11 August 1950; 13FA Bn UJ, 11 August 1950.

9. Munroe, *Second Division*, 9.

10. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 99, 111905 August 1950; 21IR WD, 11 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 35, 121700 August 1950; 21IR UJ, 11 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, 11 August 1950, and Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950.

11. 24th Recon Co WD, 11 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 92, 111600 August 1950; 24ID HQ Co WD, 11—12 August 1950; 24ID WD, Ordnance Officer Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24th Infantry Division Band War Diary, 11 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 24ID Band WD).

12. 27IR URs, 121800 August 1950; 27IRCT, "Historical Report," August 1950, including 2d Battalion Summary of Activities.

13. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 36, 112400 August 1950; 27IRCT, "Historical Report," August 1950, including 3d Battalion Summary of Activities.

14. 24ID WD, Surgeon Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 11 August 1950; 24ID WD, Finance Officer Daily Diary, 11 August 1950.

15. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 107, 112150 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, Narrative Summary; 21IR S-3 Journal, 11 August 1950.

16. Army Map Service, series L751 (Korea, 1:50,000), type A (AMS-1), -1945, sheet 6920 III (Yongsan).

17. 24ID WD, Narrative Summary; 24ID WD, Signal Officer Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 32, 122030 August 1950.

18. 24th Recon Co WD, 12 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950.

19. 24ID HQ Co WD, 12—13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 129, 120900 August 1950; 724th Ordnance Maintenance Company War Diary, 12 August 1950; Btry A, 26AAA (AW) Bn WD, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 21, 122400 August 1950.

20. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 110, 120140 August 1950, and entry 129, 120900 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 15, 102357 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950.

21. 24 Med Bn WD, 12 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 12 August 1950.

22. 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950.

23. 24ID HQ Co WD, 13 [12] August 1950.

24. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 115, 120700 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 12 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950; 24ID Arty WD, 12 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 12 August 1950; 9IR URs, no. 5, 121800 August 1950.

25. 24th Recon Co WD, 12 August 1950; Appleman, *South*, 303n; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 13 [12] August 1950.

26. 24ID HQ Co WD, 13 [12] August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 143, 121705 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950. Hafeman's War Diary states that Post 1 was evacuated at 1600, but the preponderance of evidence suggests that the event occurred one hour later. The M-39 armored personnel carrier was an open-topped vehicle based upon the chassis of the World War II vintage M-18 tank destroyer. Christopher F. Foss, *Armoured Fighting Vehicles of the World* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 149.

27. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 24ID HQ Co WD, 13 [12] August 1950; 24ID Band WD, 12 August 1950; 24 MP Co WD, 15 [12] August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 145, 121800 August 1950; 24ID WD, Ordnance Officer Daily Diary, 12 August 1950.

28. 14E(C) Bn WD, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 12 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 13 [12] August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 32, 122030 August 1950.

29. 21IR S-3 Journal, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-1 Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, Medical Officer Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 123, 121030 August 1950, entry 126, 121305 August 1950, entry 132, 121300 August 1950, and entry 151, 121955 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 36, 131700 August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 32, 122030 August 1950.

30. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 121, 121015 August 1950, entry 130, 121355 August 1950, entry 133, 121245 August 1950, and entry 140, 121450 August 1950; 24ID WD, Public Information Officer Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; Church to Appleman, 7 July 1953, OCMH Collection; Appleman, *South*, 303; 24ID PORs, no. 37, 122400 August 1950. Appleman placed Hill's conference with Church and Walker on 13 August, but 24ID documents indicate that it occurred on 12 August.

31. 9IR URs, no. 5, 121800 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 33, 121800 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 30, 12 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 19IR UJ, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 948, 120600 August 1950, entry 951, 120720 August 1950, entry 954, 120835 August 1950, and entry 960, 121045 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 12 August 1950; 13FA Bn UJ, 12 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 12 August 1950.

32. 21IR S-3 Journal, 12 August 1950; 21IR WD, 12 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 35, 121700 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, 12 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 108, 120010 August 1950, entry 109, 120100 August 1950, entry 111, 120225 August 1950, entry 112, 120300 August 1950, entry 117, 120810 August 1950, entry 125, 121210 August 1950, entry 134, 121300 August 1950, entry 147, 121700 August 1950, entry 155, 122125 August 1950, and entry 156, 122045 August 1950.

33. 21IR S-3 Journal, 12 August 1950; 21IR WD, Summary, and 12 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 35, 121700 August 1950, and no. 36, 131700 August 1950; 24ID WD, Engineer Officer Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 52FA Bn WD, 12 August 1950.

34. 21IR URs, no. 35, 121700 August 1950.

35. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 12 August 1950; 27IRCT, "Historical Report," August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 153, 121740 August 1950, and entry 158, 122305 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 37, 122400 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 21, 122400 August 1950; "Headquarters, 23d Infantry, Narrative Summary of Command and Unit Historical Report, Period Covered, 1 August—31 August 1950."

36. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 213, 131605 August 1950, and entry 222, 131800 August 1950; 27IRCT, "Historical Report," August 1950, included 2d and 3d Battalions' Summary of Activities; 27IR URs, 131800 August 1950. In some accounts, the 3d Bn, 27IR is identified as the 3d Bn, 29IR, its designation prior to 6 August. Appleman, *South*, 253n.

37. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 174, 130600 August 1950, entry 181, 130818 August 1950, entry 203, 131334 August 1950, and entry 207, 131450 August 1950; William M. Glasgow, "Platoon Leader in Korea," Ms, Archives, Center of Military History, Washington, DC, 32—40.

38. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 27IRCT, "Historical Report," August 1950, including 2d and 3d Battalions' Summary of Activities; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1059, 132035 August 1950, and entry 1074, 132250 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 190, 131120 August 1950, and entry 223, 131620 August 1950; 24ID HQ Co WD, 14 [13] August 1950.

39. 21IR URs, no. 36, 131700 August 1950, and no. 37, 141700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1066, 132120 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 13 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, 13 August 1950.

40. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 224, 132000 August 1950, and entry 231, 132140 August 1950; 21IR WD, 13 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 13 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 37, 141700 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, 13 August 1950.

41. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 206, 131140 August 1950; 24ID PIRs, no. 33, 132030 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 13 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 34, 131700 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative.

42. 24ID WD, 13 August 1950; 9IR URs, no. 6, 131800 August 1950; 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 38; 19IR UJ, 13 August 1950.

43. 34IR WD, 13 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 30, 131800 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 160, 130115 August 1950, entry 162, 130155 August 1950, entry 163, 130110 August 1950, entry 164, 120125 August 1950, entry 178, 130015 August 1950, entry 201, 130845 August 1950, entry 217, 131610 August 1950, and entry 226, 131040 August 1950.

44. 24th Recon Co WD, 13 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, 13 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn, Detailed Account of Operations, 11—13 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 14 [13] August 1950.

45. 19IR UJ, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 183, 130905 August 1950, and entry 197, 131242 August 1950; 9IR OOs, no. 5, 131300 August 1950, and Overlay to Accompany Operations Order no. 5; 24ID WD OIs, no. 22, 132400 August 1950.

46. 24ID WD, Signal Officer Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-1 Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 13 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 3, 13 August 1950, and entry 22, 131800 August 1950; 24 Repl Co WD, 13 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 38, 132400 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 34, 131700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Order of Battle Journal, entry 29; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1024, 130900 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 206, 131140 August 1950.

Chapter 6

1. 9IR OOs, no. 5, 131300 August 1950, and Overlay to Accompany Operations Order no. 5, 131230 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1030, 131150 August 1950, entry 1033, 131210 August 1950, and entry 1050, 131815 August 1950.

2. 19IR UJ, 15 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 34IR URs, no. 32, 141800 August 1950; Beauchamp comments for Appleman, 20 May 1953, OCMH Collection; Appleman, *South*, 306; 9IR URs, no. 7, 141800 August 1950; 9IR Os, no. 5, 131300 August 1950; 24ID Arty WD, 14 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 14 August 1950; 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 9, 142100 August 1950.

3. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 14 August 1950; Co A, 78 Tk Bn WD, 15 [14] August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 35, 141700 August 1950; 9IR URs, no. 7, 141800 August 1950; 34IR WD, 14 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 14 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 268, 140715 August 1950, entry 271, 140810 August 1950, and entry 273, 141006 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1098, 141235 August 1950.

4. 34IR WD, 14 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 32, 141800 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 14 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 35, 141700 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 14 August 1950; Appleman, *South*, 306. See also Hill comments for Appleman, 2 January 1958, OCMH Collection.

5. 19IR UJ, 14 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, 151015 August 1950.

6. 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 9, 142100 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1110, 141620 August 1950, entry 1112, 141645 August 1950, entry 1119, 141750 August 1950, and entry 1130, 142230 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 9IR URs, no. 7, 141800 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 14 August 1950; 34IR WD, 14 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 293, 141900 August 1950.

7. 21IR S-3 Journal, 9—11 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 14—15 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 36, 151700 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1134, 142222 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 319, 151015 August 1950.

8. 21IR WD, 14 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 14 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 37, 141700 August 1950, and no. 38, 151700 August 1950; 14E(C) Bn WD, 14 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1146, 150030 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 242, 140030 August 1950, entry 248, 140300 August 1950, entry 249, 140315 August 1950, entry 287, 141320 August 1950, and entry 289, 141545 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, 14 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-1 Daily Diary, 11 August 1950.

9. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 258, 140530 August 1950, entry 259, 140535 August 1950, and entry 261, 140555 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 14 August 1950; Beauchamp comments for Appleman, 20 May 1953, OCMH Collection; 13FA Bn WD, 14 August 1950; 34IR WD, 14 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 32, 141800 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 14 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1129, 142130 August 1950; 27IRCT "Historical Report," August 1950, including 2d and 3d Battalions' Summary of Activities; 24th Recon Co WD, 14 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 39, 142400 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 23, 142400 August 1950.

10. 34IR Message Journal, 14—15 August 1950; "34th Infantry Regiment Telephone Journal," 14 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 34IR Telephone Journal); 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 306, 150415 August 1950; Hill comments for Appleman, 2 January 1958, OCMH Collection.

11. 19IR UJ, 15 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1144, 150545 August 1950, and entry 1152, 150845 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 303, 150145 August 1950, entry 307, 150500 August 1950, and entry 309, 150810 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 15 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 15 August 1950; Munroe, *Second Division*, 10. The 3.5-inch rocket launcher had been hurriedly directed to the troops in Korea upon the discovery that the 2.36-inch rocket launcher already in their hands was inadequate to stop the North Korean T-34 tanks. Schnabel, *Policy*, 84.

12. 24ID WD, Air Operations Reports, no. 10, 152100 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 15 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 36, 151700 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 9IR URs, no. 8, 151800 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 15 August 1950; 34IR Telephone Journal, 15 August 1950; 34IR WD, 15 August 1950; 34IR URs, no. 33, 151800 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1152, 150845 August 1950, entry 1157, 151000 August 1950, and entry 1161, 151125 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 309, 150810 August 1950, and entry 310, 151030 August 1950. Air strikes numbered only eighteen on 15 August, compared to fifty-two on the previous day. For a detailed account of the actions of Company A, 34th Infantry, on 15 August, see Russell A. Gugeler, *Combat Actions in Korea* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1970), 20—30.

13. Appleman, *South*, 308; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 8, 150830 August 1950; 24th Quartermaster Company War Diary, 15 August 1950.

14. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 315, 151130 August 1950; 9IR URs, no. 8, 151800 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 15 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 15 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1161, 151125 August 1950, entry 1171, 151330 August 1950, and entry 1204, 160050 August 1950; 24ID Arty WD, 14—15 August 1950.

15. 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 315, 151130 August 1950, entry 322, 151545 August 1950, entry 341, 151200 August 1950, and entry 343, 152245 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 15 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1185, 151830 August 1950; 3E(C) Bn WD, 15 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 38, 151700 August 1950, and no. 39, 161700 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 15 August 1950.

16. 24ID PIRs, no. 35, 152030 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1162, 151125 August 1950, entry 1163, 151155 August 1950, entry 1168, 151250 August 1950, and entry 1173, 151340 August 1950.

Chapter 7

1. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 16 August 1950.

2. 34IR WD, 16 August 1950; 34IR URs, 161800 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 16 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1213, 160650 August 1950, and entry 1223, 161045 August 1950.

3. 19IR URs, no. 37, 161700 August 1950; 19IR S-3 Journal, 16 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 350, 160730 August 1950, and entry 359, 160825 August 1950.

4. 9IR URs, no. 9, 161800 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1212, 160500 August 1950, entry 1218, 160830 August 1950, and entry 1221, 161000 August 1950; 2ID, "Korean Campaign," 39—40; Munroe, *Second Division*, 10.

5. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 16 August 1950; 21IR WD, 16 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 39, 161700 August 1950, 21IR S-3 Journal, 16 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1234, 161322 August 1950, entry 1235, 161402 August 1950, and entry 1241, 161600 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 358, 161145 August 1950, entry 360, 161300 August 1950, and entry 366, 161530 August 1950.

6. 24th Infantry Division War Diary, Operational Directive, no. 1, 161400 August 1950 (hereafter cited as 24ID WD OD); 24ID PORs, no. 41, 162400 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 25, 162400 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 16 August 1950; 9IR URs, no. 9, 161800 August 1950.

7. 24ID WD OD, no. 1, 161400 August 1950; "1st Provisional Marine Brigade, Operation Plan 13—50," 161400 August 1950; 19IR OOs, no. 8, 16 August 1950; 34IR OOs, no. 8, 161800 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 372, 161550 August 1950.

8. Lynn Montross and Nicholas Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations in Korea, 1950—1953*, vol. 1, *The Pusan Perimeter* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1954), 49—54, 103—56.

9. "1st Provisional Marine Brigade, Special Action Report, 2 August—6 September 1950: Operations with Eighth U.S. Army Korea": Basic Report; annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn, 5th Marines; annex Easy, Air Section Report; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:175—77.

10. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: Basic Report; annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 1st Bn, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 3d Bn, 5th Marines; 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, Periodic Operations Reports, no. 28, 161230 August 1950, no. 29, 170500 August 1950, no. 30, 170815 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 16 August 1950.

11. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 3d Bn, 5th Marines; and 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 382, 170300 August 1950, entry 384, 170415 August 1950, and entry 405, 171230 August 1950; 34IR URs, 171800 August 1950; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:176—78.

12. W. E. Sweeney to N. A. Canzona, 22 May 1954, correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations in Korea*, vol. 1, Washington National Records Center, National Archives; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 1st Bn, 5th Marines.

13. Sweeney to Canzona, 22 May 1954, and A. M. Zimmer to N. A. Canzona, 18 February 1954, correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; 1st Prov Mar Bde SAR: annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:178; Appleman, *South*, 312.

14. Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:176—78; R. L. Murray comments for N. A. Canzona, 20 March 1954, correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; Appleman,

South, 311—12. General Craig's opinion of the condition of the 9th Infantry was much higher than Colonel Murray's.

15. Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:178—79; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn, 5th Marines; annex Item, 1st Bn, 11th Marines; annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines.

16. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: Basic Report; annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; annex Easy, Air Section Report; Sweeney to Canzona, 22 May 1954, correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; Appleman, *South*, 312.

17. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; Sweeney to Canzona, 22 May 1954, Zimmer to Canzona, 18 February 1954, R. T. Hanifin Jr. to N. A. Canzona, 14 July 1954, all in correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 389, 170935 August 1950, entry 393, 171030 August 1950, and entry 398, 171115 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 17 August 1950.

18. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; Sweeney to Canzona, 22 May 1954, Zimmer to Canzona, 18 February 1954, and Hanifin to Canzona, 14 July 1954, all in correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn; annex Easy, Air Section Report. An extended account of the 2d Battalion's action can be found in Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:181—86. See also Andrew Geer, *The New Breed: The Story of the U.S. Marines in Korea* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), 60—68.

19. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 398, 171115 August 1950; N. A. Canzona to R. L. Murray, 11 March 1954, correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:186—87. Apparently, General Craig was able to reach Colonel Hill before Murray did, since the 9th Infantry began its advance before Murray's 1st Battalion attacked.

20. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: Basic Report; annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 1st Bn, 5th Marines; 1st Prov Mar Bde, PORs, no. 31, 172039 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 410, 171525 August 1950; F. I. Fenton Jr. to N. A. Canzona, 8 May 1954, and N. A. Canzona interview with J. R. Stevens and G. C. Fox, 24 February 1954, both in correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*.

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26. 1/19 Narrative; 19IR UJ, 17 August 1950.

27. 1/19 Narrative; 19IR UJ, 17 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 17 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 38, 171700 August 1950.

28. 21IR WD, 17 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 40 and annex I, 171700 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 17 August 1950; 24th Recon Co WD, 17 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1274, 170500 August 1950, entry 1286, 170900 August 1950, entry 1309, 171400 August 1950, and entry 1329, 171840 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 394, 171045 August 1950, entry 397, 171025 August 1950, entry 406, 171350 August 1950, and entry 431, 172235 August 1950; Glasgow, "Platoon Leader," 51—55.

29. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; 9IR URs, no. 10, 171800 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative.

30. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 24ID WD, Signal Officer Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Daily Diary, 17 August 1950; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex Easy, Air Section Report; 24ID PIRs, no. 37, 172040 August 1950; 24ID WD, OIs, no. 26, 172400 August 1950.

31. 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1365, 180415 August 1950, entry 1373, 180910 August 1950, entry 1383, 181045 August 1950, and entry 1446, 181517 August 1950; 9IR URs, no. 11, 181800 August 1950; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 1st Bn, 5th Marines; N. A. Canzona interview with J. R. Stevens and G. C. Fox, 24 February 1954, in correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:196—200.

32. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 1st Bn, 5th Marines; annex Easy, Air Section Report; Canzona interview with Stevens and Fox, 24 February 1954, in correspondence file for *U.S. Marine Operations*; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:200—201; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 455, 181040 August 1950.

33. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 3d Bn, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 461, 181300 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 18 August 1950.

34. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1398, 181340 August 1950, and entry 1402, 181315 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 462, 181340 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 18 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 18 August 1950.

35. 9IR URs, no. 11, 181800 August 1950; 34IR WD, 18 August 1950; 34IR URs, 181800 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 26, 172400 August 1950.

36. 34IR WD, 18 August 1950; 34IR URs, 181800 August 1950; Beauchamp comments for Appleman, 20 May 1953, OCMH Collection; 21IR S-3 Journal, 18 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1371, 180845 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 446, 180839 August 1950, entry 450, 180848 August 1950, and entry 453, 180820 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 18 August 1950; 34IR Telephone Journal, 18 August 1950.

37. 34IR Message Journal, 18 August 1950; 34IR Telephone Journal, 18 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 38, 181800 August 1950; 1/19 Narrative; 19IR UJ, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 449, 181005 August 1950, and entry 456, 181000 August 1950.

38. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 2d Bn, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1411, 181510 August 1950; 34IR WD, 18 August 1950; 34IR URs, 181800 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 18 August 1950; 19IR URs, no. 38, 181800 August 1950; 19IR UJ, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 509, 18 August 1950.

39. 34IR Message Journal, 18 August 1950; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 3d Bn, 5th Marines; 1st Prov Mar Bde PORs, no. 34, 182100 August 1950, and no. 35, 190013 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1430, 182115 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 474, 181900 August 1950.

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41. 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1416, 181715 August 1950, entry 1417, 18 August 1950, and entry 1434, 182150 August 1950; 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex Easy, Air Section Report; 24ID Arty WD, 18 August 1950; 13FA Bn WD, 18 August 1950; 13FA Bn UJ, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 27, 18 August 1950; 21IR WD, 18 August 1950; 21IR URs, no. 41, 181700 August 1950, and no. 42, 191700 August 1950; 21IR S-3 Journal, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 448, 180950 August 1950, and entry 477, 182030 August 1950; Glasgow, "Platoon Leader," 56—64.

42. 24ID Arty WD, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 18 August 1950; 24ID PORs, no. 43, 182400 August 1950; 24ID WD OIs, no. 27, 18 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 467, 181500 August 1950, and entry 513, 181930 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 18 August 1950; 2d ID, "Korean Campaign," 40. Movement of the 9th Infantry and 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, had already begun late in the afternoon.

43. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, 3d Bn, 5th Marines; annex How, SAR, Co A, 1st Tk Bn; 1st Prov Mar Bde, Periodic Logistic Reports, no. 18, 191800 August 1950, and no. 19, 202000 August 1950; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 19 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-2 Journal, entry 1483, 191355 August 1950, entry 1485, 191500 August 1950, and entry 1505, 192020 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 503, 190645 August 1950, entry 504, 190700 August 1950, and entry 505, 190703 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Daily Diary, 19 August 1950; 34IR WD, 19 August 1950; 34IR Message Journal, 19 August 1950.

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45. 1st Prov Mar Bde, SAR: Basic Report; annex How, SAR, 5th Marines; 24ID WD, Daily Diary, 20—25 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-3 Journal, entry 511, 191130 August 1950.

46. 24ID WD, Quartermaster Daily Diary, Historical Report, 23 July—27 August 1950; 24ID WD, Chaplain Daily Diary, 23 August 1950; 24ID WD, G-4 Journal, entry 8, 23 August 1950. The number of American casualties in the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge is virtually impossible to determine with certainty because of the delay in discovering the fate of those originally listed as missing in action. Division records show the following casualty figures for the period 5—19 August 1950: killed in action, 71; wounded in action, 535; missing in action, 563; nonbattle casualties, 161. Obviously, when the division reoccupied its original positions along the Naktong after the battle, the numbers in the killed in action and missing in action categories changed markedly but to what degree cannot now be determined. "24th Infantry Division Periodic Personnel Reports," nos. 4—6, 5—29

August 1950. Marine casualties were: killed in action, 66; wounded in action, 278; missing in action, 1. Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations,* 1:206. North Korean casualties in the battle are unknown but were extremely heavy. The 4th North Korean Division was virtually destroyed, with American troops burying at least 1,200 enemy dead. Appleman, *South*, 317—18.

47. General accounts of the Second Battle of the Naktong Bulge can be found in Appleman, *South*, 443—70; Montross and Canzona, *U.S. Marine Operations*, 1:207—37; Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 204—29. For the 24th Division's role in the breakout, see Appleman, *South*, 554—58.

Chapter 8

1. In the context of this study, the term light infantry is defined as an infantry formation operating with virtually no armor support, reduced artillery support, and reduced vehicular support. It is not intended to suggest that the 24th Division either was trained in or fought in accordance with classic light infantry tactics.

2. FM 100—5 (August 1949), 140—42.

3. Ibid., 147—55.

4. This aspect of counterattack doctrine was reaffirmed in U.S. Army War College, *Report of Conference of Commandants of Army Service Schools*, 29 January—1 February 1951, vol. 1, 48—49.

5. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War*, 154—55; Office, Chief of Army Field Forces, "Training Bulletin no. 1," 8 September 1950, 16—17; 24ID WD, Summary, 23 July—25 August 1950.

6. This was the conclusion of Office, Chief of Army Field Forces, "Training Bulletin no. 1," 15, and U.S. Army War College, *Report of Conference*, 1:33—35.

7. The North Korean 4th Division's usual tactics had been to fix the defenders in front while outflanking them to left or right. During the campaign south from Osan, the defenders' left flank had been the flank most often turned.

8. Army practice was to skeletonize its infantry units by removing a battalion from each regiment, while the Marines chose to remove a company from each battalion. In neither case were doctrinal adjustments made to address the new situation. No evidence exists to indicate that either method was markedly superior to the other. The only difference seems to have been the echelon that was required to deal with the problem.

9. See U.S. Department of the Army, FM 100—5, *Operations* (Washington, DC, August 1982), 10—5 and 11—8, for the modern view of counterattack. The principle of timing receives the most attention. Flank attacks are recommended, but the manual emphasizes fire more than maneuver in such situations. The principle of centralized command of all counterattack elements seems to have been dropped. Lower level manuals show a similar trend. For example, see U.S. Department of the Army, FM 7—20, *The Infantry Battalion* (Washington, DC, March 1950), 315—25, and U.S. Department of the Army, FM 7—20, *The Infantry Battalion* (Washington, DC, April 1978), 5—36 to 5—40.

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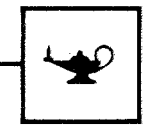

Note on Sources

Counterattack on the Naktong is based primarily on official documents created by the 24th Infantry Division during or shortly after the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge in August 1950. Housed in the Washington National Record Center of the National Archives and Records Service, Suitland, Maryland, these documents generally consist of war diaries, staff section journals, unit journals, unit reports, periodic operation reports, operations instructions, telephone logs, and map overlays. In addition to the official records of the 24th Infantry Division, a few records of component units of the 2d Infantry Division and the 25th Infantry Division have been used. These documents are also at the Suitland repository. All of the U.S. Army records are now under the custody and control of the National Archives and Records Service. Official records of the 1st Provisional Brigade, U.S. Marine Corps, while housed at Suitland remain under the control of the Historical Branch, U.S.M.C., which must grant permission for their use.

Supplementing the official documents as a source for this paper are correspondence, notes, and interviews generated as a result of the writing of the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps official histories of this portion of the Korean War. Roy Appleman's files relating to *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* are housed in the National Archives and Records Service building in downtown Washington, D.C. Similar files for Lynn Montross and Nicholas Canzona's *The Pusan Perimeter* are in the Suitland facility mentioned above.

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The Combat Studies Institute was established on 18 June 1979 as a department-level activity within the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. CSI has the following missions:

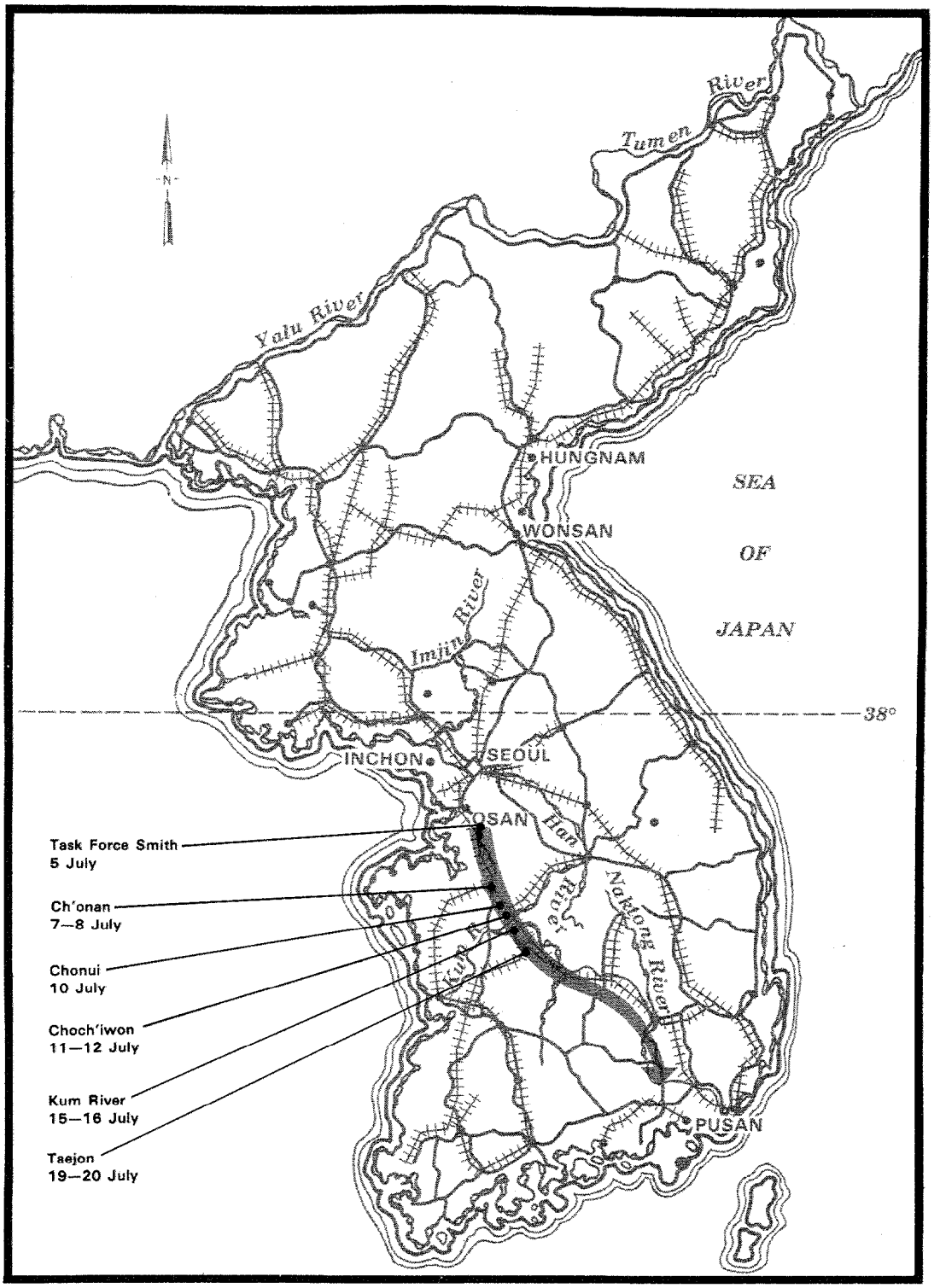
1. Conduct research on historical topics pertinent to doctrinal concerns of the Army and publish the results in a variety of formats for the Active Army and Reserve Components.
2. Prepare and present instruction in military history at USACGSC and assist other USACGSC departments in integrating military history into their instruction.
3. Serve as the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's executive agent for the development and coordination of an integrated, progressive program of military history instruction in the TRADOC service school system.

SYNOPSIS OF LEAVENWORTH PAPER 13

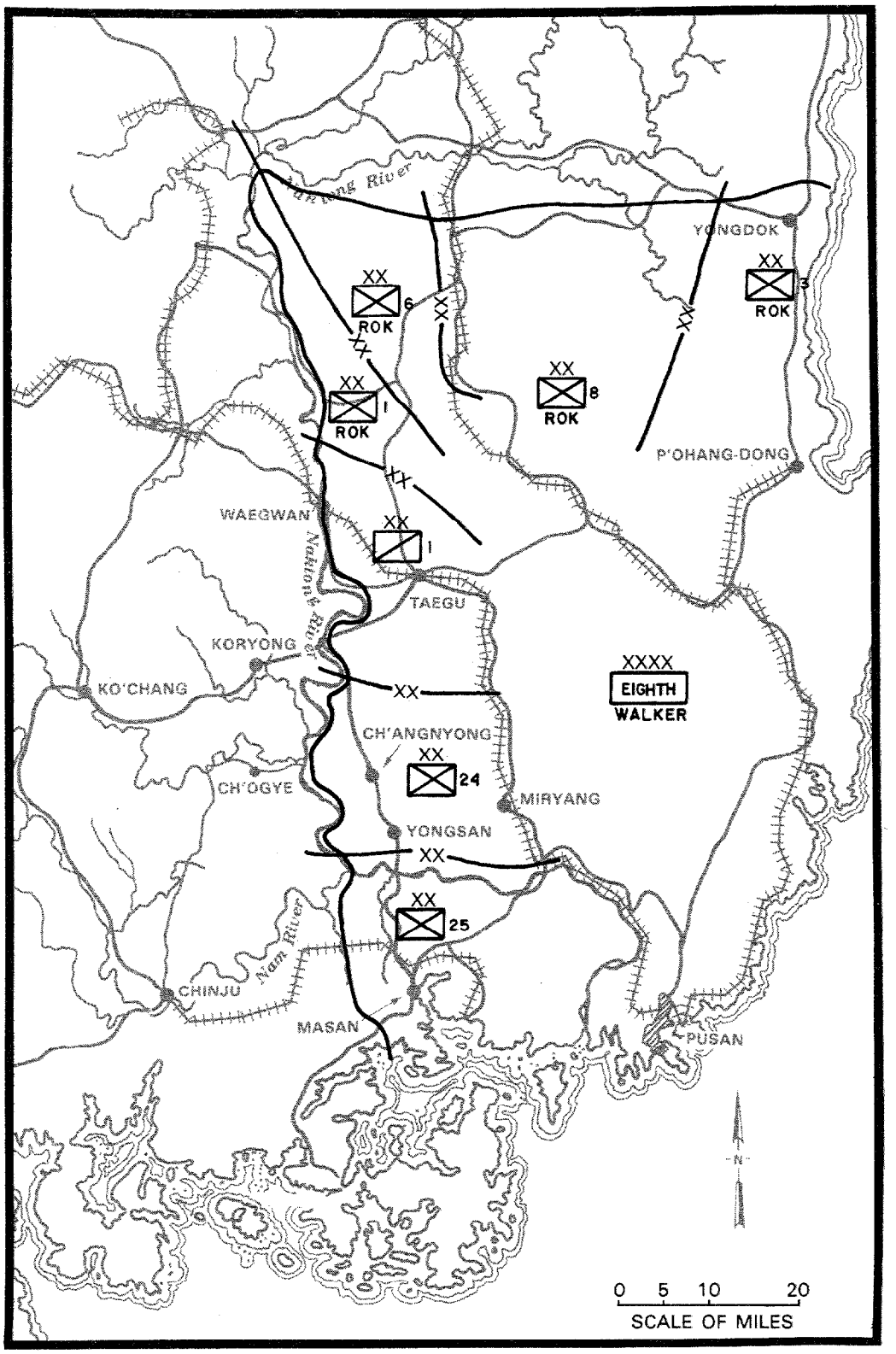
This *Leavenworth Paper* examines both the theory and practice of U.S. Army counterattack doctrine at the outbreak of the Korean War. Through an analysis of the Army's manuals in effect in 1950, it establishes the importance of counterattack in defensive operations and identifies the general principles to be observed in mounting successful counterattacks. The paper then employs a case study to determine the application of counterattack doctrine in the field and to test the validity of that doctrine.

The case study chosen for examination is the First Battle of the Naktong Bulge, 6—19 August 1950, a part of the defense of the Pusan Perimeter. In this battle, the North Korean 4th Infantry Division crossed the Naktong River and penetrated deeply into the sector held by the U.S. 24th Infantry Division. Depleted by peacetime budget cuts and recent heavy combat, the 24th Infantry Division counterattacked to regain its original defensive positions along the river. When the division proved incapable of restoring its front alone, elements of two additional Army divisions and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade joined the counterattack force. Thus augmented, the 24th Infantry Division ultimately repulsed the North Koreans and reestablished its original front.

During the two-week period covered by this study, the 24th Infantry Division and its attached units attempted at least sixty-one counterattacks of company size or larger. Analysis of these operations shows that the U.S. Army's counterattack doctrine was generally sound, but that significant elements of that doctrine were not followed by the 24th Infantry Division during the battle. This failure to implement valid doctrinal concepts appears both to have delayed the ultimate victory and increased its cost. Although the study is rich in other lessons as well, its findings regarding counterattack doctrine remain its central theme.



Map 1. The retreat of the 24th Division, 5 July—5 August 1950



Map 2. The Pusan Perimeter, 5 August 1950