

An Historical and Strategic Event Never Memorialized



By J.W. Bryan

December 28, 2022

The following article is an account covering what is reported by Wikipedia concerning the participation of the 1st Marine Division in the 1951 advance through the mountains of east-central Korea, and the part it took in the U.N. defense against a Chinese Communist spring offensive with nearly 500,000 enemy soldiers.

The report does not cover the very strategic event which played into Mao Tse Tung's set up of a massive counterattack, which I, a corporal in the Post Exchange (PX) mobile unit attached to the 5th Marine regimental HQ saw developing. It should have been seen by scores of others, especially those in or connected to intelligence. The information concerning Mao's incorporating into his poetry his military tactics and strategy already existed in Marine intelligence and should have been in all intelligence units throughout the 8th Army.

1951 Korea

While we were in Japan, an army Captain, who gave us a heads-up on what we could expect when we arrived in Korea, told us that a Marine Major in intelligence, who had been raised in China, had reported all of this about Mao and his poetry. So, this information should have been in all the intelligence units.

The poem that played into the counterattack was the one which goes something like this: "When the enemy is strong – we retreat. When they are tired – we harass. When they are hungry – we attack." He, of course, possessed the knowledge of all the circumstances which equated with each condition of the enemy, when they were strong, tired, or hungry.

According to my perception of his strategy, it was a sort of spin-off from General Robert E. Lee's "Defense In Depth" with modifications, which, according to Marine instructors at Camp Pendleton, was studied and copied all over the world.

However, it appears that all this information which could have been used to, partially at least, thwart the Chinese spring offensive, was either ignored or rejected, and resulted in the entire 8th Army's retreat of about 100 miles.

The spring offensive began the night of April 21 (I believe) and according to the report ended in mid-May with heavy enemy losses. This, however does not negate the losses we suffered or the cost in retaking all this territory.

According to reports by Wikipedia on the history of the First Marine Division's operation in the Korean conflict, "During The first three months of 1951, the 1st Marine Division participated in several U.N. offensive operations, first against North Korean guerrillas and later participating in an advance through the mountains of east-central Korea. From late April to early July, the division took part in the U.N. defense against a Chinese Communist spring offensive, in which U.N. forces faced nearly 500,000 enemy soldiers. The Chinese offensive ended in mid-May with heavy enemy losses."

Upon arriving in Korea, after being called back to duty in October, I was assigned to the 1st Marine Division's mobile post exchange (PX). As far as I know this was the first time this service existed in a combat situation. There was usually

a unit of 4 marines, a staff NCO and three others of lower rank attached to each regimental HQ. When a Battalion was relieved from the front line and was placed in reserve, the PX unit would be directed to service it. This was good for the moral of the troops.

I really looked forward to having a battalion in reserve which we would be directed to service. I was the cashier and it meant that I would have to stand in one place for 10 or 12 hours, adding up the amounts for the merchandise of each man, receiving payment and giving back the change.

At times there would be a thousand or more men come through the line, but I enjoyed listening to the frivolity carried on by the guys, and all of it just seemed to result in a holiday atmosphere. Also, I was thankful to be serving the line instead of in it.

The 5th Marine Regiment that my unit was attached to begin its advance through the mountains of east-central Korea (noted in the Wikipedia report) in late March or early April of 1951. At the beginning of the campaign the fighting was intense but after the enemy gave way, we moved forward very fast. When we would set up in a new location there were times when we would only be there for maybe two or three days. It always appeared to me that when the regiment contacted the enemy there would only be light resistance, then once again, they would retreat for maybe several miles. After observing this a couple of times and thinking on it I began to see a pattern; one which resembled General Robert E. Lee's tactic of "Defense in Depth" with modifications. It was specifically designed to draw an attacking force into a counterattack.

As I saw it, that was exactly what was happening. I mentioned this to one of the men in my unit, but to his thinking, "Ah...them S.O.B's is just hauling ass." Of course, I realized this was probably the thinking of the entire 8th army, which was

the objective of the Chinese Command – to make our people in command think we had put the enemy to route.

I believed that what I had been observing was developing into conditions which were leading to our forces being confronted with a massive counterattack. To me it was a textbook situation and on our next move forward I saw in my mind where it would happen.

The road we were traveling came to a river flowing from the north-east, but more easterly than northern. The road crossed on a pontoon bridge then turned sharply right following the river in the direction from which it flowed. Also, across the road from the river there was a massive *hogback*, (a long hill or mountain ridge with steep sides), which I learned later, ran maybe six or seven miles before leveling somewhat into a plane, or so it appeared to me.

On the other side of the *hogback* there was a narrow valley that ended with the hogback at the pontoon bridge. Evidently, the valley began at the upper end of the hogback.

The 5th and 7th Marine Regiments were in position somewhere up that road; I didn't know where. The 2nd Army Division was in position beyond the Marines, but I didn't know that at the time.

Meditating on all this I reasoned that an overwhelming force could strike the unit that was in position at the beginning of the valley. Whatever unit it might be would not be expecting an attack – **“The enemy was just hauling it; they had been put to route.”** Most likely there would be only a few outposts. So, if the enemy struck at night it could proceed down the valley to the pontoon bridge. This would result in whatever units positioned to the east of the bridge being cut off.

We were scheduled to move up the next day; but when I woke up that morning, I knew something was wrong, there wasn't anyone

in the tent except me. Then I heard a flight of Marine Corsairs that were flying straight over our tent and into the hogback. When they cleared the pinnacle, I heard the rocket and machine fire. I knew immediately what had happened. I also knew that the Chinese were only about a mile from the pontoon bridge. Shortly, Sergeant Shrake came up and told us we had to get ready to retreat, but we had to take inventory before loading up.

This resulted in a bit of humorous activity. After we had finished the inventory and calculated the results, we discovered that we were \$237 dollars over. Sergeant Shrake said to me, "Red, what are we gonna do about this?" I replied, "Well, in this case it's very simple." He said, "How?" I said, "We have a case of Gillett blue blades in stock that we haven't opened that is charged out to us for \$200.00. We'll just take that out of the inventory then we'll only be \$37.00 over" He agreed and that's what we did.

What almost happened; and it would have exactly as I had envisioned it except for staff sergeant Shrake. He was still up at midnight the night of the attack, and seeing a stream of disorderly ROK (Republic of Korea) soldiers coming down the road towards the bridge, he went out to the road and talked to some of them and informed about what had happened

Prior to this I had tried to think of some way to warn those in command; I knew that Colonel "Chesty" Puller and the 1st Marine Regiment was in reserve about 10 miles south of us, but I didn't have any way to get there. If I had, I would have made the attempt even though I knew that he might not consider what I would reveal. But I knew that he had a reputation for listening to enlisted personnel at times so I would have chanced it if it had been possible.

When staff Sergeant Shrake learned from the ROK soldiers what had happened, he contacted our coordinating officer and they drove down to where Colonel Puller was and informed him what

had happened. This resulted in the 1st Marine Regiment deploying into the valley with the Chinese coming down.

If Sergeant Shrake had not been awake to see those ROK soldiers proceeding disorderly down the road, the Chinese would have taken command of the bridge before daybreak. This would have cut-off the 5th And 7th Marines along with all supporting units. I am not sure that anyone realized what was prevented by what the Sergeant did.

The 2nd Army Division, being further east was cut off, and had to abandon all their equipment and heavy weapons and retreat on-foot through the mountains. They were in reserve for quite a long time before getting back into action.

During our retreat I was given a Sergeant's rank. This resulted, I think, because those in command of the PX had planned for me to be put in charge of the unit attached to the First Marine Regiment, which I was.

Now, having put all this together, by memory, after over 70 years, and reflecting on it, I realize that given the fact that the counterattacking force being about 500,000 strong, the 8th Army could have possibly been forced to retreat, even if the event which I have described had been prevented. But I don't think it would have been nearly as far as it was if the intelligence units, both Army and Marines, had been taking care of business.

This is a classic example of what happens when we assume that everything is nailed down and go on. Then we also forget the principle which states that all choices result in consequences which are inadvertent and come into play, usually with disastrous results.

The same goes for our lives...faith. We must have our faith in the Creator nailed down.

America 2022

The consequences in Korea in 1951 are nothing compared to what we are currently and will continue to be confronted with in our nation because 99+ percent of the people rejected or ignored all information that revealed that an evil force was, and had been for many decades, constantly working, and conniving to destroy all rights of Americans along with all other people in the world in order to set up a NEW WORLD ORDER, which is now being referred to as THE GREAT RESET.

However, none of our so-called conservative Senators or Congressmen ever say anything about these two entities or the main force behind them, which is the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). They never mention any threat beyond the Left, represented by the Democrats. This, of course, in many ways shields the real force behind the Democrats. In addition, it results in most people believing there is no other threat than the Democrats. So, they perceive writers like me, and many others that write about the truth connected with all this, as those who are only trying to draw attention to themselves by concocting false information about what is happening.

By rejecting or ignoring the evidence and information on how to avoid eternal damnation, the consequences will have horrendous results.

Messiah Jesus Christ paved the way for us to escape this. He gave his life on the cross that all who would accept him as their personal Savior – would live with him throughout eternity. But it seems that most people, even those with easy access to this information, are either ignoring or rejecting it. And what chills me is the millions of children that are being consigned to Hell by their parents...parents who willfully do not present to their children the way to salvation through Christ.

My heart breaks for the lost.

In 2 Peter 3:9, he writes, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

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