

25 JUL 80

It is deceptively known as the "Land of the Morning Calm", a small state wedged between powerful neighbours. Its thousand year rule by two successive dynasties was interrupted only by a brief Mongol conquest. Then in the 16th and 17th centuries it suffered Japanese and Mongol incursions but survived as a political entity until the end of the 19th century, at which time it became a pawn in the Sino-Japanese-Russian conflicts.

Falling under Japanese dominance until the end of the Second World War, Korea became a separated state by an accident of history. At the end of the war, Japanese forces in Korea surrendered partly to the Americans in the south and partly to the Soviets in the north, and thus became separated along the 38th Parallel. This famous boundary resulted from the negotiations between officers of relatively junior rank--not from ministerial decisions. Administrative convenience eventually hardened into political fact and thereafter all attempts to unify Korea failed due to the presence of Soviet and American troops.

The United Nations entered these negotiations in 1947 through its United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTOC). Canada served in UNTOC to attempt to arrange for elections leading to a singly Korean assembly. Canada opposed the holding of separate elections as the mandate called to facilitate and expedite the elections of a national assembly for the whole nation, not just for part of it. Overridden, she subsequently acquiesced in the formation of a national government. This Commission gave the UN a direct responsibility for action when the invasion from North Korea was launched. Canada recognized the need to uphold the Charter by resisting aggression against a government recognized by the United Nations.

Although elections were held in May 1948, the Commission was prevented from operating in the north. Consequently a government was formed in the south which claimed to be government of all of Korea but which in reality did not have any jurisdiction north of the 38th Parallel.

In 1949, the Americans and the Soviets withdrew their troops from Korea, ~~and~~ now a country with two governments ~~was~~. But the Morning Calm was perpetually threatened by the Soviets in Manchuria and Siberia and by the Americans in Japan.

During the 1950 elections, the northern government staged a political offensive for unification of the country either by a merger of the two parliaments or by new elections from which the governmental figures of the south were to be disbarred.

When it became clear that these gambits would not work, North Korean troops crossed the 38th Parallel on June 25 to impose unification on the south.

Had Dean Acheson, the US Secretary of State, not excluded Korea from the US defence perimeter this action probably would not have happened. This perimeter enclosed all those territories for which the US was prepared to fight in order to protect. Neither would the northern troops cross the line if they had not been assured of Soviet support. However, Acheson's decision of January was quickly reversed and South Korea, as well as Foremosa, were included in this perimeter.

In order to discuss this latest operation, the UN Security Council met at the bidding of US President Harry Truman and passed, in the absence of the USSR's representative, a resolution requiring a ceasefire and the return of all the northern troops to their own side of the border. All members of the United Nations were asked to

support the measure and on July 5, Truman instructed General Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo to support the Southern Koreans with one division. In addition, Truman instructed the US Seventh Fleet to insulate Foremosa.

Within two days (June 27) the Security Council passed a resolution calling on all members of the UN to assist South Korea, ~~and~~ to repel any attack made upon it and to restore international peace. This resolution was based upon the belief that fighting between the North and South was a threat to international peace; this belief was later challenged by the USSR.

On July 5, the one division under MacArthur's command made contact with the enemy. Other UN members offered to assist with the onus of bringing peace to this country, each offer in turn being accepted. Canada was one of the 16 nations to provide troops and ships in response to the appeal of the Secretary General. Three ships and a body of troops of brigade strength were organized.

On July 7, the Security Council recommended that the military contributions of those nations be placed under the unified command of the nation which was shouldering most of the responsibility for the cessation of the conflict--the United States.

In July a United Nations command was established in Tokyo under MacArthur.

Canada's offer of assistance was one of the first, and in the final analysis, proved to be the third largest--exceeded only by the United States and the United Kingdom. On June 27, the Royal Canadian Navy began to take steps to put its Pacific fleet on a war footing.

HMCS Sioux was in dry dock for "alterations and additions" and was not due for completion before July 10; HMCS Athabaskan had already begun preparations for a European cruise, however, many of her key personnel were on leave and not due to return before July 6; and the senior ship of the division, HMCS Cayuga had recently come out of dry dock and was the best prepared of the three to make a quick departure.

The decision was taken by the flag officer of the west coast that these ships were prepared to depart in 24 hours if necessary. It is fortunate that this decision was not required to be made in such a short time as some of the ships needed changes in armament, some had to complete essential repairs to bring their complements to wartime levels and all had to take on stores, a liberal supply of spare parts and fuel and ammunition. In short, that they were prepared to go when they did still stands as a credit to the staffs of the supply depot and the dockyard.

On June 30 a message was received at Pacific Command's headquarters officially cancelling the European cruise. Two and a half hours later, the flag officer received another message..."You are to sail "Cayuga," "Sioux," and "Athabaskan" from Esquimalt at 16 knots to Pearl Harbour p.m. Wednesday 5 July, 1950..."

As a consequence of this message, the three ships fell in behind HMCS Ontario, an operational supply ship, which led the three for two days. The on the evening of July 7, she topped up the destroyers with oil and reversed course to steam back to Vancouver Island. The destroyers then organized as Task Group 214.4 with Cayuga as the senior ship.

Within two hours of arriving in Pearl Harbour on the morning of July 12, a message arrived from Canada which authorized the task group to come under the operational command of General MacArthur in

for May Mills
from Capt Dunne

3/5

3

Tokyo. For the first time, Canadian warships flew the UN flag from their foremastheads.

While it is common knowledge that the Royal Canadian Navy participated in the Korean sea campaign, it was a campaign in which the Canadian ships never even sighted an enemy craft worthy of the title of "warship". But the Navy made an important contribution to the effort to quell aggression in this small nation, and thus bolstered UN efforts to achieve world peace.

Many of the activities in which the ships participated included off-shore barrages, escort for small junks filled with guerillas intended to go ashore on raiding missions, reminiscent of the old Viking raids.

One of the examples of the excellence with which these RCN Ships conducted the operations in which they participated is shown when one of the later comers, HMCS Crusader won the coveted "train-busting championship."

In Canadian fashion, it was also time for operational levity, such as the time when HMC Ships Nootka and Athabaskan contested for the "Yellow Sea Fuelling Stakes."

The contest began with the Nootka going in for the replenishment of her fuel supply which took two minutes 12 seconds. Not to be out-done, Athabaskan steamed up next to the oiler so close that CPO John Rogers was able to drop the heaving line right on the deck. The oiler's crew furiously attached the hose and began pumping. The entire operation took no more than one minute 40 seconds. The feat was unexcelled throughout the Korean conflict.

The Canadian Army, however, had a much different introduction to the "Land of the Morning Calm".

Unprepared for war so soon after the Second World War, Canada's Parliament passed a bill which permitted the raising of the Canadian Army Special Force. While this expeditionary force was being recruited and trained, the US armed forces in Korea found itself upon hard times.

Pressed into the Pusan Perimeter in the south east corner of Korea, these forces were being hard pressed. An amphibious landing of September 15 changed the situation overnight. The North Koreans found their communications threatened and therefore were forced ~~xx~~ by the American corps to serge northward. By the end of October, most of Korea was in UN hands.

Communist China, interpreting these moves as a threat to its own sovereignty, launched a massive offensive which drove the South Koreans and the Americans southward across the 38th Parallel. A second offensive at the beginning of the New Year carried the enemy into Seoul and 40 miles beyond. In November a Canadian advance party had disembarked at Pusan and by mid-February, 2 PPCLI had taken their place in the line as part of the 27th Commonwealth Brigade which included two British and one Australian battalions, a New Zealand artillery regiment and an Indian Field Ambulance.

During the latter half of February, the Canadians participated in a general advance which freed Seoul and on April 8, successfully attacked objectives across the 38th Parallel.

Towards the end of April, another Chinese and North Korean offensive again forces the UN into retreat. The task of the Commonwealth Brigade was to hold open a withdrawal route through the Kap'yong Valley. This was accomplished by holding commanding heights in the

for May Mills
from Capt. Munroe

4/5

4

face of determined attacks and subtle infiltration. The PPCLI, completely surrounded during part of the action and supplied by air, defended one height firmly during two days and a night of heavy fighting, losing 10 men and having 23 wounded. The enemy then withdrew. For their stand in the face of the enemy, the PPCLI was awarded the Presidential Citation.

Meanwhile the rest of the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade Group trained at Fort Lewis, Washington under Brigadier J. M. Rockingham. The Group sailed for Korea in April 1951 and came to line towards the end of May, in time to take part in a further advance to the 38th Parallel. The 2 RCR and 2 R22R (Van Doos) made good progress against light resistance and on May 29, thrust forward into North Korea. However, once the Parallel was crossed, opposition increased and in an attack on the village of Chail-li and a neighbouring hill, the RCR lost six and 25 wounded without gaining their objectives. All across the front operations slowed from a virtual pursuit to static warfare, marked by active patrolling. On July 10, cease-fire negotiations were begun with the enemy representatives near Kaesong, on the 38th Parallel.

On July 28, the 1st Commonwealth Division was formed, the first of its kind in history. The Canadian Brigade Group joined it and during August engaged in strong patrolling in the region of the Imjin River. During October, the 25th Brigade, in concert with other Commonwealth troops, fought forward across the lower Imjin to attain better defensive positions. The line gained was to vary little until the end of hostilities in July 1953. The Canadians were to become very familiar with the boggy flats and hills in which they now found themselves.

The Chinese launched attacks against the Patricia's on October 12, against the RCR and the Patricia's in early November and against the Van Doos between November 22 and 25. In each case the enemy was repulsed and the Canadians countered with raids and aggressive patrolling. Then on November 27, orders were received that no further fighting patrols were to be dispatched and that the artillery would be restricted to ~~xxx~~ defensive fire and counter-bombardment tasks--an indication that the cease-fire negotiations were making progress.

From the winter of 1951-2 until the end of hostilities, a period of static warfare set in. It was largely a "gunners' war" and for ~~xxxx~~ tanks, whose role was restricted to sodden rice ~~fields~~ paddies and hills, sniped at by the Communists from unconventional positions. The enemy was weaker in artillery, armour and air strength and the UN forces were stronger in manpower and they used it well. The result was a stalemate.

By the end of the war the forces of 22 countries were involved against the Chinese and Koreans. When the Armistice was signed at Panmunjom, ending three years and one month of fighting, Canada sent 21,940 soldiers to serve in the war and another 7,000 served in the theatre between the cease-fire and the end of 1955. The Communist Chinese suffered an approximate 967,000 battle casualties and the North Koreans, 624,000. The United Nations battle casualties were about 490,000 with the Canadians sustaining 1,642, of which 406 were fatalities.

The Korean War forces the Canadian government to revise its estimate of the potential for a major war. A new sense of urgency was apparent and the defence program announced in the House of Commons on February 5, 1951, called for an expenditure of about \$5 billion over three years, almost twice the cost of the New Fighter Aircraft program.

In succeeding years, all three services increased in size and considerable new equipment was obtained. Although the Korean action did not enlarge into a major war, the Canadian government's policy

for may mills
from Capt Blunne 5/5 5

policy continued to place emphasis on defence. For the first time in her history, Canada maintained in time of peace, adequate troops to meet her probable commitments...