
MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL REFERENCE PAMPHLET

**THE UNITED STATES MARINES
IN NORTH CHINA
1945 - 1949**



HISTORICAL BRANCH, G-3 DIVISION
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

**The United States Marines
in North China
1945-1949**

By

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FOREWORD

The United States Marines in North China, 1945-1949 is a concise narrative of the major events which took place when Marine ground and air units were deployed to the Asian mainland at the close of World War II. The text and appendices are based on official records, interviews with participants in the operations described, and reliable secondary sources. The pamphlet is published for the information of Marines and others interested in this significant period of Marine Corps history.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. G. Owens, Jr.".

R. G. OWENS, JR.
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The United States Marines in North China, 1945-1949

By

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HOPEH OPERATIONS

The III Amphibious Corps (IIIAC) had just begun a period of intensive training, in preparation for the invasion of the Tokyo Plain, when the war ended abruptly. Within 48 hours, a warning order had been dispatched to all units of the corps to be prepared to mount out for the Shanghai area about 1 October. In anticipation of a wide variety of possible military operations, the training schedule was modified and accelerated. But before a week had passed, Admiral Nimitz advised the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific (FMFPac), that tentative plans contemplated the employment of IIIAC in North China, to accept the surrender of Japanese troops for the Chinese Central Government and to supervise the repatriation of Japanese military and civilians. The corps headquarters and corps troops together with the 1st Marine Division would occupy positions in the vicinity of Tangku, Tientsin, Peiping, and Chinwangtao in Hopeh Province and the 6th Marine Division (less the 4th Marines) would move into Tsingtao in Shantung Province. The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing would move its planes and men to airfields in the Tsingtao, Tientsin, and Peiping areas. (See maps inside covers). Commitment of the entire corps in the Shanghai region was assigned as an alternate mission. Tentative plans for these operations were issued on 29 August, setting the mounting-out date for 15 September. The 3d Marine Division on Guam and the 4th Marine Division on Maui were designated area reserve for the operation.

According to plan, the Hopeh occupation force got underway first. The corps embarkation order was issued on 8 September, and loading of the corps troops began at Guam on the 11th. Loading was completed on 19 September, and the IIIAC Chief of Staff, Brigadier General William A. Worton, departed by air with an advance party to report to Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, USA, commanding the China Theater (ComGenChina), at Shanghai and proceeded to Tientsin to prepare for the reception

of the occupation forces there. The Commanding General, IIIAC, Major General Keller E. Rockey, sailed with the convoy from Guam for Okinawa the following day. Here, ships carrying the troops of the 1st Marine Division (Major General DeWitt Peck) rendezvoused with this convoy on 24 September. Two days later, corps troops and the 1st Marine Division sailed from Okinawa for the anchorage off Taku.

Long before daybreak on 30 September, the convoy anchored in the bay off the mouth of Hai River. With dawn, as if out of nowhere, appeared a swarm of sampans manned by enthusiastic Chinese crews who sculled their small craft close to the transports to exchange mutually unintelligible badinage with the troops lining the rails and to trade cheap trinkets. The aura of good-natured welcome continued as the Assistant Division Commander of the 1st Division, Brigadier General Louis R. Jones, and his staff boarded a patrol craft to lead a procession of LCTs carrying men of the 7th Marines over Taku Bar and into the narrow channel that led upriver to the Tangku docks. It was the start of a daylong victory parade. "Until long after dark groups of Chinese lined the river banks, gathered...outside their...houses to cheer each boatload of Marines."(2)

At 1030, General Jones set foot on the docks and met with Chinese port officials to complete arrangements initiated by General Worton's advance party for the reception, transportation, and billeting of the Marines. The 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, entrained for Tientsin, while 2/7 bivouacked in the warehouse area beside the docks. Elements of the IIIAC Shore Brigade, built around the 7th Service Regiment, also disembarked on the 30th to start unloading cargo. On every hand, the "Chinese military and civilian authorities were cooperative in the extreme,"(3) and no trouble of any kind was experienced with the Japanese garrison.

The tumultuous welcome that greeted 3/7 when it arrived in Tientsin was repeated and reinforced the following day as the 1st Marines and Division Headquarters Battalion reached the city by rail and road. The streets were packed with Chinese of all classes and European expatriates. Trucks and marching troops literally had to force their way through the happy, flag-waving throngs to reach their assigned billets in the former International Concessions. To many of the men, it seemed that their welcome must have outshone and outshouted "any welcome given to troops any time, any place, and anywhere during the war."(4)

The first element of IIIAC to come in direct contact with the highly explosive internal situation prevailing in North China was the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines. On 1 October, 1/7, reinforced, under Lieutenant Colonel John J. Gormley, sailed from Taku for the all-weather port of Chinwangtao, rail terminal for the shipment of coal from the Tangshan mining area. Former Japanese puppet troops occupying the town were engaged in desultory fighting with Communist regulars and guerrillas who held most of the surrounding countryside. Because, as Gormley reported, "all factions, civilian and military, were anxious to cooperate with our troops,"(5) the Marine commander was able to stop the fighting. He ordered the puppet forces withdrawn from their perimeter defenses and replaced them with his own men. The local Communist commander disclaimed any designs on the area without full American cooperation. The aura of universal trust was short-lived, however, and before the month was out, the Communists were regularly sabotaging rail lines leading into the city and firing on Marine-guarded trains.

Chinwangtao was only one of many spots where the Marines, in pursuing their assigned mission in China, clashed with the Communists. While open warfare was avoided by both sides, the area of intermittent conflict spread as IIIAC expanded its hold on key cities and vital routes of communication. The first Marine casualties were incurred in a fire fight on the Tientsin-Peiping road.

On 5 October, reconnaissance parties proceeding from Tientsin to Peiping found 36 unguarded roadblocks scattered along the route; jeeps were the only vehicles that could get through. The following day a detail of engineers, guarded by a rifle platoon, was sent out to clear the road. About 22 miles northwest of Tientsin, the engineer group was fired on by an estimated 40-50 Chinese troops, later identified as Communists, and forced to withdraw. Three Marines were wounded. On 7 October, the engineers went out again, this time with a rifle company of the 1st Marines, a platoon of tanks, and carrier air cover, and the road was cleared without incident. A convoy of 95 vehicles of the 5th Marines reached Peiping to join men of the regiment who arrived by rail. Regular road patrols were established to insure that the Tientsin-Peiping road stayed open.

The harassing tactics of the Communist Eighth Route Army and its affiliated partisans were all too familiar to the Japanese troops who had guarded the areas being taken over by the

Marines. There was strong evidence to indicate that the Japanese had a great deal of respect, even fear, of the Communists, (6) and that they were quite willing to get free of incessant forays, ambushes, and sabotage. General Rockey, acting for the Chinese Central Government, accepted the surrender of the 50,000 Japanese troops in the Tientsin-Tangku-Chinwangtao area at Tientsin on 6 October. Four days later, the Japanese forces in the Peiping area, an additional 50,000 men, surrendered to the Eleventh War Area commander, General Lien Chung Sun, Chiang Kai-shek's personal representative in North China. Most of the Japanese were concentrated in centrally located bivouac and barrack areas to await repatriation, but those who held outlying posts were given orders to remain on guard duty until relieved by recognized Central Government forces or U. S. Marines.

Many of the puppet troops transferred their allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek after the defeat of Japan, and most units were accepted and given official status. Other formations remained unrecognized or went over to the Communists. In addition, the Chiang-appointed mayors of Tientsin and Peiping organized their own armed supporters to back up their powers. It was a chaotic situation and one that pointed up the need for stability, which was provided by the potential strength of the Marines.

By 30 October, all major 1st Division units were ashore and established in their initial areas of responsibility. The Peiping Group, headed by General Jones and built around the 5th Marines (less 1/5) reinforced by 2/11, was established in the Legation Quarter of the ancient capital, with a rifle company at each of the city's two airfields. The 1st and 11th Marines controlled Tientsin, its airfield, and its approaches. The Taku-Tangku area was garrisoned by 1/5, and the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 7th Marines held strongpoints along the Tangku-Chinwangtao railroad. Corps troops were stationed mainly in Tientsin, with necessary supporting detachments in the field with division units.

Headquarters of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, under Major General Claude E. Larkin, was set up on 6 October at the French Arsenal near the airfield east of Tientsin. Headquarters and service squadrons of the wing and its air groups (MAGs) arrived in China with their equipment throughout the month, and flight echelons staged into their assigned firelds at Tsingtao, Peiping, and Tientsin as facilities were readied for them. A destructive typhoon which raged over Okinawa from 9-11 October damaged much of the heavy equipment of wing units stopping there en route

and materially hampered Marine air operations in North China during the remainder of the year.

The first extensive use of the airfields under Marine control was made by the Chinese Central Government. The 50,000 men comprising the Ninety-second and Ninety-fourth Chinese Nationalist Armies (CNA) were airlifted to Peiping from Central and South China by the U. S. Fourteenth Air Force between 6-29 October. The Ninety-second CNA remained in the Peiping area while the Ninety-fourth moved to Tientsin, Tangku, Tangshan, and Chinwangtao. One cause of gradually increasing anti-Marine activity on the part of the Communists is found in the IIIAC war diary's statement that "movement of these armies was facilitated by our forces, in that lines of communication, which made it possible, were kept open by our guards."(7)

The scope of Marine rail guard activities increased rapidly after the initial deployment of the 1st Division. First, intermediate stations between the principal rail centers were occupied, then outposts were established at strategic points, and, finally, vital coal and supply trains were guarded. Chinese track repair gangs, fair game for the guerrillas, needed protection if the railroad was to be kept operating. The presence of CNA forces may have made the Eighth Route Army more wary, but it did not prevent frequent Communist incursions into areas where destruction of roadbed and bridges would be most damaging. The III Corps' first month in China revealed the pattern of future months which stretched into years. Set down in the midst of a fratricidal war with ambiguous instructions to abstain from active participation while "cooperating" with Central Government forces, (8) the Marines walked a tightrope to maintain the illusion of friendly neutrality.

Although the enormous task of processing over 630,000 Japanese military and civilian repatriates in North China fell mostly to IIIAC, the process was well started by the end of October and promised to proceed smoothly so long as the Japanese could reach American-controlled areas. However, the disciplined strength and tactical and technical know-how of the Japanese appealed to both sides in the Chinese civil war and hard-pressed local Communist and Nationalist commanders were wont to detain or attempt to recruit their former enemies as allies. This situation revealed itself first at Tsingtao, destination of the 6th Marine Division, and the planned repatriation port of more than half of the Japanese in North China.

SHANTUNG OPERATIONS

Immediately after he accepted the surrender of Japanese forces in the Tientsin area, General Rockey left for Chefoo to investigate conditions at that port, the objective of the 29th Marines of the 6th Division. Communist troops had already seized the city from the Japanese, installed a party official as mayor, and were not sympathetic to the request from Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, Commander of the Seventh Fleet, that they withdraw before the Marines landed. After a conference on 7 October with the Communist mayor, who asked for withdrawal terms incompatible with IIIAC's mission, (10) Vice Admiral Daniel E. Barbey, Commander, VII Amphibious Force, recommended that the landing be temporarily postponed. Rockey concurred in a decision to delay the Chefoo operation, and on 9 October, ComGenChina was informed by Rockey that the 29th Marines would land at Tsingtao with the rest of the 6th Division.

An advance party under Colonel William N. Best, 6th Division Quartermaster, preceded the main convoy to Tsingtao to make arrangements for billeting troops and to obtain information regarding the local civil, military, and political situation. The division commander, Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., and a small staff transferred to the destroyer escort Newman en route to the target. They wished to arrive on 10 October, a day ahead of the scheduled landing, to confer with Chinese officials.

During the early afternoon of 11 October, the first of the division's transports docked at Tsingtao's wharfs. The 6th Reconnaissance Company, landing first, moved through the crowded streets, lined with a cheering, flag-waving throng, to secure Tsangkou airfield, about 10 miles from the city. The observation planes of VMO-6 were launched from the escort carrier Bougainville the next day and landed safely at the field. The remainder of the division landed amidst the din of enthusiastic applause during the next few days. By 16 October, all troops were ashore and established in their assigned billets.

Local adherents of Chiang Kai-shek, backed up by armed irregulars recognized by the Central Government, were running Tsingtao. The Communists, who held most of Shantung Province, controlled the countryside to the outskirts of Tsangkou airfield. The Japanese and their puppet troops held the rail route

leading into the interior. Until CNA units arrived at Tsingtao in sufficient strength to replace the Japanese, there was little hope of rapid fulfillment of repatriation plans.

On 13 October, an emissary from the Communist commander in Shantung arrived in Tsingtao with a letter for General Shepherd. In it was an offer to cooperate with the Marines "to destroy the remaining Japanese military forces and the rest of the traitor army (puppet army)." In order to "best establish local peace and order," Communist troops would be sent into Tsingtao with the expectation that the Marines would not oppose them. The Communist leader noted that CNA troops were preparing to enter Tsingtao with American help for the express purpose of attacking the Communists. In the resultant "open conflict," he hoped "that our both armies continue to maintain friendly relations."
(11)

The Communist emissary was soon sent back with the general's short and pointed reply. Shepherd stated that the mission of the 6th Division was a peaceful one and did not involve the destruction of either the Japanese or their puppets; there would be no such cooperation as the Communist commander desired. He further indicated that it was neither necessary nor desirable that the Communists enter Tsingtao as the city was peaceful and should disorders of any form arise his "division of well-trained combat veterans would be entirely capable of coping with the situation." As to the preparations for CNA troops to enter Tsingtao, such matters were entirely beyond the control of 6th Division Headquarters, however, Shepherd stated his own credo in regard to the civil war:

On my own behalf, however, I can say without reservation that it is my determination that the Sixth Marine Division will in no way assist any Chinese group in conflict against another.(12)

The formal Japanese surrender of the Tsingtao garrison, about 10,000 men, took place on the city's racecourse on 25 October before the assembled troops of the 6th Division. General Shepherd and Lieutenant General Chen Pao-tsang, Chiang's representative, took the surrender in the name of the Chinese Central Government. The Marines assumed responsibility for disarming, subsisting, and repatriating those Japanese within their area of control.

Clashes between the Communists and the Japanese and former

puppet troops were frequent in Shantung during October, and at General Shepherd's request, planes of MAG-32 started regular reconnaissance patrols on 26 October to check the status of the rail lines and their Japanese guards and to insure adequate warning of any Communist move against Tsingtao.

The flight echelon of MAG-32 reached Tsingtao on 21 October, and it was followed soon after the planes of MAG-12 staging up from the Philippines to their base at Peiping. By the end of October, elements of all the wing's major units had landed in China. MAGs-12 and -24 were established at Peiping's airfields and MAGs-25 and -32 were stationed at Tsingtao together with the wing's personnel reception and processing center.(13) Major General Louis E. Woods arrived in Tientsin on 31 October to assume command of the wing from General Larkin.

The first few weeks of the 6th Division's occupation of Tsingtao revealed a situation somewhat different from that which faced IIIAC in the Peiping-Tientsin-Chinwangtao area. The Chinese Central Government's effective strength in Hopeh Province gained rapidly during October, due in large part to the Marines' control of the major cities and lines of communication between them. CNA troops there soon reached a position of strength in relation to their Communist opponents. In Shantung, however, the Communists held most of the coastline and vast areas of the interior prior to the arrival of the Marines, and had withdrawn most of their troops from Central China to make a fight for this vital province. Because the Communists respected the implied threat of the 6th Division's air and ground strength, backed up by the guns and planes of the Seventh Fleet, Tsingtao remained a Nationalist island in a Communist sea.

The primary mission of the Marines in China, as expressed by the Secretary of the Navy, was "to accomplish the disarmament of the Japanese and to provide for their repatriation up to the point where General Wedemeyer considers that the Chinese Nationalist government troops can alone carry out this mission." (14) This mission could not be fulfilled in Shantung until CNA forces could gain control of the interior and release the Japanese from their vital guard duties. The prospect of a short tour of duty in China, at least by the Marine forces in Tsingtao, was not good.

MARINE TROOP REDUCTION

IIIAC's disposition in Hopeh placed it squarely astride the route to Manchuria along which Chiang Kai-shek moved to regain the rich northeastern provinces. After U. S. ships landed the Thirteenth CNA at Chinwangtao on 30-31 October, a steady stream of Manchuria-bound troops funnelled into North China through the Marine-controlled area. Although the Nationalists had a relatively safe point of debarkation and protected railheads, their lifeline into Manchuria was tenuous. From the Great Wall to Mukden and on to Changchun, every mile of track, every bridge, and every switch was the potential target of Communist attacks. As the American military attache at Chungking reported, "the principal weapon of the Communists in their efforts to prevent the Central Government from occupying areas dominated by them is the effectiveness of Communist troops against the railroads in those areas."(16)

General Wedemeyer, in his capacity as military advisor to Chiang Kai-shek, had warned the Chinese leader early in November that he should first consolidate his grip on North China before attempting to occupy Manchuria. Despite the Nationalists' marked superiority in men and equipment, Wedemeyer felt that the CNA had neither adequate forces nor transport to insure appropriate logistic support and security for the long and vulnerable supply route. The effective suppression of Communist guerrilla activity in North China required the commitment of overwhelmingly superior CNA forces. When large numbers of these troops were drained off for the Manchuria drive, vast areas in the interior of Shantung and Hopeh fell to Communist control. The Nationalists' premature Manchuria operation contained within it the seeds of Nationalist destruction, and they ripened in a few short and bloody years into total defeat.

On both political and moral grounds, it was impossible for the United States to take a decisive military role in another nation's civil war, and the average Marine on postwar duty in China found himself an uneasy spectator or sometimes an unwilling participant in a war which he little understood and could not prevent. A steady procession of "incidents" involving Marine guards and raiding Communists continued until the last Marine cleared Tsingtao in the spring of 1949.(17)

The explosive nature of the situation is best illustrated by an incident that occurred soon after the Marines arrived in China. On 14 November, a train carrying General Peck and an inspection party was fired on near Kuyeh, while en route from Tangshan to Chinwangtao. A desultory fire fight lasting several hours ensued between the Marine train guards and Communist forces located around a village some 500 yards north of the track. General Rockey approved Peck's request for a bombing mission against the village, but only simulated strafing runs were made because of the danger to innocent civilians and the lack of a clearly definable target of hostile troops. Late in the afternoon, a company from the 7th Marines, sent to aid the beleaguered train, found that the opposing forces had melted away. Peck's train returned to Kuyeh after dark.

Next day, the general's train was halted in the same general area by a break in the track, and again it was taken under fire. During the night, some 400 yards of the rail line had been torn up. Several Chinese section hands, attempting to repair the break, were killed or injured by mines planted near the right of way, but there were no Marine casualties. Since repair work was expected to take two days, General Peck returned to Tangshan, headquarters of the 7th Marines, where he boarded a light observation plane and continued to Chinwangtao by air.

The Kuyeh incident demonstrated the need for strong CNA offensive action to clear the railroad line, and to arrange this, General Peck was authorized to deal directly with Lieutenant General Tu Li-ming, Commanding General, Northeast China Command. The Nationalist leader agreed to drive back the Communist guerrillas and to avoid Marine positions while he was doing so, in order to keep American forces out of the conflict. The Marines, in turn, would help release Nationalist troops for this operation by assuming responsibility for guarding all rail bridges over 100 meters long between Tangku and Chinwangtao, a distance of approximately 135 miles.

Even before this new task was added to the extensive security commitments of the 7th Marines, IIIAC had recognized the need for additional troops in the regiment's zone of responsibility, which extended from Tangku to Chinwangtao, and on 30 October, the corps had ordered the 6th Marine Division to provide a reinforced infantry battalion for duty in the Chinwangtao area. General Shepherd sent the 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, from Tsingtao on 6 November, and it landed the next day at Chinwangtao. There, these 6th Division men were placed under operational control of the 7th Marines. They soon were plagued by

incidents involving blown tracks, train derailments, and ambushes which were to be the lot of Marines on duty in the midst of the Chinese civil war. While American casualties amounted to only a handful compared to the toll from an island assault, these China dangers were particularly distasteful because the war was supposed to be over, and the slowly rising casualty list loomed large in the eyes of the men who manned the isolated guard posts and rode the dusty coal trains.

China duty had been coveted in the prewar Marine Corps, and, for the men who garrisoned the major cities in 1945, a China assignment still had much of that appeal. Marine commanders set up a system to rotate troops on dangerous and exposed outposts, and to grant liberty in Peiping and Tientsin to the men on rail guard duty. Rest from the constant strain of watching and waiting was brief, however; in a few days, the Marines again were standing guard along the rail line.

Coal shipments guarded by the 1st Marine Division were vital to the Chinese people. General Wedemeyer pointed out that it was "a military necessity that at least 100,000 tons of coal reach Shanghai every month,"(18) and his orders to IIIAC were to insure that this coal reached its destination. Without it, the public utilities and factories needed to keep the economy of that key city alive would cease to operate, and the lack of coal would mean starvation for thousands of people. Perhaps the average Marine standing his turn on guard and huddling against the biting winter wind that blew down out of the Mongolian desert was not aware of this, but his superiors were, and they lived under the constant pressure of that knowledge.

The United States was determined to try every feasible measure to achieve peace in China and promote the country's economic recovery. On 27 November 1945, President Truman appointed General of the Army George C. Marshall as his Special Representative in China to attempt mediation of the differences between the Nationalists and Communists. Truman said it was "in the most vital interest of the United States and all the United Nations that the people of China overlook no opportunity to adjust their internal differences promptly by methods of peaceful negotiation."(19)

The immediate Chinese reaction to the President's appointment was very favorable, and it was evident that a man of Marshall's unquestioned personal integrity was essential in

the role of mediator. But the basic problem proved insoluble. Neither the Nationalists nor the Communists could overcome their distrust of each other:

The National Government was convinced that the U.S.S.R. had obstructed the efforts of the National Government to assume control over Manchuria in spite of the provisions of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945 and that the Chinese Communists were tools of the U.S.S.R. The Chinese Communist Party was suspicious of the Kuomintang and believed that its aim was the destruction of the Chinese Communist Party. The Government leaders were unwilling to permit Communist participation in the Government until the Communists had given up their armed forces, while the Communists believed that to do so without guarantees of their legal political status would end in their destruction.
(20)

General Marshall managed some cooperation early in his mission, when both groups agreed to meet with him and form a top-level negotiating Committee of Three. Chiang Kai-shek appointed General Chang Chun as his representative, and Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, appointed Chou En-lai. The committee held its first formal session at Chungking on 7 January 1946, and three days later, agreed on a cease-fire to take effect at midnight on 13 January. The terms of the agreement were simple. Both sides were to cease hostilities and halt all troop movements except those of the CNA forces into and within Manchuria, where Chinese sovereignty was being reasserted. An Executive Headquarters would be established at Peiping following the Committee of Three pattern to supervise the cease-fire agreement, and operational teams including a Nationalist, a Communist, and an American officer, would go into the field to insure compliance with cease-fire provisions. It was made clear, however, that American participation in the work of the Executive Headquarters would be restricted to aiding the Chinese members. In effect, each American team member acted as did General Marshall, but in a greatly restricted capacity.

For IIIAC the cease-fire agreement meant a lessening of the hit-and-run guerrilla attacks, but there was never a time in the following months when a guard detachment could consider itself safe. By March, political and military differences had again split China wide open and, although a pretense at negotiation continued, clashes increased between Communists and

Nationalists. Neither side was blameless in the covert renewal of hostilities, but the major share of blame fell to the Communists, who definitely violated the 10 January agreement in wholesale manner in March and April by moving troops from Shansi and Hopeh into Manchuria. With the assistance of the Soviet occupation forces, which conveniently withdrew when Chinese Communists arrived to take over, and which left large stock-piles of Japanese weapons and munitions behind, Mao Tse-tung managed to strengthen considerably his military position during the respite gained by the cease-fire.

At the same time that the Communists built up strength for the forthcoming show-down campaign and the Nationalists reinforced their Manchurian armies, Marine units in China were hit by the severe postwar reduction of America's troop strength. By December 1945, thousands of men in the III Amphibious Corps were eligible to return to the States under the point discharge and rotation plan, and increasing numbers would become eligible in each month of the new year. Although some replacements (low point men and regulars) were available from Marine units disbanding elsewhere in the Pacific, or from the United States, this number did not meet the minimum requirements of the units remaining in China.

In the first quarter of 1946, substantial reductions in the number of Marines in China were made and many veteran units were deactivated. Approval for IIIAC to disband the 6th Marine Division was received from General Wedemeyer on 13 December 1945. The division would shrink into a reinforced brigade, with its infantry component organized around the skeletonized 4th Marines, whose headquarters was then in Japan. On 24 December, General Shepherd, commander of the division since its formation on Guadalcanal in September 1944, turned over his command to Major General Archie B. Howard, and returned to the United States.

January brought the end to one major Marine responsibility in North China. Arrangements were completed to turn over custody of remaining Japanese personnel and equipment and the responsibility for Japanese subsistence and repatriation to the CNA. The actual transfer was well underway. To pursue their operations in North China and Manchuria, the Nationalists needed the large stores of Japanese munitions held under Marine guard, but as a matter of American policy, General Wedemeyer had refused this materiel to the CNA unless the Central Government assumed complete responsibility for the Japanese. The Marines, however, were still to play a prominent part in repatriation activities.

Wedemeyer directed that American forces in the China Theater furnish supervisory assistance in processing, staging, and loading out the repatriates. In addition, Marines would continue to furnish guard details for American-manned repatriation ships. Approximately 300,000 Japanese, both military personnel and civilians, remained in North China at the end of January 1946.

On 14 February, IIIAC issued its Operation Plan 1-46 which noted that "incident to the turnover of responsibility for Japanese prisoners of war and civilians together with all their supplies, equipment, and repatriation to Chinese authorities, the work load of this Corps has been materially reduced."(21) The plan outlined the scope of the postwar reorganization of IIIAC and directed immediate action to release eligible personnel in order to assist in the demobilization of the Marine Corps. It was expected that the necessary reorganization and redeployment would be effected in February and March. Shipping to return 12,000 Marines to the United States was scheduled to arrive in China during the latter month.

In addition to the deactivation of the 6th Marine Division, the plan called for a reduction and regrouping of headquarters and service troops at all levels of command, a disbanding of 1/29 and the third battalion of each infantry regiment, and deactivation of the last lettered battery of each artillery battalion within the 1st Marine Division. The 4th Marines, backbone of the proposed brigade at Tsingtao, would be the only infantry regiment in the Marine Corps to retain the World War II organization of three rifle battalions. The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing was to return the headquarters and service squadrons of MAG-12, as well as VMF(N)-541 and VMTB-134 to the United States, and to turn over control of the south airfield at Peiping to the Army Air Forces units supporting the Executive Headquarters.

By the end of March, this reorganization had taken place at Tsingtao, and on 1 April 1946, the remaining elements of the 6th Marine Division became the 3d Marine Brigade, consisting of headquarters, service, medical, and artillery battalions in addition to the 4th Marines.(22) On 17 April, Brigadier General William T. Clement relieved General Howard as brigade commander. The 1st Marine Division completed its last ordered deactivation on 15 April, and the III Amphibious Corps staff and units were pared down to skeleton strength.

The personnel situation of IIIAC was still far from ideal, however, even though its operational commitments had been drastically cut. By mid-April, nearly all Marines who had taken part

in the original movement of China had been sent home or were being processed for return. Except for a relatively small number of regular officers and NCOs with combat experience, the majority of IIIAC was composed of men fresh from boot camp. The tremendous public pressure to release combat veterans and other men eligible for discharge had been responsible for severe restrictions on the length and scope of both recruit and advanced training. Many of the thousands of Marines who arrived in China late in 1945 and in the early months of 1946 were badly in need of training in even the most basic military subjects. To meet this serious problem, IIIAC set up a comprehensive program which provided for corps, division, and regimental schools in needed specialties, and established extensive unit training in basic military subjects. Since the corps continued to be heavily committed during this transition period, a large part of this schooling was accomplished by on-the-job training.

On 1 May, the China Theater was deactivated and most of the residual functions were assumed by the Commanding General, U. S. Army Forces in China (Lieutenant General Alvin C. Gillem, Jr.). Operational control of Marine forces reverted to the Commander, Seventh Fleet, and III Amphibious Corps was directed to contribute to the fleet's mission "to support the foreign policy of the United States in China." (23) With the exception of security guard for coal shipments from the Tangshan area, Marines had accomplished most of their original missions, such as the repatriation of Japanese. The primary remaining function for the Marine garrison forces was to provide "security of areas occupied by, or necessary for the support of, United States installations, property, and personnel." (24) General Rockey was also directed to maintain liaison with the Peiping Executive Headquarters for the Seventh Fleet.

Although not stated in IIIAC's instructions implied was a directive that the corps give all assistance possible to the United Nations' efforts to ease China's economic distress resulting from her long years of war. The United States was the strongest supporter of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) which was set up to distribute food, clothing, and other needs to the victims of World War II. China was allotted more of these supplies than any other country. Considerable numbers of UNRRA personnel, many of them Americans, arrived in China after November 1945 to administer the program, and they added substantially to the security burdens of Marine forces. Since political considerations were secondary to the needs of the people, UNRRA operated in both Nationalist and

Communist-controlled territory. At General Marshall's suggestion, the Marine commanders at Tsingtao participated in the early arrangements for delivery of relief supplies to Communist areas in an effort to foster better understanding between the Marines and the Communists. But these efforts brought about no significant improvement in the Communist attitude, and the constant round of harassing attacks continued.

The progress of reorganization and reduction of Marine forces continued after the IIIAC came under control of the Seventh Fleet. During May and June, both MAG-25 and MAG-32 returned to the States, leaving the Headquarters of the 1st Wing, with attached transport and observation squadrons and the fighter squadrons of MAG-24, to execute Marine air commitments. On 10 June, at Tsingtao, the headquarters and supporting troops of the 3d Brigade merged with those of the 4th Marines. III Corps headquarters was also deactivated on 10 June, and most of the corps staff was reassigned similar duties on the 1st Division staff. Corps headquarters and service-type units were disbanded. Excess staff officers and other personnel were either reassigned or returned to the United States.

The resulting organization, with a total authorized strength of 24,252, received the task force designation of Marine Forces, China. It included the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and 1st Marine Division (Reinforced), with the 4th Marines (Reinforced) attached. General Rockey assumed command of both the task force and the division.

By the end of June, the number of Marines in North China had been cut to less than half the original strength committed in September 1945, and there was every prospect that the reduction would continue. Unfortunately, there was no corresponding decrease in the number of incidents involving the Communists and Marine train guards and outposts. After an initial interval of relative calm following Marshall's cease-fire arrangement, the tempo of the harassing attacks mounted. On 7 July, the Chinese Communist Party issued a manifesto bitterly attacking the United States' policy toward China and its support of the Central Government. Following this propaganda outburst, two serious incidents indicated that the Marines were going to bear the brunt of this Communist displeasure.

In one instance, on 13 July, the Communists ambushed and captured seven Marine bridge guards in an area about 15 miles from Peitaiho, while the men were attempting to procure ice for

their detachment mess from a nearby village. Strong Marine and CNA patrols combed the area, but were unable to locate the men. After an Executive Headquarters field team conducted extensive negotiations with the local Communist command, the Marines were released unharmed on 24 July; but as a price for setting them free, the Communists demanded an apology for what they called unlawful entry into the "liberated area." U. S. authorities answered with a strong protest.

Five days after the release of these Marines, the second incident occurred in another area of the 1st Division's zone. A routine motor patrol of 1 officer and 40 enlisted men was escorting six supply trucks from Tientsin to Peiping when it was ambushed near the village of Anping by a strong force of uniformed Chinese armed with automatic weapons, rifles, and hand grenades. The lieutenant commanding the escort was killed in the first burst of enemy fire, and a fight which lasted for four hours ensued. An air-supported relief column rushed out from Tientsin, but arrived on the scene too late to trap the ambush party. Three Marines were killed and 12 wounded in the fire fight; one man later died of wounds. Two others were injured when a jeep, returning to Tientsin for aid, turned over.

This was by far the most serious clash that had occurred between Marines and the Communists up to that time. A specially selected fact-finding team from the Executive Headquarters in Peiping, formed at the specific request of Chiang Kai-shek and Chou En-lai, investigated the incident. Communist delaying tactics and vicious misrepresentations finally caused General Marshall to instruct the United States team personnel to withdraw and submit their report to him. In essence this report stated:

...that a Communist force had ambushed the motor convoy of Executive Headquarters and UNRRA supplies escorted by a United States Marine unit, that it had killed three Marines and wounded 12 others and that no National Government troops were present or involved in the incident.

The deliberate Communist ambush was additional proof that the chances for peace in China were nonexistent. Without regard to their truce agreements, both sides initiated hostilities wherever the military situation seemed to favor them, and "each side took the stand with General Marshall that the other was provoking the fighting and could not be trusted to go through

with an agreement."(26) A general war was in progress by the end of August, despite every reasonable effort by American representatives to stop it, and Marines were placed in the unenviable position of remaining neutral in the middle of a battlefield.

(27)

MARINE WITHDRAWAL

Marine commitments in the Tsingtao area were never as extensive as those which the 1st Division encountered in Hopeh Province, and by midsummer of 1946, even the mission of supervisory assistance to the Nationalists in repatriation activities had ended. Except for those Japanese held prisoner in Siberian labor camps by the Soviets and a small number of technicians retained by the Chinese, all Japanese had been returned to their home islands. The primary responsibility of the 4th Marines became that of supporting American naval activities at Tsingtao, which was an important base for the Seventh Fleet and, in addition, the location of the training center where Nationalist crews were taught to man and maintain the ships transferred to the Central Government under United States naval aid programs.

On 1 August 1946, the 1st Division directed that Marine forces in Tsingtao be reduced to a reinforced infantry battalion and that the 4th Marines (Reinforced) return to the United States. The regiment's 3d Battalion was to remain in China as a separate unit under operational control of the Commander, Naval Port Facilities, Tsingtao. The 12th Service Battalion would also remain to continue its role of furnishing logistic support for Marine activities in Tsingtao.(28) A company of 3/4 was assigned to guard 1st Wing facilities at Tsangkou airfield, from which VMO-6 would operate as a reconnaissance and liaison agency for 3/4.

The last elements of the 4th Marines embarked on 3 September, and on the same date, 3/4 came under direct naval command. The deletion of the 4th Marines from the 1st Division troop list came at the same time that the last Marines were being withdrawn from guard duty on the coal trains operating between Tangshan and Chinwangtao. During August and early September, the CNA finally assumed all responsibility for the security of the coal fields and the rail line between Peiping and Chinwangtao. After 6 September, Marine guards were assigned solely to those trains which transported American personnel and supplies.

The ending of the dangerous coal train and bridge guard assignments enabled General Rockey to pull in his outposts and concentrate the 1st Division units in the major cities. The 7th Marines, reinforced by 3/11, moved to barracks in the Peitaiho-Chinwangtao area while division headquarters and special troops, the 1st Marines, and the rest of the 11th Marines set up in Tientsin. The 5th Marines Regimental Headquarters and its 2d Battalion moved to Peiping as the security force for American property and personnel at the Executive Headquarters, and 1/5, with a detachment of the 7th Service Regiment, provided the guard and operated the port and supply installation in the Taku-Tangku area. After its regrouping, the division was better able to coordinate and vigorously prosecute a new training program aimed at a goal of maintaining its units in a high state of combat readiness.

General Rockey, who as senior Marine commander in China had borne the major share of responsibility for avoiding open conflict throughout a protracted period of Communist harassing attacks, was finally relieved on 18 September 1946. The new commander of Marine Forces, China and the 1st Marine Division was Major General Samuel L. Howard, a veteran "China-hand."⁽²⁹⁾ Soon after Howard took over, he received convincing proof that the Marine withdrawal from the rail line had not brought an end to Communist attacks. The munitions stored at the 1st Division ammunition supply point (ASP) at Hsin Ho, six miles northwest of Tangku, proved to be an irresistible magnet for raiding parties.

On the night of 3-4 October, a Communist company broke into the Hsin Ho dump to steal ammunition. A sentry from the 1/5 guard detachment discovered the attempt and exchanged fire with the Communists. A rescue party from the main guard which entrusted to come to his aid was forced to dismount and build up a firing line when a fusillade of small arms fire struck the truck, wounding the driver. Before additional reinforcements could arrive from Tangku, the Communists disappeared into the darkness. An investigation in the morning revealed that several cases of ammunition had been stolen from one of the storage tents near the compound's fence; most of these were recovered, however, in the immediate dump area. Papers found on the body of a man killed in the raid and the statement of another, who was wounded and abandoned in the hasty withdrawal, established conclusively that the attack had been made by an organized Communist unit.

The civil war was not going well for the Communists in the fall of 1946, and they emitted a constant stream of

vilification and accusations which placed the blame for their predicament on American aid to the Nationalists. General Marshall, who was the personal target of much of this political abuse, was still willing to continue in his role as mediator, but could get no honest cooperation from either side. The Nationalists, flushed by temporary successes in Manchuria and North China, were striving for an overwhelming position of strength from which they could dictate peace terms. The Communists, fighting for their political existence, felt that they could not afford to negotiate from weakness. Both Mao Tse-tung and the top American observers realized that the Nationalists were becoming seriously overextended in both a military and an economic sense; so much of the gross production of Nationalist China was being diverted to the war effort that General Marshall warned Chiang Kai-shek that economic collapse was inevitable before military victory could be achieved. Most of the members of the Nationalist hierarchy, convinced that the CNA would prevail, refused to accept the fact that immediate peace was essential to their political well-being.

Although truce negotiations dragged on fitfully through the remainder of 1946, there was seldom evidence of good faith on the part of either belligerent and the days of the Marshall mission were numbered. On 6 January 1947, President Truman, acting on Marshall's recommendation, ordered the general to return to Washington (30) and directed that American participation in Peiping's Executive Headquarters be ended. This action also had the effect of ending a stormy era of Marine involvement in China's internal strife since:

...it made it possible to withdraw all United States Marines from North China, except for a guard contingent at Tsingtao, the location of the United States Naval Training Group engaged in training Chinese naval personnel.(31)

By this time, many Marine units already had orders to new duty assignments dictated by postwar commitments of the division and the wing. In December, the 7th Marines, with 3/11 and 4/11 attached, departed for the United States, and the depleted 11th Marines and the 1st Tank Battalion (less Companies B and C) sailed for Guam. Two squadrons of the 1st Wing, VMF(N)-533 and VMF-115, were transferred to the Hawaiian Islands, and VMO-6 was released from the Tsingtao garrison for return to the States. The 1st Marines assumed all guard duties in Tientsin from the relieved units and sent two companies to Chinwangtao as a security detachment for the rear echelon of the 7th Marines, which was

directed to dispose of all surplus government property in the Peitaiho-Chinwangtao area. At the end of January, all units had cleared China and passed to operational control of FMFPac. The remaining elements of Marine Forces, China, were not long in following.

On 1 April 1947, operation plans were issued detailing the steps to be taken in the withdrawal and redeployment from China of the 1st Marine Division and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Most of the wing units, including headquarters and MAG-24, were slated for Guam as was the 5th Marines, which was to join the 1st Marine Brigade then forming on the island. Division headquarters battalion and division troops (less reinforcing detachments to infantry units) were to return to the United States to the amphibious training base at Camp Pendleton. A rear echelon of about 1,900 men, composed of the 7th Service Regiment with 1/1 as security troops, was to remain temporarily at Tientsin to load out heavy equipment and dispose of surplus government property. When the division headquarters left China, the rear echelon would come under operational control of the Marine commander at Tsingtao.

A new command, Fleet Marine Force, Western Pacific (FMF-WesPac), was to be activated at Tsingtao on 1 May under Brigadier General Omar T. Pfeiffer. Its principal mission was to be security of United States naval training activities. In addition to the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines already at Tsingtao, the 1st Marines (less 1/1) was to join the garrison, the regimental headquarters and service company being redesignated Headquarters Company, FMFWesPac. Air support for Pfeiffer's command would be provided by the three squadrons remaining at Tsingtao (Air FMFWesPac): the wing service squadron, VMF-211, and VMR-153. The composition of FMFWesPac after all necessary transfers were completed would be: Headquarters and Service Battalion; 3/4; 2/1; 12th Service Battalion; AirFMFWesPac.(32)

The last major clash between Marines of the 1st Division and Communist forces occurred shortly after the withdrawal plans were issued. The scene was again the isolated ammunition supply point at Hsin Ho, and the attack gave every evidence of being well planned and coordinated. On the night of 4-5 April, an enemy raiding party with an estimated strength of 350 men made simultaneous attacks at three widely separated points on the dump perimeter. Five Marine sentries were killed in the initial exchange of fire, and the Communists broke into the ammunition storage area. Eight more Marines were wounded as the heavily

outnumbered guard detachment attempted to contain and beat back the penetration. In accordance with their carefully laid plan, the Communists brought up horse-drawn carts and pack animals to haul away captured ammunition and set up an ambush on the road to Tangku, anticipating the fact that the commanding officer of 1/5 would immediately dispatch reinforcements to Hsin Ho. The lead vehicle of the Company C rescue column was disabled by land mines, and heavy fire forced the Marines to dismount and engage the ambush party, which closed to grenade range before it was finally driven off. Using their preponderance of strength at the supply point and the time advantage gained by their ambush, the Communists were able to disengage and withdraw from the scene of action, covering their retreat by blowing up two of the ammunition stockpiles. Although Company C pursued the raiders through the darkness for more than eight miles it was unable to reestablish contact, and dawn air searches revealed that the Communist force had disappeared into the maze of fields, villages, and brush that dotted the countryside north of Tangku. The bodies of six uniformed Communists were found at Hsin Ho, and it was estimated that 20-30 wounded men had been carried away during the withdrawal. Marine casualties totaled 5 dead and 16 wounded in the worst incident in the history of strained relations between the Marines and the Communists.(33) On 21 April, the division turned over the ASP and its contents to Nationalist troops as part of the American program of postwar lend-lease aid.

During April and May, units of the 5th Marines and the 1st Wing loaded out and sailed for Guam, and the 1st Marines (less 1/1) joined FMFWesPac at Tsingtao. Marine activities were terminated at Peiping, Tangku, and Chinwangtao. The remaining elements of the division not assigned to the rear echelon embarked in June, and on the 21st, the division command post closed in Tientsin and opened in the USS Renville. The 1st Marine Division, now little more than a skeleton outfit of headquarters and service troops, had ended 21 months of quasi-war with the Chinese Communists.

After June 1947, the mission of protecting American lives and property in China fell to General Pfeiffer's forces at Tsingtao. On orders from the Commander, Naval Forces, Western Pacific, successor to Seventh Fleet, FMFWesPac was to have an infantry battalion ready at all times to be air-transported to Shanghai, Nanking, or Tientsin where most American nationals were located. Surprise alerts and practice air lifts were a constant feature of the Marine training program thereafter.

FMFWesPac was an unusual command in the sense that it functioned simultaneously as a naval base guard detachment and a major FMF air-ground team. Coupled with instruction and practice in interior guard duties was a program of individual training and small unit combat exercises designed to prepare for the possibility of Communist attacks on Tsingtao and to meet the continuing requirement that a FMF unit be ready for amphibious operations. Reinforcements in the form of landing parties from ships of the fleet were regularly instructed in infantry tactics by the Marines, and periodically the two battalions, organized as battalion landing teams, (34) boarded ship to participate in landing exercises with fleet units.

Tsingtao became the only Marine duty station in China on 1 September 1947 when the rear echelon of the 1st Division cleared Tientsin and left for the United States. A month later, the ground units of FMFWesPac were all redesignated and reorganized under the new "J" Tables of Organization which were aimed at making the most efficient use of the limited manpower available. Most of the reinforcing elements of Pfeiffer's command became detached companies or platoons of the separate battalions of the 1st Marine Division. The infantry battalions assumed the names, battle honors, and traditions of regiments: 2/1 was redesignated the 1st Marines and 3/4 the 3d Marines.

All types of combat training sought to give both officers and men experience in handling the problems of larger units, even though a great deal of this practice dealt with woefully understrength and often "paper" organizations. The Marine Corps reorganization in autumn of 1947 obviously had many shortcomings, but it attempted to cope with the budgetary and personnel restrictions of the period, and to keep in being units whose combat tradition and reputation were an invaluable morale factor.

Military training and guard duty filled only a portion of the Tsingtao garrison's time during the next year. Liberty in the Chinese city was generously granted, an extensive recreation program was implemented, and off-duty educational activities, both through local studies and by correspondence, were encouraged. A considerable number of dependents were permitted to come out from the States in keeping with a postwar policy of reuniting service families wherever possible. Duty at Tsingtao was much like that at any overseas station, but there was one critical difference. The fighting between the Nationalists and Communists grew steadily more violent and bitter, and the possibility of Marine involvement was always present.

In the fall of 1948, the economic and military collapse of the Nationalists, predicted by Wedemeyer, Marshall, and a host of other qualified observers, came about in Manchuria. In a few short months, the Communists captured vast quantities of munitions and absorbed thousands of defecting Nationalist troops who had lost all desire to fight. In the cities of South and Central China, the pauperized populace, led by agitators, became increasingly more dissatisfied with its lot of continuous war and gave strong evidence that it would accept any change which promised peace. By December, the ultimate success of the Communists was so obvious that the Director of the American Military Advisory Group of Nanking, Major General David Barr, USA, told his superiors at the Pentagon that:

Only a policy of unlimited United States aid including the immediate employment of United States armed forces to block the southern advance of the Communists, which I emphatically do not recommend, would enable the Nationalist Government to maintain a foothold in southern China against a determined Communist advance.... The complete defeat of the Nationalist Army...is inevitable.(35)

The safety of many Americans and nationals of friendly foreign powers was imperiled by the steady Communist advance into North China. In November, the State Department had ordered their evacuation, and to meet the need for security troops in Shanghai, port for the Yangtze Valley and an announced Communist objective, the Secretary of the Navy ordered the 9th Marines (actually a reinforced battalion) to embark for China. The unit left Guam on 28 November, staged through Tsingtao where evacuation plans were coordinated with FMFWesPac, and arrived at Shanghai on 16 December.

FMFWesPac was under orders to withdraw from China once its evacuation mission was completed. While civilians were sent directly to the States or transshipped to Shanghai for further movement, essential Marine Corps and Navy equipment was loaded out and the vanguard of the garrison boarded ship. VMF-211, which was to fly fighter cover for the evacuation, completed carrier qualification flights on 21 January and reported to the CVE Rendova. The rest of AirFMFWesPac had departed Tsingtao by 1 February. With the exception of Company C, 3d Marines, quartered ashore to patrol the harbor area, all elements of FMFWesPac were afloat by 3 February. Headquarters and service troops and the 1st Marines (Reinforced)(36) left China on

8 February to rejoin the 1st Division, leaving the 3d Marines and 9th Marines to continue evacuation operations.

For more than a month, the 3d Marines remained afloat in Tsingtao harbor, while the Communist drive gained momentum against disintegrating Nationalist opposition. On 17 March, the 3d Marines, less Company C, sailed to Shanghai to take over the mission of the 9th Marines, which left for the United States at the end of the month.(37) While the battalion stayed on board ship at Shanghai, the Communists reached their Yangtze valley objectives, crossed the river, and on 24 April, occupied the Nationalist capital at Nanking. On the 28th, the 3d Marines left Shanghai for Tsingtao, pausing there for a few days before it left for the States. On 6 May, the 3d sailed, leaving Company C as a cruiser-borne reinforcement for Naval Forces, Western Pacific. A relief for this company, C of the 7th Marines, arrived at Tsingtao on 14 May to take over the watch, and the last element of the 3d Marines departed. In less than a month, the 7th Marines company was also on its way home. The possibility of landing American troops in China without precipitating costly fighting was now remote, and the American fleet stood off from the Communist coast.

As an instrument of American policy, the Marines were first committed to assist in the repatriation of more than a half million Japanese and to help the Chinese Central Government reestablish its sovereignty over occupied territory. Ordered to avoid involvement in the civil strife but to defend themselves if attacked, "the Marines were the balance of order"(38) in North China, while they controlled the vital coastal cities and lines of communication. They reinforced General Marshall's attempt to secure peace, and when this failed, were given their traditional role as protectors of American lives, interests, and property in China.

After postwar demobilization drastically cut American troop strength, the skeletal Marine units strung out along Hopeh's rail lines invited Communist harassing attacks. Even after the rail guard duty ended and the Marines concentrated their forces, the Communists occasionally tested the defenses with minor success. When the last Marine garrison was set up at Tsingtao, the combination of infantry and air, backed up by guns of the fleet, proved a sufficient deterrent, and the port city remained inviolate even though the Communists controlled most of Shantung Province.

When the defeat of the Nationalist armies forced an American withdrawal, the Marines provided a security force that insured the escape of hundreds of foreign nationals who might otherwise have ended up in Communist prisons. Faced with a round of trying and often dangerous assignments during the postwar years of China duty, when their full fighting power was always held in check, the Marines acquitted themselves well. The Communists, concerned solely with their drive to conquer China, did not choose to meet the Marines head on. Once they were secure in their control of the mainland, however, the time of that encounter was not long delayed. In November 1950, they met the Marines again, this time in full-scale battle, in the rugged hills of North Korea.

NOTES

- (1) Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: IIIAC WarDs (War Diaries), Aug-Sep45; 1st MarDiv WarDs, Sep-Oct45; 1st MAW WarDs, Sep-Oct45. Unless otherwise noted, all material cited is located in the Historical Archives, Historical Branch, G-3, HQMC.
- (2) Eyewitness account quoted in George McMillan, The Old Breed: A History of the First Marine Division in World War II, (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1949), p. 428.
- (3) 1st MarDiv WarD, Sep45, p. 2.
- (4) Quoted in McMillan, op. cit., p. 428.
- (5) 1st MarDiv WarD, Oct45, p. 2.
- (6) Col Charles W. Harrison interview by HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 15Nov55.
- (7) IIIAC WarD, Oct45, p. 5.
- (8) IIIAC OPlan 26-45, dtd 1Sep45, App I to IIIAC WarD, Sep45.
- (9) Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: IIIAC WarDs, Sep-Oct45; 6th MarDiv WarDs, Sep-Oct45; 1st MAW WarD, Oct45.
- (10) The mayor's terms were: (1) Advance information of the time of landing; (2) No CNA troops to accompany the Marines; (3) No change in the city administration.
- (11) 6th MarDiv WarD, Oct45, Encl A.
- (12) Ibid., Encl B. General Worton, Chief of Staff, IIIAC, received a similar emissary in Tientsin in mid-October. An offer to share control of Tientsin with the Communists was refused. Harrison interview, op. cit.
- (13) Because of its location, Tsangkou airfield was a major staging stop for most transports en route to Tientsin and Peiping from South China or bases in the Pacific. As a result, and because Tsingtao was an all-weather port, the wing service squadron established a personnel center for all wing operations at Tsangkou, taking over the functions of Marine Air Depot Squadron 1.
- (14) James V. Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, Walter Millis, ed. (New York: The Viking Press, 1951), p. 108.

- (15) Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: IIIAC WarDs, Nov45-Jul46; 1st MarDiv WarDs, Nov45-Mar46; 1st MAW WarDs, Nov45-Jul46; 3d MarBrig WarDs, Apr-May46; 4th Mar WarDs, Jun-Jul46; U. S. Dept of State, United States Relations with China (Washington, 1949), hereafter State Dept Rept.
- (16) State Dept Rept, p. 110.
- (17) See summary of incidents at the end of this article, Appendices A and B.
- (18) IIIAC SpecO No. 226-45, dtd 6Dec45, in IIIAC WarD, Dec45.
- (19) State Dept Rept, p. 133.
- (20) Ibid., p. 136.
- (21) IIIAC OPlan 1-46, dtd 14Feb46, in IIIAC WarD, Feb46.
- (22) The Medical Battalion, 3d Marine Brigade, was formally activated on 8 April 1946.
- (23) IIIAC OPlan 2-46, dtd 1May46, Annex C, in IIIAC WarD, Apr46.
- (24) Ibid.
- (25) State Dept Rept, p. 173n.
- (26) Ibid., p. 178.
- (27) Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: 1st MarDiv WarDs, Aug46-Jun47; 1st MAW WarDs, Aug46-Apr47; FMFWesPac WarDs, May47-Jan48; AirFMFWesPac WarDs, May47-Feb48; FMFWesPac G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, and Air S-3 Repts, Mar48-Jan49, variously dated and incomplete (HQMC S&C Files); 3d Mar S-3 PeriodicRepts Nos. 1 and 2, Feb-Mar49 (HQMC S&C Files); Unit Muster Rolls, Nov48-May49 (Unit Diary Sect, Pers Dept, HQMC).
- (28) The 12th Service Battalion remained under operational control of the senior Marine supply echelon in China, the 7th Service Regiment at Tientsin.
- (29) General Howard, who spent three and a half years as a Japanese prisoner, had commanded the 4th Marines in China just prior to the outbreak of the war and led the regiment during the defense of the Philippines.

- (30) On 7 January 1947, General Marshall was appointed Secretary of State.
- (31) Forrestal, op. cit., p. 219.
- (32) The 12th Service Battalion and AirFMFWesPac were attached for operational control only; administrative control remained with 7th Service Regiment and 1st MAW respectively.
- (33) 1st MarDiv G-2 PeriodicRept No. 52, dtd 8Apr47, Encl A. Convincing evidence that this attack was long in preparation was furnished by the discovery on the body of a Communist of a copy of the dump's guard roster for 29 January 1947.
- (34) As there was no organic artillery unit assigned to FMF-WesPac, one rifle company in each battalion received an augmentation of artillerymen to provide a provisional firing battery, and a small artillery staff section was added to Headquarters Company, FMFWesPac.
- (35) State Dept Rept, p. 336.
- (36) Company B, 3d Marines, was attached to the 1st Marines on 29 January 1949.
- (37) Company C, 9th Marines, including one platoon on security guard at the U. S. Embassy in Nanking, was transferred to the 3d Marines on 28 March 1949 and redesignated Company B, 3d Marines.
- (38) Forrestal, op. cit., p. 179.

Appendix A
Major Armed Clashes Between
U. S. Marines and Chinese Communists
October 1945 - May 1947

Date	Location	Marine		Communist		Remarks
		KIA	WIA	KIA	WIA	
6Oct45	Tientsin-Peiping Road		3	unk	unk	Ambush of road reconnaissance party by an estimated 40-50 troops.
18Oct45	Langfang-Peiping railroad	-	-	6	unk	Ambush of train by force of unknown strength.
2Nov45	Village 3 miles north of Tientsin	-	-	1	unk	Motor patrol attacked by group of irregulars
14-15Nov45	Kuyeh vicinity on railroad	-	-	unk	unk	CG, 1stMarDiv inspection train fired on by force of unknown strength.
8Jan46	Bridge near Anshan	-	-	unk	unk	Bridge guard attacked by 25-30 irregulars.
16Apr46	Bridge near Lutai	-	-	unk	unk	Bridge guard attacked by irregulars of unknown strength.
5May46	Bridge near Hanku	-	1	unk	unk	Bridge guard attacked by force of unknown strength with mortars.
21May46	Village 10 miles south of Tientsin	1	1	2	unk	Reconnaissance party attacked by 50-75 irregular troops.
1Jun46	Bridge near Peitaiho	-	-	5	unk	Force of unknown strength attacked bridge guard.
26Jul46	Anping between Tientsin and Peiping	-	-	unk	unk	Motor patrol attacked by group of unknown strength.

29Jul46	Arping between Tientsin and Feiping	4	11	12	unk	Motor convoy attacked by group of about 300 strength.
5Aug46	Hsin-Ho ASF near Tangku	-	-	unk	unk	Fire fight with Communist raiding party.
9Aug46	Railroad 2 miles north of Lintai	-	-	unk	4 est	Coal train derailed and ambushed by an estimated 50 troops.
12Aug46	Hsin-Ho ASP near Tangku	-	-	unk	unk	Fire fight with Communist raiding party.
3-4Oct46	Hsin-Ho ASP near Tangku	-	1	1	1	Attack by organized group of about 100 Communists.
4-5Apr47	Hsin-Ho ASP near Tangku	5	16	6	25 est	Attack by two companies of Communists, about 350 men.
27Aug47	North shore Shantung Peninsula	-	-	unk	unk	Landing party attempting to destroy crashed plane attacked by force of unknown strength.
31Jan48	Tsankou airfield	-	-	unk	unk	Patrol pinned down by fire from force of unknown strength.
	Totals	10	33	33*	30*	

* Throughout this period it was customary for the attacking Communist troops to carry off their casualties if it was possible.

Appendix B

Marine Casualties Incurred as a Result of
Attacks on Sentries, Recreation Parties, and Individuals

Date	Location	Casualties		Remarks
		KIA	WIA	
19Oct45	Tangshan vicinity	-	2	Jeep ambushed.
29Oct45	Peiping vicinity	-	1	Jeep ambushed.
4Dec45	Anshan vicinity	1	1	Hunting party attacked.
9Dec45	Tientsin vicinity	-	1	Individual on recreation liberty attacked.
15Jan45	Tangshan vicinity	-	2	Trucks ambushed.
7Apr46	Lutai vicinity	1	-	Hunting party attacked.
7May46	Lutai	-	1	Sentry attacked.
2Jul46	Hangku	-	1	Sentry attacked.
		-	-	
	Total	2	9	

Appendix C

Aircrew Losses Incurred by Marine Squadrons in Operational Crashes in North China

Date	Location	Plane Type	Losses
22Oct45	Hopeh	Fighter	1
8Dec45	Shantung	6 Dive Bombers	10
11Dec45	Shantung	Photo-Reconnaissance	2
11Mar46	Hopeh	Fighter	1
22Apr46	Hopeh	Fighter	1
25Apr46	Shantung	Utility	1
13Jun46	Hopeh	Fighter	1
22Sep46	En route to Hawaii	Transport	4
24 May47	Hopeh	Fighter	1
		Total	22*

* On 26 August 1948, one of an R5C transport's engines temporarily failed in flight and a part of the crew bailed out over water; one man was not recovered.

