

From a Standing Start: U.S. ARMY PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND CIVIL AFFAIRS IN THE KOREAN WAR

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Following World War II, United States Army special operations units virtually vanished in the rapid demobilization. The start of the Korean War on 25 June 1950 was the catalyst for the revival of the Army's special operations capability. The Army brought back the Rangers as company-sized units, stood up the 8240th Army Unit to train anti-Communist North Korean partisan forces and revived its nascent Psychological Warfare (Psywar) and Civil Affairs (CA) capability.¹ This issue of *Veritas* features the development of the units that figured prominently in the growth of tactical and strategic Psywar and the organizations developed to handle the humanitarian assistance and civil-military government efforts. Of significance to Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) was the establishment of the Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina which resulted in the birth of Special Forces. In several notable respects, ARSOF as it exists in today's Army is the result of the special operations capabilities developed during the Korean War.

In contrast to World War II when America was attacked by Imperial Japan, the Korean War was a clash of competing Cold War ideologies. The United States as a nation was not directly threatened by the North Korean invasion. Instead, the Korean War was the "hot" aspect of the Cold War, and was the most serious direct confrontation between the Communist bloc and the capitalist West. Throughout the war, the Army walked a fine line between adequately supporting operations in Korea against its primary mission of opposing the Soviet forces in Europe. In this battle, the United States Defense Department quickly recognized the need to counter the extensive Communist propaganda.

When the war started in June 1950, the U.S. Army's entire Psywar capability consisted of a thirty-man Tactical Information Detachment (TID) at Fort Riley, Kansas. Directing the effort to build up its Psywar capability was the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare (OCPW), headed by Brigadier General (BG) Robert A. McClure. The OCPW moved quickly to build up the Army's Psywar



The Korean War began with the North Korean invasion of the south on 25 June 1950. The United States Army was ill-prepared for the war and had to rapidly build up all of its capabilities.



General Douglas A. MacArthur meets South Korean President Syngman Rhee. MacArthur requested Army Psywar elements to bolster Rhee's fragile government in the early days of the war.

capability, concentrating on the two primary methods for disseminating information, printed leaflets and radio broadcasting. Psywar courses were swiftly established at the Army General School at Fort Riley to train soldiers

The U.S. Army was faced with an almost insurmountable problem of refugees on the battlefield. Army Civil Affairs units were instrumental in the effort to provide food and medical care and to keep the roads clear of the hordes of displaced civilians.



This leaflet was produced by the 1st Loudspeaker & Leaflet Company to induce the surrender of North Korean People's Army soldiers. An enemy soldier surrendering while in possession of the leaflet was guaranteed safe conduct to the rear.

to man the newly created units. In the interim, BG McClure sent the TID to Japan, the first Psywar elements to support General (GEN) Douglas A. MacArthur's Far East Command (FECOM).²

The Army fielded the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company (1st L&L), the 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group (1st RB&L) and the 4th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (4th MRBC) to meet the need for producing and disseminating leaflets and directly broadcasting information at the tactical and strategic levels in Korea.³ Simultaneously, the 2nd, and 5th Loudspeaker and Leaflet Companies and the 301st Mobile Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group were formed and trained, and the 5th L&L and 301st RB&L deployed to Europe. Built from scratch, these units were manned by established artists, journalists and technicians from the civilian advertising, publishing, and radio news industries. Their missions were as varied as the backgrounds of the soldiers.

On the battlefield in Korea, the units supporting the Eighth US Army (EUSA) deployed loudspeaker teams with manpack and vehicle-mounted systems in support of the divisions on the frontlines. Often operating in "no-man's land" forward of friendly lines these "bullet magnets" broadcast directly to the North Koreans and Chinese and were frequently the target of enemy patrols and indirect fire as they conducted tactical Psywar.⁴ At the strategic level in support of FECOM, the 1st RB&L artists and lithographers translated complex themes into simple visual products, producing millions of leaflets that were disseminated on both sides of the front lines. Those targeting the Communist forces were designed to lower morale and induce surrender. The units also produced



Korea Civil Assistance Command SSI

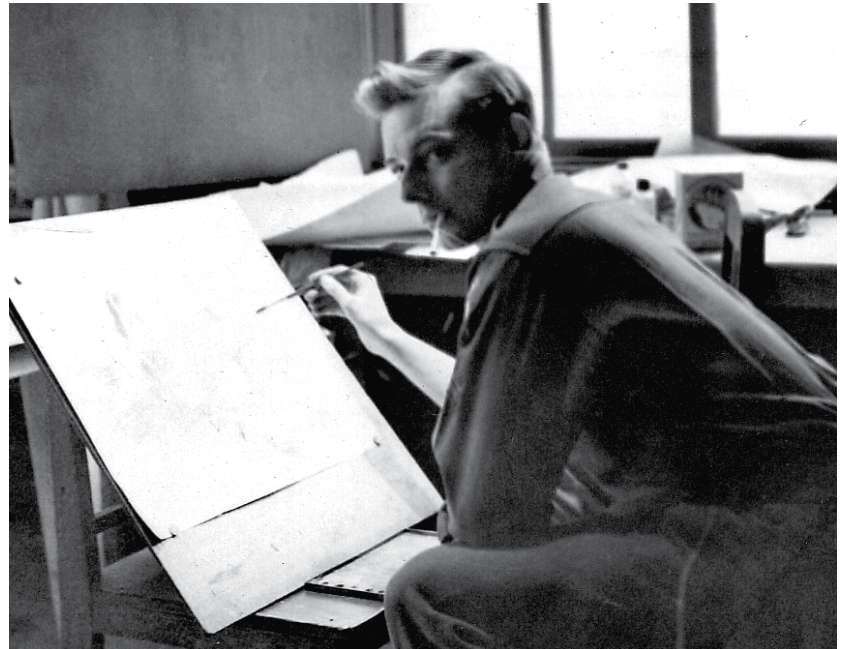
leaflets and information sheets focused on the South Korean civilian population and were a primary means of providing public information. Other Psywar units performed a similar function using radio broadcasting to reach both sides.

Mobile teams initially based in Japan deployed into Korea and established a number of radio stations in Seoul, Pusan, Taejon, and in other locations as well as briefly in the North Korean capital of P'yongyang.⁵ The 4th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (4th MRBC) produced radio scripts that were translated into *Hangul* (Korean) and Chinese for transmission over the Korean Broadcasting System radio network. The teams broadcast the speeches of South Korean President Syngman Rhee as well as provided the prepared newscasts that reached throughout the South. The information distributed by the Psywar teams was instrumental in the successful operations of another ARSOF operation in Korea, Civil Affairs.

The Korean War also presented monumental problems for the U.S. Army in dealing with the nearly insurmountable health and sanitation needs of large numbers of refugees and the requirement to establish civil-military government in the occupied North Korean cities, notably in P'yongyang.⁶ A succession of organizations, the UN Public Health and Welfare Detachment, which became the United Nations Civil Affairs Command Korea (UNCACK), then the Korea Civil Affairs Command were formed as the main U.S. Army effort to administer the civil affairs mission. The formation of the UN Public Health and Welfare Detachment was directed by GEN MacArthur and designed to support Lieutenant General



Brigadier General Robert A. McClure, the director of the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare. McClure was responsible for the establishment of the Psychological Warfare School.



Richard Zayac was an illustrator for the 1st Loudspeaker & Leaflet Company. He designed many of the leaflets distributed by the company and captured images of frontline operations. A selection of his work appears in this issue.

Walton H. Walker's Eighth Army. The other major U.S. combat formation in Korea, Major General (MG) Edmond M. Almond's X Corps was not an element of EUSA and hence, had to conduct its civil affairs operations using its organic assets. Notable uses of Civil Affairs in Korea encompassed governance in the occupied territories of North Korea and humanitarian assistance, which included the evacuation of large numbers of refugees from the ports of Chinnamp'o, Wonsan, and Hungnam.⁷ As was the case with Psywar, the CA organization was rapidly and often painfully built up to meet the mission in Korea.⁸ This expansion rejuvenated the stateside training base for both elements, in the case of Civil Affairs at Camp Gordon, Georgia. For Psywar, it resulted in the establishment of the Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Under the impetus of BG Robert A. McClure, the director of OCPW and the strongest advocate for rebuilding the Army's Psywar capability, a new training facility was established on Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg in 1952. Originally formed in 1951 as the Psychological Warfare Division of the Army General School at Fort Riley, Kansas, the new Psychological Warfare Center was activated at Fort Bragg on 1 May 1952. The Center was composed of the Psychological Warfare School (Provisional) with a Psychological Operations Department and the Special Forces Department, the 6th Radio Broadcast and Leaflet Group (6th RB&L), the Psychological Warfare Board, and the 10th Special Forces Group.⁹ By virtue of the establishment of the Psychological Warfare Center, the linkage between today's ARSOF units,

particularly the 4th Military Information Support Group (4th MISG) and the seven U.S. Army Special Forces Groups is a result of the Army's effort to meet the Psywar requirements of the Korean War.

Veritas 2011:1 features articles on the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, the 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group, and the 4th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company as well as other units associated with the Psywar effort in Korea. In all cases, the voices of the veterans of these units are prominent in describing the missions and conditions under which they operated. The artistic talents of illustrator Richard Zayac and photographer Sergeant Herbert Shevins of the 1st L&L are featured.¹⁰ Included in the coverage of the Psywar effort is an article addressing the birth of the Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg. This issue looks at the Civil Affairs organization in EUSA as it evolved during the Korean War and highlights the X Corps evacuation operations at the ports of Hungnam and Wonsan. The legacy of the Korean War Civil Affairs and Psywar missions is embodied today in the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade and the 4th Military Information Support Group at Fort Bragg. ♣

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Endnotes

- 1 **Military Information Support Operations (MISO) and Civil Affairs are the primary topics addressed in this issue of *Veritas*. Among the many volumes written on these topics, several provide background information on the Korean War and the formation of the Army's Psychological Warfare Center. Noteworthy sources include, but are not limited to:** Stanley Sandler, "*Cease Resistance: It's Good For You: A History of U.S. Army Combat Psychological Operations*, 2nd Ed., (Fort Bragg, NC, Army Printing Facility Fort Bragg, 1989), United States Army Special Operations Command History Office Reprint, Fort Bragg, NC; Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins* (Manhattan, KS, University of Kansas Press, 2002); Paul M. A. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* 2nd Ed. (New York, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1954); Frank L. Goldstein, *Psychological Operations: Principles and Case Studies* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, Air University Press, 1996); E. Grant Meade, *American Military Government in Korea* (New York, King's Crown Press, 1951); Stanley Sandler, *Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1992* (Fort Bragg, NC, Army Printing Facility, 1992), U.S. Army Special Operations Command Reprint.
- 2 Charles H. Briscoe, "A Clearer View of Psywar at Fort Riley & Fort Bragg, 1951-1952," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 5, No. 4, 2009, 62.
- 3 Charles H. Briscoe, "'Volunteering' for Combat: Loudspeaker Psywar in Korea," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 1, No. 2, 2005, 46-60; Robert W. Jones Jr., "The Ganders: Strategic Psywar in the Far East Part I; Introduction and movement to the Far East," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 3, No. 1, 2007, 59-65. Robert W. Jones, "The Ganders: 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group Conducts Psywar in Korea-Part II," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 3, No. 3, 2007, 41-58; Charles H. Briscoe, "The 1st L&L in Korea, A Photographer's Record, 1952-1953," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 3, No. 4, 2007, 14-25.
- 4 Briscoe, "'Volunteering' for Combat: Loudspeaker Psywar in Korea."
- 5 Jones, "The Ganders: 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group Conducts Psywar in Korea-Part II."
- 6 Charles H. Briscoe, "The UN Occupation of P'yongyang," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 6, No. 1, 2010, 63-82.
- 7 Charles H. Briscoe, "Do What You Can!: UN Civil Assistance, Chinnamp'o, North Korea, November-December 1950."
- 8 Troy J. Sacquety, "A Civil Affairs Pioneer: Brigadier General Crawford F. Sams, U.S. Army Medical Corps," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 6, No. 1, 2010, 60-62.
- 9 Paddock, *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins*, 141-142.
- 10 Earl J. Moniz, "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words," *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 1, No. 2, 2010, 60-62; Briscoe, "'Volunteering for Combat.'"

This leaflet entitled *Communists Deny People Freedom* was designed to convey the message that "Under Communism, Propaganda Replaces the Truth..." Leaflets of this nature were common products of the Psywar units.

Aerial photograph of Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in the 1970's. At this time, little had changed since the Psychological Warfare Center was established in 1952. The photograph is oriented from the southwest in the lower left corner to the northeast in the upper right corner.

