

General MacArthur's Inchon Flank

On June 25, 1950, ten divisions of the North Korean Armed Forces, backed by 1,643 heavy guns and Soviet tanks, streamed across the 38th Parallel and attacked the Republic of Korea. . . . Meeting in emergency session on June 25, and again on June 27, the UN Security Council called for the use of force “to repel the armed attack.”

On July 10, Gen. Douglas MacArthur was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the UN forces in Korea. But even as U.S. ground troops that had been stationed in Japan were fed into the conflict, the North Koreans continued their advance southward. Morale among the allied troops was low and sinking, as they suffered repeated battlefield setbacks and steadily retreated toward what, in late July, was finally established as the Pusan Perimeter.

The ‘Three Battles of Inchon’

On July 23, MacArthur cabled Washington with his audacious proposal for a two-division corps (30,000 troops) amphibious flanking assault at Inchon—a surprise landing hundreds of miles behind the North Korean front lines. MacArthur recognized that the Pusan beachhead/perimeter could not be maintained indefinitely, for both political and military reasons. So he decided to remedy the situation with a bold counterstroke. The surprise landing at Inchon was conceptualized as a blow which would relieve the pressure on Pusan, and secure victory, *in a single stroke*:

“...I am firmly convinced,” he wrote, “that early

and strong effort behind [the enemy’s] front will sever his main lines of communications and enable us to deliver a decisive and crushing blow. . . . The alternative is a frontal assault which can only result in a protracted and expensive campaign.”

The “Second” Battle of Inchon was waged against the North Korean Armed Forces during and after the landing.

The “Third” Battle of Inchon was against President Truman and the U.S. State Department, following MacArthur’s victory over the North Koreans on the battlefield.

The battle which MacArthur had to conduct against the Joint Chiefs in order to secure their grudging and belated authorization for his Inchon design, is paradigmatic of what the distilled essence of warfare actually is—combat in the realm of ideas.

MacArthur was convinced, that the enemy had not properly prepared Inchon for defense: “Surprise is the most vital element for success in modern war.”

The key to the seizure of Inchon and nearby Seoul, was that *it would cut the enemy’s supply lines, and seal off the entire southern peninsula*. MacArthur’s troops at Inchon would become the anvil, against which the hammer of Gen. Walton Walker’s advancing Eighth Army would be wielded.

The first assault wave did not suffer a single fatality, as the element of surprise was complete. . . . By Sept. 28, Seoul was liberated. In the two weeks after Inchon, over 130,000 North Korean soldiers were taken prisoner, as the gigantic pincer movement between Inchon and Pusan was completed, just as MacArthur had conceptualized it. . . .

Adapted from an article by Steve Douglas, [EIR](#), Dec. 10, 2004.