

DO LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAST SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE
MISSIONS VALIDATE THE CREATION OF THE UNITED STATES
ARMY'S CURRENT SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE BRIGADES?

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General Studies

by

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ABSTRACT

DO LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAST SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE MISSIONS VALIDATE THE CREATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S CURRENT SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE BRIGADES? By MAJ Ernesto D. Amador III, 98 pages.

While the revised US Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, *Operations*, and associated Field Manual shift the Army's focus to preparing for large-scale combat operations against a near-peer threat, security force assistance operations continue to be vital to promote regional United States interests. The Army created security force assistance brigades to relieve brigade combat teams from performing security cooperation operations. These much smaller regionally aligned advisor units will be challenged to fulfill the intense theater requirements for security force assistance operations. Brigade combat teams will continue to have to execute security force assistance and should synchronize their efforts with regionally aligned advisor units to meet the needs of combatant commanders. The case studies from past security force assistance operations in China during WWII and in Korea during the Korean War validate the Army's creation of the security force assistance brigades. These case studies will also highlight lessons learned that apply to today's security force assistance brigades.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. military strengthens regional stability by conducting security cooperation activities with foreign defense establishments. Such activities support mutual security interests, develop partner capabilities for self-defense, and prepare for multinational operations. Strengthening partners is fundamental to our security, building strategic depth for our national defense.

— Commander Joint Chief of Staff, GEN Martin E. Dempsey,
National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015

Security force assistance brigades are specialized units whose core mission is to conduct advise-and-assist operations with allied and partner nations... these units will help us achieve the national security objectives by, with, and through allied and partnered indigenous security forces for the next 25-30 years.

— Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN. Mark A. Milley,
“SFAB Deployment Announcement”

The SFAB brings us strategic capability. We need purpose-built organizations that will advise and assist our partner organizations in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. It frees up brigade combat teams that are doing that mission now

— SMA Daniel A. Dailey,
“Meeting 1st SFAB at Fort Benning”



Figure 1. Security Force Assistance Brigade Unit Patch

Source: US Army, “1st SFAB host activation ceremony; Heraldry announced,” February 8, 2018, accessed November 30, 2018, https://www.army.mil/article/200244/1st_sfab_hosts_activation_ceremony_heraldry_announced.

Purpose and Significance

This study’s purpose is to validate the creation of the Army’s security force assistance brigades by utilizing case studies from past security force assistance operations in China during WWII and in Korea during the Korean War. While revised Army doctrine shifts the Army’s focus to preparing for large scale combat operations, security force assistance operations will continue to be a vital part of the United States’ strategy. This study will examine the Army advisor units formed during these conflicts. The lessons learned from past advisory operations can assist the security force assistance brigades as they execute security cooperation missions in support of joint force and combatant commanders. The US Army is creating these new brigades as the US Army’s doctrine and training shift from a counterinsurgency focus towards preparing for large-scale combat operations against a near-peer adversary. Current strategic documents to

include the 2017 National Security Strategy and the continued combat deployments of US forces in advisor roles in Afghanistan and Iraq stress the importance of the United States “by, with and through” approach with partner nations to achieve The United States strategic goals. The “by, with and through” approach seeks to achieve the United States strategic goals by employing partner nation maneuver forces with the training, advising, assisting and support of US Army forces and enablers.

Security cooperation and security force assistance are vital tasks for the Army as advisory support missions continue to represent the most likely deployment for US Army soldiers. The Army Capabilities Integration Center’s Warfighting Challenges address this topic in challenge two and challenge three. “How the Army influences the security environment and engages key actors and local/regional forces in order to consolidate gains and achieve sustainable security outcomes in support of geographic combatant commands and joint requirements.”¹ Large advisory missions become more challenging for the US Army as brigade combat teams train for large-scale combat operations and the security force assistance brigades train for advisory operations. The vast requirements for US Army advisors across the combatant commands will continue to force brigade combat teams to deploy in advisory roles as the Army continues to field and expand the security forces assistance brigades. These conventional brigade combat teams will deploy to conduct security force assistance operations after training to conduct large-scale combat operations and could struggle to advise and assist partner forces. Brigade combat teams

¹ Army Capabilities Integration Center, “Army Warfighting Challenges,” accessed November 29, 2018, <http://www.arcic.army.mil/initiatives/armywarfightingchallenges>.

have little time to train on deployment-specific tasks after they complete their decisive action training environment rotation at a combat training center before deployment.

This thesis will analyze past security force assistance operations to understand the impact advisors had while advising and assisting host nation forces during combat operations. This study will also highlight any challenges that advisor units faced in training and preparing advisors. Advisory units were created during past United States conflicts to assess, train, advise and assist, organize, rebuild and build host nation security forces to augment US and coalition forces efforts. US advisors can set the conditions for the withdrawal of US military conventional forces after conflicts by training and equipping host nation forces to consolidate gains and stabilize the region. Training and advising foreign security forces to improve regional security is not a new mission for the US Army. Between 1899 and 1902, the US Army organized and trained Cuban security forces when Spain relinquished control of Cuba to the United States after the Spanish American War. This security force assistance mission was the first in a long tradition of the United States military intervention and advisory assistance to governments in South and Central America.² The US Army continues to conduct security force assistance operations as US Army soldiers continue to deploy to almost every continent to advise and assist partner nation's security forces. Security force assistance and advisory support operations will continue to be vital tasks for the US Army as the United States builds and maintains relationships with partner nations across the world.

² Walter G. Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor" (Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, Washington, DC, 1966), 5.

Issues

The Army is fielding security force assistance brigades to replace the combat brigade teams and military transition teams that have trained, advised, and assisted foreign security forces over the last 16 years. In theory, these security force assistance brigades will increase the Army's capabilities by allowing brigade combat teams to focus on combined arms maneuver in support of unified land operations. These regionally aligned security force assistance brigades are a new approach for the Army. These units will consist of specially selected soldiers who will attend the Combat Advisor Training Course at the Military Advisor Training Academy and will focus on advising host nation forces. These newly created specialized conventional Army units will have the mission to assess, train, advise and assist foreign security forces across the combatant commands to improve partner capability and increase partner capacity to help achieve United States strategic objectives.³ The security force assistance brigade is a scalable organization that can provide advisor teams, companies, battalions or deploy the entire brigade to fit the requirement needed⁴.

The Army plans to establish five security force assistance brigades in the regular Army and one in the National Guard.⁵ While six brigades seem like an adequate number,

³ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-96.1, *Security Force Assistance Brigade* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Directorate, 2018), 22.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵ Meghann Myers, "The Army's second security force assistance brigade is activated and preparing to deploy next year," *Army Times*, November 30, 2018, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/11/30/the-armys->

each security force assistance brigade consists of only about 800 soldiers making the security force assistance brigade much smaller than a brigade combat team which can contain as many as 4,500 soldiers.⁶ The security force assistance brigades are shells of armored or infantry brigade combat teams. The advisor brigades are comprised of the officer and noncommissioned officer leadership and staff positions but omit junior enlisted soldiers.⁷ Having the leadership structure in place enables the Army to fill security force assistance brigades with junior soldiers and equipment to create an additional infantry or armored brigade combat team if the Army needed to grow the force rapidly.⁸ With the small size and lack of junior soldiers, security force assistance brigades can require additional support from brigade combat teams for security, transportation, and logistics depending on if the security force assistance brigade deploys to a permissive or non-permissive operating environment. The security force assistance brigades will also be a broadening assignment for soldiers who join. Once soldiers from the security force assistance brigade complete their commitment, they will be transferred out of the advisory unit. As a broadening assignment, frequent turnover can prevent soldiers from improving their advisor skill set and inhibits the organization from learning from deployments. With vast requests for Army units to conduct security cooperation and the

second-security-force-assistance-brigade-is-activated-and-preparing-to-deploy-next-year/.

⁶ Drew Brooks, “The 2nd SFAB Is Gearing Up For Its New Advise-And-Assist Mission in Afghanistan,” *Task & Purpose*, December 09, 2018, accessed February 9 2019, <https://taskandpurpose.com/2nd-sfab-afghanistan-deployment>.

⁷ HQDA, ATP 3-96.1, 20.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, brigade combat teams will still be required to augment security force assistance brigades to meet operational requirements.

The Army also utilizes the National Guard to execute the state partnership program to provide constant support to Chief of Mission, and geographic combatant command's security cooperation activities. The state partnership program began 25 years ago, and currently has all 52 United States' and two territories' National Guard units paired with countries across the world.⁹ In 2016, the state partnership program had partnerships with 76 countries, spanning all of the geographic combatant commands.¹⁰ This program sends small teams of National Guard soldiers to conduct a range of security cooperation activities to build relationships and gain trust through supporting the partner nation's military and security forces. These military-to-military engagements are useful tools for US Army soldiers to increase cultural and language proficiency while improving US Army interoperability with host nation forces. National Guard soldiers often remain in the same unit much longer than active duty soldiers. This stability provides continuity to the state partnership program and enables soldiers to build on prior experience. These enduring relationships between US Army forces and partner countries support the United States' national security and foreign policy goals.

This thesis will examine US advisor efforts in China during WWII and in Korea before and during the Korean War. These case studies will reveal how well the Army

⁹ Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), Bulletin No. 19-01, *Security Cooperation and the State Partnership Program* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Combined Arms Center, 2018), vii.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, iii.

organizations established performed security force assistance during combat operations. This study will also look at the preparation soldiers received before deploying and executing their advisor mission and any doctrine that advisors utilized. The May 2017 Joint Publication 3-20, *Security Cooperation* defines security cooperation as one of the ways and means to help achieve national security and foreign policy objectives. Security cooperation can encompass and integrate the instruments of national power to include diplomatic, information, military and economic to achieve national strategic objectives.

Security force assistance is one of the five security cooperation activities listed in the US Army Field Manual 3-22, *Army Support to Security Cooperation*. Security cooperation activities include security assistance, security force assistance, internal defense and development, foreign internal defense, and security sector reform. Security force assistance can take place during all phases of military operations. Security force assistance seeks to improve partner capacity and capability across the range of military operations that includes counter-terrorism, and foreign internal defense. Security force assistance operations include organizing, training, equipping and advising foreign security forces from the department down to the tactical unit level. Combatant commanders can utilize security force assistance to shape the theater, stabilize an area or act as a deterrent to prevent US Army forces from having to conduct contingency operations. The United States has understood the importance of security force assistance since receiving what could be called security force assistance from France during the American Revolution. With American soldiers continuously deployed across the world today conducting security force assistance, there continues to be a need for Army units to

perform these operations even as the Army shifts its training focus to large-scale combat operations.

Problem Statement

The revised United States Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, Operations, and associated Field Manual 3-0, Operations, shift the Army's focus to preparing for large-scale combat operations against near-peer threats. These manuals prioritize Army training and resources toward combined arms maneuver in support of large-scale combat operations at the brigade combat team and above. Even with this doctrine and training shift, the Army still has requirements to provide forces to conduct security cooperation operations over the next few years with the continued operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Army created security force assistance brigades to free brigade combat teams from performing these security cooperation operations that brigade combat teams have executed over the last fifteen years. Looking at historical examples and the lessons learned from past security force assistance operations, one must ask the question, "does creating a focused security force assistance brigade increase the Army's capability to conduct security force assistance, relieving brigade combat teams of the requirement?" Due to the immense requirements for security force assistance, brigade combat teams will continue to perform security force assistance missions to meet the needs of regional partners and combatant commanders. Brigade combat teams will deploy without the mission readiness exercises and mission-focused training that advise & assist tasked brigade combat teams and security force assistance brigades received before deployments. The training and doctrine shift toward preparing for large-scale combat operations and the focus on brigade combat teams executing a decisive action training

environment at a combat training center before deployment leaves little time for brigade combat teams to train on deployment-specific mission tasks.

Research Questions

Primary Research Question

Are the newly created security force assistance brigades optimal to advise Host Nation Forces during offensive operations in light of historical examples?

Secondary Questions

1. What was the effectiveness of past security force assistance operations according to the primary security force assistance tasks as outlined in the Army FM 3-22?
2. How were past Army “Security Force Assistance Brigade” like organizations organized?
3. What was the pre-mission training of past organizations and was the training effective in preparing conventional soldiers for their advisor mission?
4. What other governmental organizations supported conventional SFA operations?
5. How did security force assistance organizations assist conventional forces during combat operations?
6. What are some best practices to support HNF with US Military / Coalition enablers?

Assumptions and Delimitations

This thesis assumes that the security force assistance brigades will continue to be an Army priority and will not transition into becoming full up infantry or armor brigade combat teams if the Army's end strength increases over the next few years. This thesis also assumes that the United States national strategy will continue to utilize security cooperation and security force assistance missions to meet national policy objectives. Operation Resolute Support, Operation Freedom's Sentinel and Operation Inherent Resolve will continue over the next several years requiring the continuous deployment of US soldiers to conduct security cooperation activities. These requirements will overwhelm the capacity of the security force assistance brigades that the Army is currently fielding. The required training for and dwell time after these deployments will prevent security force assistance brigades from simultaneously supporting all of the combatant commands. With security force assistance brigades rotating to the central command area of responsibility and deploying to Afghanistan, lessons learned will be difficult to implement. As a broadening assignment, soldiers will cycle out of the security force assistance brigade between the brigade's deployments taking the knowledge and experience they gained with them. National Guard soldiers will continue to perform the state partnership program, building relationships with partner nations, increasing their experience-advising forces in these countries. The Army can utilize the experienced soldiers in the National Guard to educate, train, and assist other Army advisors teams. Brigade combat teams will be required to continue to deploy as advisors to meet the demand. Brigade combat teams will also be required to support the SFAB in non-permissive operating environments in Iraq and Afghanistan. These demands and

requirements will necessitate that security force assistance brigades and brigade combat teams work together to accomplish national strategic objectives. This study will compare and contrast the methods that US advisors utilized during past security force assistance operations in China and Korea to provide recommendations for today's advisors.

The central delimitation is that this study will focus only on US Army security force assistance operations. This study does not analyze or make recommendations on the modified table of organization and equipment for current security force assistance brigades. Additional research would be required to make these recommendations, which would need to analyze the first security force assistance brigade's deployment to Afghanistan. Research would also be needed to identify what equipment would be necessary to be effective in each of the different regional areas of responsibility. While this study will briefly analyze the doctrine used during past operations, additional research will be needed to make recommendations on changes to current Army doctrine. Future research can also examine the manning challenges and the Army-wide effect the talent management draw to fill the security force assistance brigades will have. This thesis will primarily remain focused at the tactical and operational levels. Future research can focus on how the security force assistance brigades can synchronize tactical efforts with US Army echelons above brigade advisor units tactical to operational level advising. Additional research will be required to analyze the whole of government approach needed to succeed at long term security force assistance.

Summary and Focus

This thesis centers on the ramifications from the prioritization of training and resources of brigade combat teams towards combined arms maneuver in support of large-

scale combat operations against near-peer threats. These changes stem from the updates to the United States Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, *Operations*, and associated Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*. These doctrinal changes and focus are necessary to train and certify units on tactical tasks that have atrophied over the last 15 years of ongoing contingency operations during the global war on terrorism. This shift in the training focus does not adequately prepare soldiers for their most likely deployment but aims to prepare soldiers for the most dangerous deployment scenario, a fight against a near-peer threat. The Army risks losing the lessons learned over the past 15 years without continuing the training and development of organizations like the security force assistance brigades and institutionalizing the lessons learned from advising Afghan and Iraqi security forces into the ever-evolving Army doctrine.

Brigade combat teams have little time to train on deployment-specific tasks as they prepare to certify the brigade in a decisive action training environment rotation at a combat training center before their deployment. The timing of the capstone combat training center rotation leaves little time for brigades to train on mission-specific tasks before packing out for the deployment. If these brigade combat teams deploy to conduct security force assistance operations, they could be relearning lessons learned, increasing the risk to force and risk to the mission as they learn how to advise while operating during the deployment. The security force assistance mission seeks to build partner capacity through training and equipping foreign security forces for regional stability to achieve national policy objectives. The Army is creating six regionally aligned security force assistance brigades to fill the Army's need for trained advisors. The Army organized security force assistance brigades as the leadership shells of an infantry or

armored brigade combat team comprised of almost 800 officers and noncommissioned officers. Security force assistance brigades lack the force protection and sustainment capabilities that reside in larger brigade combat teams. These advisor units will be scalable to deploy advisor teams, companies, battalions or the entire brigade depending on the mission. As the Army continues to field these brigades, traditional brigade combat teams will continue to deploy to serve as advisors for host nation forces due to the demand.

As the Army rapidly fields security force assistance brigades, the Army can learn from past security force assistance operations. The lessons from these operations can help shape the training and selection for security force assistance brigades. Lessons learned can also highlight how past advisory units advised and assisted partner forces during combat operations. This thesis will focus on the tactical and operational lessons learned from historical case studies to answer the primary research questions. This thesis will use historical case studies to highlight training shortfalls that advisor units had to inform current Army leaders of the risks of not having regionally focused brigades. The Army can utilize lessons from past security force assistance operations to refine how the Army employs security force assistance brigades and augments their efforts with brigade combat teams and other Army programs like the state partnership program to support national security and foreign policy goals.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Introduction

This paper examines if the newly created security force assistance brigades are essential to advise Host Nation Forces during offensive operations in light of historical examples. This thesis will analyze two case studies to answer primary and secondary research questions. The case studies consist of US advisor efforts in China during WWII, focusing on the establishment of the Chinese Training and Combat Command at the Ramgarh Training Center in India. The establishment of the US Provisional Military Advisor Group and the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea before and during the Korean War. To compare and contrast these two historical security force assistance operations this chapter provides an overview of past and current related literature, doctrine, and studies. This thesis relies on historical reports and doctrine to analyze the case studies to capture the lessons learned from the tactics, techniques, and procedures that advisors employed.

Security Force Assistance in Current Doctrine

The October 2017 United States Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, *Operations* provides a brief definition of security force assistance and security cooperation. The Army Doctrine Reference Publication states that Army forces support the combatant commander's campaign objectives through security cooperation. The security cooperation activities that the Army specifically supports are security force assistance and foreign internal defense. Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0,

Operations uses the Joint Publication 3-20, *Security Cooperation* definition for security force assistance. Security force assistance is defined in Joint Publication 3-20, *Security Cooperation* as a Department of Defense activity that supports the development of the capacities and capabilities of foreign security forces. Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, *Operations* defines the Army contributions to security force assistance as advise, assist, train, and equip partner units. The institutional Army builds institutional capacity for professional education, force generation, and force sustainment in partner units. Besides proving these definitions under unified action, Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, *Operations* does not discuss security force assistance again and only mentions security cooperation as one of the primary stability tasks. Security force assistance can be vital to support US Army forces conducting large scale combat operations and while consolidating gains.

The December 2017, Field Manual 3-0 *Operations* describes how the Army will conduct large-scale ground combat against a peer threat and mentions security cooperation as an activity in the joint phase 0, “shape” and phase 1, “deter.” Within these phases, the Army seeks to build partner capacity and capability to deter adversaries’ aggression. Field manual 3-0 fails to describe how security cooperation and security force assistance can be used to augment US Army forces during large-scale combat operations. The consolidation of gains chapter describes the activities that occur within an area of operations where large-scale combat operations are no longer happening. While security and stability tasks are vital to achieving the military end state during the consolidation of gains, units can execute security cooperation and security force assistance during all operational phases. Field Manuel 3-0 lists security force assistance and security

cooperation under the theater Army responsibilities during the consolidation of gains but does not describe where these trained and educated advisors would come from. Field Manual 3-0 needs to be updated to account for the creation of the security force assistance brigades and to assess the security force assistance brigade's ability to augment US Army conventional forces during large-scale combat operations.

The May 2017 Joint Publication 3-20, *Security Cooperation* provides the joint overview of security cooperation activities and how they can be utilized as the ways and means to help achieve national strategic objectives. This manual is essential for soldiers conducting security force assistance to understand how their efforts align with national objectives. Joint Publication 3-20 links the military's contribution to security cooperation to the contributions from the other instruments of national power. *Security Cooperation* states that security cooperation activities can be conducted continuously across the conflict continuum from peace to war and across the range of military operations from large-scale combat to deterrence operations.

The Army's current manual on security cooperation is the January 2013 Field Manual 3-22 *Army Support to Security Cooperation*. This field manual defines how the Army supports the joint force security cooperation mission from the brigade to the Department of the Army level. This manual will have to be updated to incorporate the security force assistance brigade into the Army's security cooperation strategy. This manual is vital for US Army advisors to understand how their efforts support geographic combatant commanders. The security cooperation activities are defined in this manual as security assistance, security force assistance, internal defense and development, foreign internal defense, and security sector reform. Field Manual 3-22 list the security force

assistance tasks as organize, train, equip, rebuild and build, advise and assist and assess also known as OTERA-A. These security force assistance tasks are an essential framework for advisors to understand when evaluating and training foreign security forces. Army units planning to build partner capability and capacity can use the OTERA-A task framework to determine which areas to focus their efforts. This framework will be utilized to analyze US Army advisory units in China during WWII and in South Korea before and during the Korean War.

The Security Force Assistance Brigade

With the Army activating the first security force assistance brigade in 2018 there has not been considerable research on these new organizations. Official Army press releases were used to gain information on the composition and deployment schedule for security force assistance brigades to keep this thesis at the unclassified level. The May 2018, Army Techniques Publication 3-96.1 *Security Force Assistance Brigade* provides the Army doctrine for these newly created security force assistance brigades and should be updated to reflect the observations and lessons learned from the first two brigades to deploy. This publication was the most useful source to understand the security force assistance brigade's mission and organizational structure. The security force assistance brigade has the core mission to assess, train, advise and assist foreign security forces from the OTERA-A tasks defined in Field Manual 3-22 *Army Support to Security Cooperation*. The publication states that the security force assistance brigade is not the lead for the tasks of organize, equip, rebuild and build. These tasks would require an advisory unit at echelons above brigade.

This publication describes the two operating environments that security force assistance brigades can deploy into. One of the environments is inside of a designated joint operational area where the Department of Defense is the lead agency. The other environment is outside of a designated joint operational area where the security force assistance brigade's deployment is coordinated with the partner nation and the US Embassy. 3-96.1 defines security force assistance operations and activities using Joint and Army definitions and explains how these activities support unified action and unified land operations. This publication provides techniques for the security force assistance brigade to task organize depending on the scale and scope of the mission. These task organizations should be updated to account for any augmentation from brigade combat teams that the security force assistance brigade required during the brigade's deployment to the non-permissive environment of Afghanistan.

US Advisor Efforts in China during WWII

The China-Burma-India Theater was at the bottom of priority for Allied supply and support during WWII. With Americas "Europe first" or "Germany first" approach to the war, The Pacific Theater became the second priority, and the China-Burma-India Theater became an economy of force mission. As the economy of force mission, allied advisors played a critical role in empowering host nation forces to counter the Japanese in the China-Burma-India Theater. There are less historical accounts and academic studies that focus on the China-Burma-India Theater during WWII. The Department of the Army study *Survey of the Development of the Role of the U.S. Army Military Advisor* from 1966 by Walter G. Hermes provides an overview of US advisor efforts from the late 1800s

until Vietnam. This study provided an official summary of US advisory efforts in China during WWII before moving onto analyze more detailed sources.

The 1953, *Stilwell's Mission to China* by Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland is a Department of the Army historical publication that tells the operational and strategic level narrative of the US Army in the China-Burma-India Theater. This historical account does not only center on LTG Stilwell, but it does include excerpts from Stilwell's wartime journals which were later published as *The Stilwell Papers*. This publication provides a detailed narrative of the United States involvement in China from before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor to when LTG Stilwell felt there was nothing more that he could do to improve the combat capability of the Chinese army as the Chinese army prepared to launch their attack into Burma after being trained and equipped by US advisors. Kenneth Ray Young reviews LTG Stilwell's career in *The Stilwell Controversy*. This review of LTG Stilwell's career is focused on his time in China and focuses on his controversies and his blunt and stubborn personality. This review provides a different point of view on LTG Stilwell's mission than the official Army history studies, *Stilwell's Mission to China* and *Stilwell's Command Problems*.

The Soldier Extraordinaire: The Life and Career of Brig. Gen. Frank "Pinkie" Dorn (1901-81) by Alfred Emile Cornebise published by the Combat Studies Institute Press Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 2019 tells the story of Brig. Gen. Dorn who served as Gen. Stilwell's aide in the China-Burma-India Theater. This study uses Frank Dorn's unpublished autobiography and official documents to examine the life of Frank Dorn. Of interest to this thesis, was his time served in the China-Burma-India Theater. Like Stilwell, Dorn had considerable experience in China prior to the outbreak of World War

II and the establishment of the US advisory mission in China. Dorn studied Chinese at the language school in Peking, China in the mid-1930s. Dorn later served alongside Stilwell when Stilwell was chosen to serve as the commanding general of US forces in the China-Burma-India Theater. This study describes the events that led to the establishment of the Ramgarh Training Center in India. Frank Dorn would later command Chinese soldiers of the Yok-Force during combat operations in Burma.

Dr. Joseph G.D. Babb's dissertation *The Harmony of the Yin and Yank: The American Military Advisory Effort in China, 1941-1951* completed in 2012 provides a detailed account of the US advisory mission in China before and after World War II. This study provides insights into the successful training, equipping and advising of Chinese troops by US advisors to retake Burma from Japanese forces. This dissertation contains a detailed account of the US Army effort at the Ramgarh Training Center. Dr. Babb's research describes the issues newly arrived US advisors to the Ramgarh Training Center had in understanding the Chinese language and culture with little to no pre-mission preparation.

The Monograph *Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before*, by LTC Davis S. Pierce in 2010 researched past advisor operations in North Africa and China during World War II and in Vietnam to highlight how these advisory operations supported the overall military and strategic objectives. These operations are then compared to the Iraq war and the lack of initial planning that went into training and advising the Iraqi army after US forces occupied Iraq. This monograph describes the complexity of the operating environment in China leading up to WWII and the issues the Chinese military had during the Central Burma Campaign. To keep China in the war

against Japan, the United States set out to improve the combat capability of the Chinese army by providing equipment, training, and advisors. The monograph explains how the US military established the Chinese training program and the effects that advisors had in increasing the capability of the Chinese army.

The CBI-Theater website was the most useful source for the China case study. The CBI-Theater site provides access to numerous pictures, primary, and secondary sources to include the China-Burma-India weekly newspaper and editions of the Army Weekly YANK and LIFE magazine articles that featured photos and stories from the China-Burma-India Theater. The Ramgarh subpage provides information from *Ramgarh "Now it Can Be Told"* written by a senior instructor at the Ramgarh Training Center S/Sgt. John "Red" Sweeney to include an overview of the courses that US advisors taught at the training center. This section also provides access to "The Bull Sheet" which was the newspaper published at the Ramgarh Training Center. Access to these documents and the orders and memorandums from the Ramgarh Training Center provided the insight required to complete this thesis.

US Advisor Efforts in Korea before and During the Korean War

The United States created the Provisional Military Advisor Group shortly after US soldiers deployed to Korea to assist in creating a Korean security force capable of stabilizing and securing the country. This security force assistance mission would expand, and the Provisional Military Advisor Group grew to become the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea. The advisor organization remained flexible as advisors adapted to their evolving mission before and during the Korean War. As the situation evolved in Korea, US advisors operated in both of the possible operating

environments described in Army Techniques Publication 3-96.1 *Security Force Assistance Brigade*. Before the Korean War, advisors were deployed outside of a designated joint operational area in coordination with the US Embassy and the partner nation. When the United States intervened in the Korean War advisors found themselves operating inside of a designated joint operational area where the Department of Defense was the lead organization. This thesis will analyze historical reports, past doctrine, and studies to discover the best practices and lessons learned from the tactics, techniques, and procedures that advisors utilized before and during the Korean War.

The Department of the army study *Survey of the Development of the Role of the U.S. Army Military Advisor*, from 1966 by Walter G. Hermes provides an official US military history summary of US advisor efforts in Korea before and during the Korean War. This study was used to gain a general understanding of the environment and advisors efforts in Korea. Walter Hermes provides an overview of the geopolitical environment US forces encountered in Korea and became the basis for further research. *The Korean War, 1950-53: from maneuver to stalemate* by Spencer Tucker in 2010 provided context into the post-World War II, early Cold War political climate that led to the United States involvement in Korea. This analysis does not focus on advisor efforts, and in his conclusion, Spencer Tucker states that further research should be completed to compare advisors effectiveness in training Korean soldiers during the war to US advisory efforts in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

The US Army historical series publication, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, by MAJ Robert Sawyer and edited by Walter Hermes, was the most useful publication for the Korean case study. Robert Sawyer provided the most detailed

account of US advisor efforts from the beginning of the United States involvement in Korea in 1945 through the Korean War. This publication captures lessons advisors learned and best practices they developed as the advisor mission expanded during the War. Robert Sawyer highlights the lack of pre-mission cultural and language training advisors had. The deficiency of advisor pre-mission training created difficulties during the first few years when US advisors stood up the Korean security forces. Robert Sawyer interviewed advisors and used personal letters to provide the information for this publication since official records were inadequate to tell the story.

The 2011 *Korean Military Advisory Group: Insights for Future Security Force Assistance Efforts*, thesis by MAJ Christopher Ricci analyzes US security force assistance efforts in Korea to identify lessons learned and compare and contrast them to US advisory efforts in Iraq. This thesis explains the reason for The United States involvement in Korea and the creation of the provisional military advisory group and the advisory group's evolution into the Korean Military Advisory Group. In the conclusion, Christopher Ricci states that he does not want the institutional knowledge gained during advisory operations in Iraq to disappear as conventional forces will likely continue to conduct security force assistance operations in the future.

The 2006 Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, by Robert D. Ramsey III is a historical study of US advisor efforts in Korea, Vietnam and El Salvador. This study focuses on US advisory efforts during the Korean War and does include detailed information on the United States efforts before the outbreak of the war. This paper added depth to the research into US advisory efforts during the Korean War. Robert Ramsey

highlights the cultural and language challenges advisors faced in Korea. Advisors also faced pressure from US Army leadership to ensure that Korean units performed well in combat. This publication also captures comments on US advisors from their Korean counterparts who felt that an advisors personality and respect were more important than an advisor's competence.

The Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG): A Model for Success?, monograph by MAJ John D. Tabb in 2010 uses the DOTMLPF framework to analyze US advisor efforts before and during the Korean War to draw parallels to US advisor efforts in Afghanistan. This monograph uses the doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel and facilities framework to compare the Korean army in 1949 before the war, with the Korean army in 1953 after the war to understand how US advisors contributions were successful in improving the effectiveness of the Korean army.

The 1951 Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea *Advisor's Handbook* states the functions, objectives, mission, and standards of the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea. This handbook was useful to understand the advisory group and staff functions operating procedures in 1951. The pictured organizational structure for the Korean army and the military advisory group are helpful to understand the structure of both organizations. The advisory group published this handbook while advisors were advising and assisting Korean units in combat and facilitating training at Korean replacement training centers to fill combat losses in Korean units.

The 1957 *The KMAG Advisor: Role and Problems of the Military Advisor in Developing Indigenous Army for Combat Operations in Korea*, written by Alfred H.

Hausrath at the Operations Research Office, the Johns Hopkins University was produced under contract for the US Army to analyze US advisor efforts during the Korean War. This study interviewed and surveyed former advisors who served in the advisor group during the last year of the Korean War and Korean soldiers to gather lessons learned and best practices.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This thesis will utilize a historical qualitative case study approach to compare and contrast past security force assistance operations. Case studies will include US advisor efforts in China during WWII, and the establishment of the Chinese Training and Combat Command at the Ramgarh Training Center in India. The establishment of the US Provisional Military Advisor Group and the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea before and during the Korean War. This thesis will analyze these historical case studies using the primary and secondary sources listed in chapter two. These sources will be used to identify the lessons learned from the procedures and techniques advisors used during these conventional security force assistance operations. These past security force assistance operations will be analyzed using the core mission tasks given to the newly established security force assistance brigades and the security force assistance developmental tasks listed in Army Field Manual 3-22. The core mission tasks for the security force assistance brigades are to assess, train, advise and assist foreign security forces.¹¹

Army Field Manual 3-22, Army Support to Security Cooperation, dated January 2013 lists the security force assistance developmental tasks as organize, train, equip, rebuild and build, advise and assist, and assess, also known as OTERA-A. While all of these tasks are critical to accomplishing the security force assistance mission, the security force assistance brigades will rely on other organizations to lead in organizing, equipping,

¹¹ HQDA, ATP 3-91.1, 22.

and rebuilding or building foreign security forces. The Army will accomplish these security force assistance tasks in coordination with joint, interagency, and multinational forces to build partner capability and capacities to support the combatant commander's theater strategic objectives.¹² The security force assistance developmental tasks of organize, train, equip, rebuild and build, advise and assist, and assess will be used as the framework to analyze the case studies to capture the entirety of the assistance provided to host nation forces. While the security force assistance brigade might not execute all of the security force assistance developmental tasks during a deployment, it will rely on other governmental organizations to perform the higher echelon tasks.

As defined in Army Field Manual 3-22, the task of "Organize" consists of supporting host nation forces in recruiting, manning, developing unit task organizations, doctrine development, and command and staff processes. The task of "Train" consists of training and aiding the development of training programs for host nation forces at all levels from individual to collective training. "Equip" is to integrate equipment and materials with host nation forces. Equip also includes assisting in the fielding, maintenance, and procurement of equipment for host nation forces. "Rebuild and Build" covers improving and building host nation base infrastructure to include training and garrison facilities. The task "Advise and Assist" is the guidance, advice, and mentorship that US Army soldiers as subject matter experts provide to host nation forces. Advisors can advise and assist host nation forces during training and combat operations as

¹² Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Field Manual (FM) 3-22, *Army Support to Security Cooperation* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Directorate, 2013), vi.

required. US Army advisers can influence host nation force during combat operations from the tactical to the strategic level when advisers execute the advise and assist task. The task of “Assess” is developing measures of effectiveness and performance with which to evaluate host nation forces capabilities and limitations. Assessing host nation security forces is crucial to identify gaps and shortfalls and to develop a plan to address deficiencies and sustain the progress that host nation forces have made. The task of assess is a continuous process that allows soldiers executing security force assistance to evaluate the training and proficiency level of host nation forces. Advisers need to assess and understand the operating environment to adjust the training focus and tempo to account for changes in the operating environment. This thesis will seek to identify the adaptations advisers made as their security force assistance mission evolved. This thesis will use the case studies to analyze how and when US soldiers assessed the host nations’ security force capabilities. Assessing is also crucial to understanding when to transition from executing tasks for host nation forces to host nation forces completing tasks on their own with limited assistance from advisers. This thesis will utilize the developmental tasks of organize, train, equip, rebuild and build, advise and assist, and assess to frame the effectiveness and lessons learned from the past security force assistance operations in the case studies.

The tasks of organize, equip, rebuild and build and assist can be executed alongside host nation forces or for the host nation depending on the mission and operational variables. The case studies will initially focus on these tasks, as the host nations in the case studies required US advisers to organize, equip and build their security forces and infrastructure to execute combat operations. Field Manual 3-22 states

that the task to train and advise and assist host nation forces are performed together with the host nation. The thesis will focus on how US advisors developed and adjusted training programs for host nation forces. The case studies will also identify the skills and prior experience soldiers had as training instructors before becoming advisors. The case studies will highlight the actions and organizational construct US advisors used during combat operations. The research will identify effective techniques advisors used to advise and assist host nation forces during combat operations. The analysis will determine how advisor organizations efforts contributed to conventional force combat operations. The thesis will also capture effective techniques that advisors utilized to integrate US military combat enabler assets to support host nation operations.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDIES

US Advisory Efforts in China



Figure 2. Ramgarh Instructor Lapel Pin

Source: John Sweeney, “Ramgarh,” adapted by Carl Warren Weidenburner, accessed December 18, 2018, http://gardnerworld.com/cbi/60thAnnv/pin_rank/images/Ramhgar_Pin.jpg.

The United States strategic World War II strategy of “Europe first” put the China-Burma-India Theater at the bottom of priority for Allied supply and support. The United States fought the China-India-Burma Theater as an economy of force mission. With an insufficient number of US Army maneuver units, the China-Burma-India Theater relied on US advisors to achieve theater objectives by, with, and through Chinese military forces. By 1945, US advisors trained and equipped 39 Chinese divisions at training centers established in India and China.¹³ With embedded US advisors, these Chinese

¹³ Joseph G.D. Babb, “The Harmony of Yin and Yang: The American Military Advisory Effort in China, 1941-1951” (Ph.D., diss., University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, 2012), 210.

divisions fought alongside the first US Army maneuver force to deploy into the theater, the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), the famed Merrill's Marauders, to retake Burma.¹⁴ This case study focuses on advisor efforts and lessons learned at the first US Advisor established training center, the Ramgarh Training Center.

Even before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States established the Lend-Lease Act to provide vital military assistance to friendly nations.¹⁵ President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved Lend-Lease support for China in 1940. The US military assistance mission in China supported the Nationalist Chinese government which had already been fighting Japanese forces for almost five years.¹⁶ Chinese troops lacked the modern equipment, adequate supplies, training, and tactics needed to defeat the Japanese army. China lost a significant number of trained officers and critical supplies during the initial battles against the Japanese. America looked to protect US interest in the Pacific before the attack on Pearl Harbor by supporting China to keep them in the war against the Japanese. However, China required military supplies and equipment to continue the fight against the Japanese.¹⁷ Although officially in an agreement to fight the Japanese together, the Chinese Nationalist Government was also fighting a civil war against the Chinese

¹⁴ Babb, "The Harmony of Yin and Yank: The American Military Advisory Effort in China, 1941-1951," 166.

¹⁵ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁷ US Department of State, *Diplomatic Papers 1941, the Far East*, ed. E. R. Perkins, Foreign Relations of the United States (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 1956), 288-289.

Communist movement. The Nationalist Government initially prioritized fighting the Chinese Communist over fighting the Japanese. Mao Tse-tung was the leader of the Chinese Communist forces and Chiang Kai-shek was the leader of the Chinese Nationalist government. As the Japanese campaign in China intensified, Chiang Kai-shek was pressured by his own generals to focus on defeating the Japanese not the Chinese Communists.¹⁸

As military aid started to arrive in China in 1941, The United States chose BG John Magruder to lead the American mission. His task was to advise and assist the Chinese Government and to train Chinese personnel to effectively utilize and maintain the United States provided equipment.¹⁹ The Magruder mission's size and priority increased when the United States entered the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In March of 1942, the Army sent LTG Joseph W. Stilwell to take command of the expanded mission.²⁰ Stilwell had prior combat experience during WWI and was deployed to China several times where he learned to speak and write Chinese before the start of World War II. LTG Stilwell's primary task was to improve the combat efficiency of the Chinese army. However, Stilwell's China-Burma-India Theater was at the bottom of priority for supply. The mission was further imperiled as the Japanese continued to advance into Burma threatening ground lines of communication. The fight against the

¹⁸ David S. Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before" (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2010), 21.

¹⁹ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 21.

²⁰ Ibid., 22.

Japanese was further hampered by the Chinese Nationalist Government's efforts to keep large numbers of troops in reserve due to a distrust of Chinese Communists.²¹ LTG Stilwell attempted, with limited success, the difficult task of focusing Chiang Kai-shek to provide the manpower necessary to defeat the Japanese advance across the continent. LTG Stilwell's prior combat experience and cultural understanding would be vital in establishing his advisor task organization and building relationships with Chinese leadership.

To ensure the Chinese National Government received Lend-Lease support, Chiang Kai-shek was willing to integrate American advisors. Chiang Kai-shek assigned LTG Stilwell as his Chief of Staff.²² Chiang Kai-shek allowed LTG Stilwell and his initial small team to assess the situation on the ground with Chinese forces.²³ Shortly after LTG Stilwell arrived in China, Chiang Kai-shek granted him command over some of the Chinese forces attempting to defend central Burma against the Japanese attack. The Chinese goal was to assist the British in retaining the ground line of communication through central Burma to India and down to the ports in Burma. The defense of central

²¹ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 22.

²² *Ibid.*, 25.

²³ Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before," 24.

Burma would be the first opportunity for LTG Stilwell and his initial team to advise and assist Chinese forces in combat.²⁴

LTG Stilwell organized his advisors to model a US Army corps headquarters. His staff established an integrated headquarters incorporating selected senior Chinese officers. He also created a liaison system with American advisors attached to Chinese divisions.²⁵ LTG Stilwell sent orders to the Chinese General Staff Mission in Burma who translated and formatted the orders into Chinese and issued the orders to Chinese commanders. This process allowed LTG Stilwell to issue directives to Chinese commanders while his advisor network assessed Chinese units during the execution of the operation. Chiang Kai-shek often contradicted these orders in an attempt to preserve combat power by limiting the risk to his forces. Chiang Kai-shek did not want to commit all of his troops and supplies into battle in fear of losing the valuable resources he later required to defeat the Chinese Communists.²⁶ Stilwell was offensively focused and wanted to quickly launch counterattacks against the Japanese. Chiang Kai-shek tried to avoid a major battle with the Japanese and wanted to attrit Japanese forces utilizing a defense in depth approach.²⁷

²⁴ Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Stilwell's Mission to China* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953), 84-85.

²⁵ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 23.

²⁶ Kenneth Ray Young, "The Stilwell Controversy: A Biographical Review," *Military Affairs* 39, no. 2 (April 1975): 66-68, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1986929>.

²⁷ Romanus and Sunderland, *Stilwell's Mission to China*, 235.

Despite these efforts, by May 1942 Japanese forces overwhelmed and defeated the Chinese and British defense in Burma.²⁸ The Chinese army retrograded into China and India leaving the Japanese in control of the strategic Burma line of communication. This defeat created the opportunity for LTG Stilwell to establish a training center in India to rebuild, train, and equip the small portion of the Chinese army that retrograded into India. LTG Stilwell's goal was to retake the strategically vital Burma ground line of communication that linked India, Burma, and China. LTG Stilwell's objective was to develop a training program and provide the equipment necessary to equip thirty Chinese divisions in India and China.²⁹ Chiang Kai-shek limited the number of soldiers he mobilized and committed to the training program to maintain his reserve. Chiang Kai-shek was reluctant to commit the forces required because he knew that once the American mission trained and equipped them, Stilwell would utilize the Chinese units for offensive operations against the Japanese.³⁰ Chinese soldiers killed during offensive operations against the Japanese would limit the number of US advisor trained and equipped troops that Chiang Kai-shek had to employ against Communist forces after the war.

LTG Stilwell established the Chinese Training and Combat Command at the Ramgarh Training Center in India in 1942 after marching nearly 200 miles through

²⁸ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 23.

²⁹ Romanus and Sunderland, *Stilwell's Mission to China*, 235.

³⁰ Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before," 22.

severely restricted tropical jungles with the remnants of two Chinese divisions³¹. British protection and rail lines from Indian ports to Ramgarh to transport and secure Lend-Lease supplies made this area a protected sanctuary. At this location, LTG Stilwell established the military-training base necessary to rebuild and reequip the Chinese divisions needed along with British units to defeat the Japanese in Burma.³² The British army focused on protecting India from Japanese invasion, which temporarily created the safe haven required to mass supplies and train Chinese soldiers. The Lend-Lease material was crucial in equipping Chinese forces with modern the weapons and equipment needed to turn the tide against the Japanese. Ramgarh already had the infrastructure required to house Chinese soldiers, as the base was a British Prisoner of War camp that housed German and Italian prisoners that the Allies relocated³³. LTG Stilwell appointed a Chinese officer as the vice commander of the training center who handled the administrative and discipline issues.³⁴

The US Army created Casual Detachment 8925-B to augment the US soldiers under LTG Stilwell's command to train the Chinese army. This unit initially consisted of fifty-two officers and one hundred and thirty-eight enlisted soldiers specially selected

³¹ John Sweeney, "Ramgarh," adapted by Carl Warren Weidenburner, accessed December 28, 2018, <http://www.cbi-theater.com/ramgarh/ramgarh.html#LINKS>.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

from training centers across various Army branches where they served as instructors.³⁵ This advisor unit mobilized at Fort Screven, Georgia and the detachment deployed together to India. The soldiers knew they would be training soldiers, but for secrecy, they did not know that they would head to India to train Chinese soldiers.³⁶ The secrecy surrounding the mission did not allow the soldiers assigned to Casual Detachment 8925-B to study the Chinese language and culture before arriving in India. The soldiers were not familiar with the Chinese language when they integrated into the training center.³⁷ The trainers and advisors at the Ramgarh Training Center created a unique unit insignia with the motto “Victory Through Knowledge” in English and Chinese characters.³⁸ This unit insignia identified the US soldiers selected and assigned to the unit to give them pride in their mission. The instructors wore this insignia on their hats.³⁹ The Ramgarh Training Center instruction mirrored the US Mobilization Training Program which many of the US advisors had prior experience using to instruct US soldiers.⁴⁰

The security force assistance tasks from the current FM 3-22 can be used to assess the mission at the Ramgarh Training Center. Stilwell and his American advisors

³⁵ Rex Smith, “Rambling Through Gold Brick Row,” *Ex-CBI Roundup* (May 1962): 12-14, accessed February 16 2019, http://www.ex-cbi-roundup.com/documents/1962_may.pdf.

³⁶ Sweeney, “Ramgarh.”

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Smith, “Rambling Through Gold Brick Row,” 14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Hermes, “Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor,” 24.

organized, trained, equipped, rebuilt and built, advised and assisted, and assessed Chinese forces. Stillwell's prior experiences enabled him to assess the Chinese army's capabilities quickly after arriving in theater and gave him the ability to evaluate the Japanese army's capabilities when he commanded Chinese troops in combat. It also allowed him to better understand the challenges of the operating environment. Jungle warfare tactics would be critical for Chinese soldiers to train for and understand if they were to defeat the battle-tested and confident Japanese army in Burma.

The Ramgarh Training Center initially focused on training and equipping the two Chinese divisions that retrograded into India with LTG Stilwell.⁴¹ Chinese replacement soldiers arrived at the camp by train and air from bases in China to fill combat losses to the two Chinese divisions.⁴² Training started at the soldier level with individual skills training, and Chinese interpreters assisting US Army instructors in communicating intent.⁴³ After individual training on personal and crew-served weapons, Chinese soldiers attended a jungle warfare course. US instructors also trained Chinese artillery sections to utilize provided American howitzers.⁴⁴ American advisors were subject matter experts and experienced instructors who came from a variety of Army branches. The instructors' experience and an array of skills allowed the advisors to establish the instructional

⁴¹ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 23-24.

⁴² Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before," 23.

programs to successfully train Chinese soldiers in American tactics, techniques, and procedures. American advisors tested Lend-Lease equipment in the jungles and modified the equipment to be more effective in that operating environment. An example was the advisors shortening of the British Enfield rifle. The advisors also devised changes to the British animal transportation cart to improve its maneuverability in the jungle. Upgrades to the animal-drawn supply carts included automotive wheels and high-speed axels increasing their dependability.⁴⁵

To improve the organization of the Chinese forces, the Ramgarh Training Center established several officer courses in order to train leaders and integrate staff planning tools and processes.⁴⁶ American advisors ran the Chinese staff through division command post exercises before Chinese units conducted collective training.⁴⁷ Chinese officers remained in command of their units at the training center, and after the completion of the individual training program, these officers planned and led the collective training.⁴⁸ US advisors supported collective training by providing training aids and advice.⁴⁹ Unit training gave Chinese officers confidence in their own soldier's

⁴⁵ Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

⁴⁶ Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before," 23.

⁴⁷ Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

⁴⁸ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 24.

⁴⁹ Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

abilities, it also allowed them to exercise command and control before these units began combat operations against the Japanese.

LTG Stilwell's mission did not initially focus on rebuilding or building Chinese training bases in China. The safety, space, and infrastructure already built at Ramgarh made that location a sanctuary to retrain and equip the first contingent of Chinese troops. The training center acquired land to expand by compensating property owners. American advisors built up the Ramgarh Training Center and expanded the training center to include 360 square miles of ranges and training areas to train and equip multiple Chinese divisions. Advisors converted several existing buildings at Ramgarh into classrooms for instruction during inclement weather and built ammunition magazines and arms rooms.⁵⁰ The training center housed twelve thousand troops in barracks and could accommodate an additional fifteen thousand soldiers in tents.⁵¹ The US established other training centers in China later in the war and modeled them after the Ramgarh Training Center which was the first US Army established overseas foreign force training center.⁵²

By the end of 1943, after almost two years, over five thousand officers and nearly fifty thousand enlisted soldiers trained at the Ramgarh Training Center.⁵³ In October

⁵⁰ Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 28.

⁵³ Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

1943, LTG Stilwell used these soldiers to launch initial attacks into Burma.⁵⁴ To advise and assist these Chinese units in combat, LTG Stilwell expanded the advisor network used in 1942 to fifteen hundred American advisors.⁵⁵ These expanded teams had American field grade or senior captain advisors at the battalion level and included American colonels with a small staff at the Chinese division level.⁵⁶ Advisor teams did face issues advising senior Chinese officers who were veterans of operations against the Communist Chinese and the Japanese. American officers did not have the combat experience and rank needed to advise some Chinese officers during initial combat operations.

Overall, the advisor network would prove to be very successful during the upcoming Chinese attacks into Burma.⁵⁷ American advisors were able to build rapport with Chinese officers who trained at the Ramgarh Training Center. Having advisors down to the Chinese battalion level moved advisors closer to the forward line of troops where they could observe and communicate the situation to LTG Stilwell's headquarters. Embedded advisors at the battalion level helped moderate language issues and having to wait for reports at the Chinese division level. However, the more extensive advisor network created instructor shortages at the training center and Chinese instructors were

⁵⁴ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 25.

⁵⁵ Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before," 25.

⁵⁶ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 25.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

trained to fill the vacant positions. The Ramgarh Training Center increased the number of Chinese instructors to expand the training program.⁵⁸ These Chinese instructors were valuable later when the US military established additional training centers in China.

LTG Stilwell was successful in creating a training program in India and establishing an advisor network for two Chinese divisions. These divisions attacked into Burma and reestablished the ground line of communication to resupply Chinese troops who were relying on American aircraft to deliver supplies.⁵⁹ Chinese divisions that trained at the Ramgarh Training Center, together with Chinese soldiers from the Y-force who trained in China were highly successful in their encounters against the Japanese army. These victories highlight the success of the training program in increasing the combat effectiveness of Chinese forces.

Chiang Kai-shek kept some US trained forces in reserve and continued to focus on keeping troops in reserve for the eventual continuation of the fight against Mao Tse-tung. Chiang Kai-shek strongly opposed LTG Stilwell's plan for the expanded employment of the US-trained and equipped divisions. Chiang Kai-shek continued to limit the forces available to LTG Stilwell as he kept them in positions to restrict the expansion of the Chinese Communists. Arguments with Chiang Kai-shek on the offensive employment of the Chinese army led to his request for LTG Stilwell's removal

⁵⁸ Pierce, "Training and Advising Foreign Militaries: We've Done This Before," 26.

⁵⁹ Sweeney, "Ramgarh."

from China.⁶⁰ With LTG Stilwell replaced and American advances in the Pacific theater, the United States reduced its expectations for the China-Burma-India Theater. However, offensive operations by Chinese and Allied forces in the China-Burma-India Theater prevented the Japanese from repositioning forces to reinforce their defenses in the Pacific and on the Japanese home islands.

In conclusion, when the United States entered World War II, LTG Stilwell and a selected team of advisors were sent to the China-Burma-India Theater early on. Several of these officers possessed the necessary Chinese cultural and military experience needed to lead the United States mission in China. In the 1930s LTG Stilwell had served as a military attaché in China. He studied the Chinese army and the combat employment of Chinese and Japanese units during the Sino-Japanese battles of 1937-38.⁶¹ Ideally, the US soldiers that were recruited to serve as advisors and instructors in casual detachment 8925-B would have also had Chinese language and culture experience. While US soldiers did receive cultural and language training once deployed, they would have been more effective at building rapport with Chinese soldiers if they had more cultural training and combat experience before their deployment. Pre-mission Chinese language and culture training would have made the advisors more productive with the limited number of available Chinese interpreters. The US soldiers recruited for casual detachment 8925-B came from various Army training centers where they served as instructors across US

⁶⁰ Hermes, “Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor,” 26.

⁶¹ Babb, “The Harmony of Yin and Yank: The American Military Advisory Effort in China, 1941-1951,” 107.

Army branches. With an instructor background, selected soldiers only needed Chinese cultural and language training to be competent instructors at the Ramgarh Training Center.

It was vital to the Allied effort that the Chinese sought and agreed to United States assistance to defeat the Japanese forces occupying China. Chiang Kai-shek wanted the Lend-Lease material support from the United States and agreed to integrate American advisors and appoint LTG Stilwell to his staff. LTG Stilwell reciprocated this by establishing an integrated headquarters. Integrating host nation forces into the headquarters and utilizing the host nation chain of command are essential for host nation forces to gain experience and to prevent host nation soldiers from resenting advisors for appearing to take over. US advisors embedded in Chinese units served as liaisons to report the on-ground situation back to LTG Stilwell's headquarters. The liaison network allowed Stilwell to assess the situation across Chinese echelons. This liaison network was crucial as Chinese forces were spread out creating command and control and reporting challenges for LTG Stilwell and senior Chinese leaders.

US advisors at the Ramgarh Training Center executed all the security force assistance tasks of organize, train, equip, rebuild and build, advise and assist and assess from the current FM 3-22. For the task of organize, advisors did not help the Chinese with recruiting and manning Chinese divisions. However, the advisors adjusted the Chinese task organization and tactics to account for Lend-Lease provided equipment. These adjustments increased the effectiveness of Chinese forces against the experienced and battle-tested Japanese Army. To assist in the organization of Chinese headquarters, advisors established officer training courses to integrate staff planning tools and

processes. Chinese division headquarters conducted division command post exercises before they planned and managed Chinese collective level training with oversight and advice from the US advisors.

Training and equipping Chinese divisions was the focus of the Ramgarh Training Center. Advisors used the “crawl, walk, run” methodology to train the Chinese soldiers that retrograded into India with LTG Stilwell as well as those provided from China as combat replacements. Advisors initially led the individual training until advisors trained Chinese instructors. During the crawl phase, individual training focused on personal and crew-served weapons. During the walk phase, Chinese soldiers attended a jungle warfare training course and completed specialized military occupation training. During the run phase, Chinese divisions gained confidence in their abilities as they executed division maneuvers prior to going on the attack against Japanese forces. This “crawl, walk, run” methodology was effective in building competency and confidence in Chinese forces.

Chinese forces operating in China relied on Allied airpower for resupply after Japanese forces seized the vital Burma line of communication. It took much longer to equip Chinese troops training in camps located in China by air while the Japanese controlled the Burma line of communication. The safety of Ramgarh enabled Chinese forces to focus on training and preparing for combat. For the rebuild and build task, advisors expanded the Ramgarh Training Center and constructed the facilities and ranges necessary to train multiple Chinese divisions simultaneously. The camp was large enough to train and house Chinese forces onsite which facilitated unit cohesion. Training centers established later in the war in China used the Ramgarh Training Center as a model.

For the advise and assist task, a small advisor team consisting of LTG Stilwell's headquarters advised and assisted Chinese soldiers during their retreat from Burma. Through training at Ramgarh and during the successful Chinese attack back into Burma this advisor network was expanded and gained experience. US advisors established working relationships, worked through language barriers, and built rapport with Chinese troops during the training and equipping at Ramgarh. Without having pre-mission advisory and cultural familiarization, Ramgarh gave advisors the time necessary to understand how to work through interpreters and gain an understanding of the Chinese culture. Advisors developed a shared understanding with their Chinese counterparts at Ramgarh. The time at Ramgarh was just as critical for advisors as it was for Chinese soldiers. US advisors proved their value and demonstrated their capabilities before they advised Chinese units in combat during the attack back into Burma. Dedicated training time allows advisors and partner forces to make and learn from mistakes under less stressful conditions without the fear of losing lives during combat. During the Chinese attack into Burma, LTG Stilwell expanded the US advisor network to integrate US advisors into Chinese units at the battalion, regiment and division levels. Integrating Advisor teams at multiple echelons facilitated cross communication up and down the chain of command which improved advisors and Chinese units overall situational understanding.

Assess is the critical security force assistance task during security force assistance operations. Advisors need to understand the capabilities and limitations of their partner force to develop a timed constrained training plan to improve the partner force's combat effectiveness. During the defense of Burma, LTG Stilwell and his advisor network

assessed the capabilities and limitations of Chinese forces. These combat observations enabled advisors to develop the training and equipping plan established at the Ramgarh Training Center. As Chinese soldiers trained, advisors made assessments for when to advance the training using the crawl, walk, run framework. During the attack into Burma LTG Stilwell and the advisor network were able to assess the effectiveness of the training program under combat conditions. Advisors could adjust the program of instruction to account for training gaps and shortfalls that advisors identified during combat to increase the effectiveness of the next Chinese training cohort.

In 1944, an American long range penetration force, the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) arrived in India to take part in the Chinese attack into Burma.⁶² Merrill's Marauders along with British and Chinese units launched attacks behind enemy lines to interdict supply lines to stall the Japanese offensive and set the conditions for the follow on British and Chinese assault into Burma. Toward the end of 1944, Chinese forces recaptured the strategic Burma line of communication which enabled the United States to expand and speed up its mission to train and equip Chinese units in China. In 1945, the Chinese Alpha force consisting of 39 US trained and equipped Chinese divisions with embedded US advisors and the American Mars Task Force consisting of the remnants of the 5307th and an additional US regiment supported by US airpower launched the Chinese Offensive Campaign.⁶³ The 1945 China Offensive Campaign prevented the Japanese from repositioning combat power to reinforce the Japanese defenses on the

⁶² Babb, "The Harmony of Yin and Yank: The American Military Advisory Effort in China, 1941-1951," 166.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 208.

Pacific Islands. The Chinese success validated advisors efforts training, equipping and advising Chinese units and also validated the “by, with, and through” approach utilizing embedded US advisors.

US Advisory Support in Korea

Advisory duty in a tactical unit of a local national army, particularly under combat conditions, is exceedingly difficult and frequently frustrating, and personnel selected for such duty must be temperamentally and physically able to withstand these stresses, in addition to being professionally competent. Qualities needed include tact, patience, emotional stability, self-sufficiency, self-discipline, and – in tactical units – command and combat experience is possible

— Alfred Hausrath, *Role and Problems of the Military Advisor in Developing an Indigenous Army for Combat in Korea*



Figure 3. Unit Patch, US Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea

Source: Wikipedia, “Korean Military Advisor Group,” last modified August 10, 2018, accessed December 1 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Military_Advisory_Group#/media/File:Kmag.jpg.

The United States mission in Korea began after the Japanese surrender ended Word War II. US forces deployed to Korea to disarm the Japanese army who had begun

their occupation of Korea in 1910.⁶⁴ Elements of the 7th Infantry Division accepted the surrender of Japanese forces in the Korean capital of Seoul.⁶⁵ President Roosevelt used Japanese held Korea as a bargaining chip to get the Soviet Union to join the war against the Japanese in an attempt to limit US military casualties during the invasion of the Japanese home islands.⁶⁶ The Allied powers of World War II agreed to split the Korean peninsula roughly in half at the 38th parallel with the United States and British influence in the south and Soviet and Chinese influence in the north. The Allied powers did not consult with Korea before making the decision.⁶⁷ This political move created tension by splitting Korea, which had been a single territory and by putting the Korean capital in the southern territory. US forces that arrived in Korea had little time to prepare for their occupation mission. The rapid movement of Soviet troops into North Korea forced the United States to deploy available units to secure Korea south of the 38th parallel to prevent Soviet forces from occupying the entire peninsula.⁶⁸

After having been under Japanese control since Japan annexed Korea in 1910,⁶⁹ Koreans wanted to be a united and independent country. During the 1943 Allied leader

⁶⁴ Spencer C. Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 22, no. 4 (December 2010): 422.

⁶⁵ Robert G. Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, ed. Walter G. Hermes (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1962), 1.

⁶⁶ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 421.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

meeting in Cairo, the United States, British, and Chinese leaders agreed that once stabilized, Korea should be independent. The Allied nations did not agree on a timeline for Korean independence and relations between the United States and the Soviet Union deteriorated after the war.⁷⁰ Soviet and Communist Chinese advisors continued to push Communist ideals in North Korea. President Harry S. Truman's policy of Communist containment prioritized the United States support to South Korea to prevent the spread of Communism to the entire Korean peninsula.⁷¹ With this US strategic direction, the US established the United States Army Military Government in Korea to set the conditions for Korean independence. This occupational government would anger many Koreans by keeping in power leaders who the Japanese put in power during the Japanese occupation until they could be replaced by Korean elected officials.⁷²

Eighteen lieutenants arrived in Korea in 1945 with the task of building and expanding a Korean Constabulary to support the national police. The United States specifically created this internal security force instead of a Korean army in an attempt to not agitate the Soviet forces in North Korea. The Constabulary replaced the Japanese police force established to control the Korean population.⁷³ The United States would regionally align the constabulary to support the national police in South Korean

⁷⁰ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 422.

⁷¹ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 70.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷³ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 46.

provinces.⁷⁴ A lack of interpreters and Korean military officers who spoke English created a language barrier that hindered US advisors' efforts. A cultural and language barrier existed due to the limited contact Koreans had with the western world. The United States established an English language school in Seoul for Korean officers to learn basic military terms.⁷⁵ The American military government recruited and trained this internal security force during a one-month course that US advisors created. A Korean officer became Chief of the Constabulary in 1946 giving the unit legitimacy in the eyes of the Korean population. Korean leadership was necessary as Koreans resented the Japanese established and led police force. The longer that the United States remained in control of Korean governmental organizations, the more the Korean population would view the United States with resentment as occupiers. Although the United States sought to create this new Constabulary without leadership from units that the Japanese established, the lack of experienced officers forced the United States to keep many Koreans who served under the Japanese in the organization. This reserve police force was required to stabilize the country and replace US troops who were performing basic security tasks. The Korean security force would be essential in establishing the conditions for elections to form a Korean government.

With an insignificant budget, advisors struggled to find and build the infrastructure necessary to house, train and equip the constabulary. The United States

⁷⁴ John D. Tabb, "Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG): A Model for Success?" (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2010), 20.

⁷⁵ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 11.

provided captured Japanese rifles to outfit the constabulary. The US Army continued to downsize and redeploy overseas personnel after WWII leaving fewer US advisors in Korea. Advisors were responsible for multiple regiments who were often miles apart.⁷⁶ This shortage of experienced US soldiers to serve as advisors slowed down the expansion and training of the Constabulary.

In 1948, The United States pushed the issue of uniting Korea to the United Nations. The United Nations General Assembly established the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea to hold elections in North and South Korea to unite the country under one government. The Soviets did not allow the United Nations mission to enter North Korea, so the mission held elections in only South Korea.⁷⁷ Three years after the liberation of Korea from Japan, these elections would lead to the creation of the Republic of Korea government with Syngman Rhee elected as the first president.⁷⁸ This new South Korean government replaced the US Army Military Government, and the United States occupation forces began to leave Korea. The constabulary that US advisors created and trained became the Republic of Korea army organized similarly to the US Army.⁷⁹ An agreement between Syngman Rhee and the US military established the US

⁷⁶ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 16.

⁷⁷ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 423.

⁷⁸ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 33.

⁷⁹ Robert D. Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 5.

Provisional Military Advisor Group in 1948 to continue building the capacity of the Republic of Korea's security forces.⁸⁰

In North Korea in 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was created under Communist leader Kim Il-Sung. The Republic of Korea and the Communist-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea both claimed to be the legitimate government for all of Korea. The United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea failed to set a path toward uniting the countries. Both the North and South Korean governments claimed that they were the legitimate government for all of Korea leading to the commission issuing a warning for a possible civil war.⁸¹ The Soviet Union withdrew the Soviet occupation force in North Korea after the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. With the growing threat in the north, the US Provisional Military Advisor Group continued to train the newly established Republic of Korea army. This US advisor group grew in size to several hundred officers and enlisted soldiers but was not well organized or supported as the provisional US military government continued to relinquish authority to the Korean government.⁸²

In 1949 as the last of the US military occupation force left Korea, the US military established the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea to replace the Provisional advisor unit. This enlarged unit would fall under the direction of the US

⁸⁰ Tabb, "Korean Military Advisory Group (K MAG): a Model for Success?" 9.

⁸¹ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 423.

⁸² Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 48.

ambassador.⁸³ The advisory group's first commander was Brigadier General William Roberts.⁸⁴ The US Army established the military advisory group with a cap of 500 soldiers. The unit's organization consisted of almost two hundred officers and three hundred enlisted soldiers.⁸⁵ To fill these additional billets the military advisory group would pull recommended volunteers from units still in Korea. The group faced challenges in recruiting officers from these units. Most officers in Korea did not want to extend their tour in Korea, as officers did not view Korea as a desirable assignment. The military advisory group lowered the rank requirement for officers from captain to first lieutenant to help fill the unit. Not all of these newly recruited advisors had the experience and skill necessary to advise senior Korean officers.⁸⁶ Soldiers with combat experience in WWII were demobilizing, leaving the Army with an increasing number of soldiers without prior combat or instructor experience.

US advisors continuously conducted security force assistance operations with the Republic of Korea's security forces before the outbreak of the Korean War. The complex post-WWII political environment and the beginning of the Cold War constrained advisor efforts. The United States and the Republic of Korea did not know that they had limited time to build and prepare South Korean forces to defeat a North Korean attack. The expanding US-trained and equipped South Korean military failed to deter North Korean

⁸³ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 48.

⁸⁴ Tabb, "Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG): a Model for Success?" 24.

⁸⁵ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 43.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

aggression. Utilizing the Security Force Assistance tasks from FM 3-22 to assess US advisory efforts before the Korean War; American advisors organized, trained, equipped, built, advised and assisted, and assessed South Korean forces.

The Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea assisted in building the Republic of Korea army, coast guard, and national police force to help secure the country. US advisors built the Korean army from the ground up and utilized the US Army's organizational framework and doctrine to establish the Korean army. The United States established a military school system before the outbreak of the war. These schools included a Korean Military Academy, command and general staff college and branch-specific training schools, which included intelligence, artillery, infantry, medical and engineer.⁸⁷ This military education system utilized a program of instruction that advisors produced by modifying the instruction from US Army courses. This effort lacked the trained Korean instructors and proper facilities required to be fully effective.

Advisors continued to struggle to overcome the language barrier with their Korean counterparts when training and advising Korean soldiers. US advisors still did not receive Korean language and cultural training as part of a training or certification program before becoming advisors.⁸⁸ The number of Korean interpreters continued to be insufficient, and the English language school for Korean officers had limited throughput. Korean soldiers lacked technological backgrounds due to the length of time under

⁸⁷ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 51.

⁸⁸ Christopher J. Ricci, "Korean Military Advisory Group: Insights for Future Security Force Assistance Efforts" (Master's Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2011), 15.

Japanese subjugation. Demonstrating a training task to Korean soldiers was the primary technique advisors used to communicate their intent. A proper demonstration was critical during training to ensure Korean soldiers learned and drilled with correct techniques.⁸⁹ As the Korean army continued to expand the US advisor force did not. The limited number of advisors per Korean unit limited the impact US advisors had on the rapidly growing Korean army. This manning shortage was similar to the issues that the smaller provisional advisor group had when they created and expanded the Korean Constabulary.

US advisors focused on developing the internal security capabilities of South Korean security forces. The United States policy of internal security sought to prevent Syngman Rhee from using the military to escalate confrontations with North Korean forces on the border or to launch an attack into North Korea. The internal security focus and budget constraints limited the number of artillery pieces, armor, and aircraft that the United States provided to South Korea before the outbreak of the Korean War. The United States occupation force left behind the bulk of weapons and equipment that US advisors used to supply the South Korean army when the occupation force departed Korea. The weapons that the US Army occupation force left behind consisted primarily of small arms and a limited number of crew-served weapons and mortars.⁹⁰ US advisors equipped 50,000 Korean soldiers with small arms by 1949. The United States equipped the remainder of Korean security forces with captured Japanese war stock weapons.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 43.

⁹⁰ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 48.

⁹¹ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 41.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, did not restrict the weapons or equipment supplied to North Korean troops. North Korean soldiers were equipped and trained with advanced weapons to include modern Soviet tanks.⁹²

There was limited infrastructure to house and train Korean forces. US advisors initially used Japanese military facilities to house and train the Korean Constabulary. As American occupation troops left Korea, they turned their bases and infrastructure over to Korean units. The majority of these installations were located in and around the capital of Seoul.⁹³ Limited funding from the South Korean and US governments slowed the expansion of training facilities and the supplies needed to improve the proficiency of Korean soldiers. The Korean economy was slow to establish the industrial base necessary to maintain and produce the equipment and ordnance that Korean soldiers required.

South Korean president Syngman Rhee faced rival political factions, communist guerrillas, and clashes along the 38th parallel with North Korean soldiers.⁹⁴ These challenges provided opportunities for the military advisory group to advise and assist Korean forces during operations. US advisors partnered with Korean officers from the battalion level up to the general staff level. The Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea integrated into the Korean army, working in the same offices and going to the field for training with Korean units.⁹⁵ US advisors relied on an expanded radio

⁹² Max Hastings, *The Korean War* (New York: Touchstone, 1987), 45.

⁹³ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 51.

⁹⁴ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 423.

⁹⁵ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 49.

communication network to allow them to communicate with the advisory group headquarters in Seoul.⁹⁶ Advisors utilized the radio network for supply request and for coordination with adjacent advisors. This close working relationship enabled US advisors to build rapport with Korean officers in the field.

Sharing hardships and accompanying Korean troops when training built confidence and mutual respect between Korean forces and US advisors. Younger advisors needed to gain confidence in their abilities and prove their value to earn the respect of older and more senior Korean officers. Advisors relied on their relationships and influencing techniques to solve issues with Korean officers and units. Advisors proved their value as they accompanied and advised South Korean soldiers across South Korea to subdue communist uprisings. These operations were some of the first combat operations South Korean security forces conducted.⁹⁷ Combat operations provided US advisors with the ability to assess the combat effectiveness of South Korean forces. Advisors knew what improvements the Korean army needed, but they did not realize that time was rapidly running out to make the necessary improvements. The political environment constrained advisors by focusing their mission on internal security. Korean security forces were becoming proficient in counterinsurgency operations but had limited equipment and training for large-scale combat operations against external forces.

On 25 June 1950, the war between North and South Korea began when North Korean forces crossed the 38th Parallel with ten divisions supported by artillery and

⁹⁶ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: K MAG in Peace and War*, 54.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

armor.⁹⁸ The South Korean army opposing the North Korean attack had four understrength and undersupplied divisions dispersed along the 38th Parallel and three divisions conducting in counterinsurgency operations further south.⁹⁹ The attack caught South Korean forces and US advisors by surprise. Intelligence estimates underestimated the offensive capability of North Korean soldiers. South Korean soldiers were ill-prepared to counter this coordinated attack. The four South Korean divisions had only one regiment each forward deployed along the border. The remainder of the divisions were in their bases away from the 38th Parallel.¹⁰⁰ Some South Korean units fought hard delaying the North Korean advance, but they were overmatched and lacked the anti-armor weapons required to destroy North Korean tanks. In about one month, the South Korean army went from a force of almost 100,000 to only be able to account for 22,000 soldiers.¹⁰¹ Kim Il-Sung expected North Korean soldiers to defeat the Republic of Korea quickly. This quick North Korean victory was necessary to prevent the United States from mobilizing and deploying forces to support the Republic of Korea.¹⁰²

The five hundred personnel Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea lacked a defined wartime advisory mission and planned to leave the country if a war

⁹⁸ Ricci, “Korean Military Advisory Group: Insights for Future Security Force Assistance Efforts,” 26.

⁹⁹ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 114.

¹⁰¹ Tabb, “Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG): a Model for Success?” 27.

¹⁰² Tucker, “The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate,” 425.

broke out. Even without a wartime plan, the advisory group was crucial in the first weeks of the war. Advisors were located with Korean units throughout the country when the North Korean attack began. The advisory group was in a command transition when the assault happened, and the advisory group chief of staff was in command of the group.¹⁰³ The chief of staff and group headquarters immediately provided what support they could to the South Korean army high command. The advisory group headquarters also coordinated and assisted the US Embassy with a non-combatant evacuation. The US ambassador decided to evacuate American families living in South Korea to Japan after advisor reporting emphasized the dire situation.¹⁰⁴

As South Korean units reacted to the North Korean attack, advisors who had established relationships remained with their South Korean counterparts and were indispensable in assisting and organizing South Korean defensive positions. Advisors played an essential role in attempting to reorganize the shattered Republic of Korea units. US advisors even took operational control of South Korean soldiers during some combat operations to provide the leadership required to keep South Korean soldiers in the fight.¹⁰⁵ Numerous US advisors fought alongside the Republic of Korea units they advised as they retreated south.

The advisor network was able to provide intelligence to GEN MacArthur at the Far East Command. These updates provided GEN MacArthur with the common operating

¹⁰³ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 119.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁰⁵ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 53.

picture required to offer potential strategic level courses of actions to President Truman. Advisors also relayed messages of imminent United States support from GEN MacArthur to South Korean commanders, which persuaded them to continue to fight.¹⁰⁶ The Far East Command sent ammunition and supplies to Korea that US advisors requested to support South Korean units. US advisors continued to assist South Korean forces in establishing defensive positions and attempted to facilitate orderly retrogrades as the attacked pushed South Korean forces further south. Advisor-assisted defensive positions delayed the North Korean attack long enough for the United States to mobilize and deploy forces before North Korea defeated the Republic of Korea. The outbreak of the Korean War drastically changed the scope and urgency of the military advisory group's mission.

On 27 June, after North Korea failed to comply with a United Nations request to withdraw north of the 38th Parallel, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution to assist the Republic of Korea in repelling the North Korean attack.¹⁰⁷ President Truman ordered GEN MacArthur to employ the US military to support the Republic of Korea.¹⁰⁸ The Far East Command mobilized and deployed combat power from Eighth Army units stationed in the Pacific. The US military rushed these undertrained and poorly equipped units into combat to assist the Republic of Korea

¹⁰⁶ Ricci, "Korean Military Advisory Group: Insights for Future Security Force Assistance Efforts," 28.

¹⁰⁷ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 128.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 128.

forces.¹⁰⁹ On 7 July, the U.N. Security Council established a United Nations Command under the lead of the United States, and President Truman appointed GEN MacArthur as the commander.¹¹⁰ The United States thought that a multinational operation would reduce the risk of the Soviet Union entering the war in support of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.¹¹¹ The Eighth Army took operational control of the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea from the US State Department in July, and the advisor group became a major subordinate command. US advisors become the vital link between the Eighth Army and the South Korean military.¹¹² As the US military buildup continued, the military advisor group acted as the liaison element with South Korea forces. With the military advisory group now under the Eighth Army, the number of advisors expanded as the South Korean army increased in size and the Eight Army needed advisors to train, advise, and assist South Korean forces in combat. The military advisory group increased to a strength of 1,308 in September 1951.¹¹³

The Republic of Korea army was in disarray but continued to resist the North Korean advance. Units would have to consolidate, reorganize, and reestablish command structures to become a capable fighting force once again. Only the remnants of five South

¹⁰⁹ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 426.

¹¹⁰ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 135.

¹¹¹ Ricci, "Korean Military Advisory Group: Insights for Future Security Force Assistance Efforts," 27.

¹¹² Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 53.

¹¹³ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 161.

Korean divisions completed the arduous retrograde south.¹¹⁴ South Korean units left vital weapons and equipment behind during their retreat.¹¹⁵ The Far East Command had to balance equipping and supplying South Korean and US forces who were arriving in Korea. Pauses in the North Korean attack to resupply and reorganize provided South Korean and US forces with the time needed to establish a defensive perimeter along defensible terrain. North Korean troops surrounded the southern port city of Pusan where the United Nations defensive line held. The shortened interior lines enabled United Nations units to quickly reinforce and defeat North Korean attempts to penetrate the defensive line. The advisors' focus shifted back to the security force assistance tasks of organizing and equipping South Korean forces as the situation began to stabilize.

The South Korean government urgently recruited soldiers to reconstitute Korean army units. The South Korean army's authorized strength increased, and the US Eighth Army developed a plan to organize and equip a new division every month until the Korean army doubled in size to ten divisions.¹¹⁶ South Korean soldiers with the help of US advisors conscripted male citizens from nearby villages and organized them into units. There was no shortage of South Korean citizens willing and motivated to defend South Korea from the North Korean invasion.¹¹⁷ South Korean recruiters and US

¹¹⁴ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 5.

¹¹⁵ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 143.

¹¹⁶ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 6.

¹¹⁷ Tabb, "Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG): a Model for Success?" 28.

advisors chose and promoted noncommissioned officers and junior officers on the spot to fill these hastily formed units.¹¹⁸ To supply the company and above leadership positions, South Korean leaders pulled officers from other units. Advisors faced immense challenges as they advised and assisted these hastily formed units as they deployed to reinforce the depleted South Korean army. The limited number of combat advisors also reduced US advisors effectiveness across the South Korean Army. The average division level advisor team was led by a lieutenant colonel or major and consisted of five officers and three soldiers in 1950.¹¹⁹ At the South Korean regimental level, a major or senior captain led the advisor team, which only included two officers.¹²⁰ The US Eighth Army considered an idea to utilize US military officers to command and control South Korean units but this idea was not practical and would hinder the progress made by empowering South Korean leadership.¹²¹

With minimal training and equipment, the South Korean military sent these newly formed units to free up more experienced forces who were occupying inactive areas along the defensive line.¹²² With no time for lengthy training courses, these soldiers gained experience during operations. The military advisory group was crucial in

¹¹⁸ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 6.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 55.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 53.

preventing these new units from making costly mistakes. These hastily organized and inexperienced units lacked the formal training and equipment to defeat well-organized North Korean attacks.¹²³ As these South Korean units were needed on the front lines to augment United Nations forces, there was no time to reestablish the South Korean military school system that advisors developed and implemented before the war.

GEN MacArthur took a gamble to cut off North Korean supply lines by launching a surprise amphibious assault at Inch'on on 15 September.¹²⁴ The amphibious assault was successful in gaining a foothold in the North Korean rear area. The US X Corps landing and break out threatened to cut off the North Korean's stretched supply lines to their forces surrounding Pusan. North Korean soldiers who were threatened by the US X Corps surrounding them began to retrograde from South Korea. The US Eighth Army went on the offense from Pusan and broke out from its defensive perimeter as North Korean forces withdrew. The US Eighth Army pursued the retreating North Korean forces north. The X Corps recaptured Seoul and the US Eighth Army linked up on 26 September and soon US forces reached the 38th Parallel.¹²⁵ The amphibious assault and break out from the Pusan perimeter created the space required for the military advisory group to rebuild, grow and train the South Korean army.

The United Nations Command pushed to the Yalu River, which brought Chinese Communist Forces into the war in support of the North Korean Communist

¹²³ Hermes, "Survey of the Development of the Role of the US Army Military Advisor," 55.

¹²⁴ Tucker, "The Korean War, 1950–53: From Maneuver to Stalemate," 427.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

government.¹²⁶ Chinese Communist Forces attacked in mass and drove the US Eighth Army south back towards the 38th Parallel. Chinese forces destroyed several South Korean units and killed embedded advisors as they advanced south. The Chinese entry into the war and the rapid destruction of South Korean army units shortened the training time for South Korean recruits at replacement training centers as units desperately required replacements. The US Eighth Army even utilized South Korean soldiers to fill critical shortages in US Army units through the Korean Augmentation to the US Army program.¹²⁷ The Korean Augmentation program started as an agreement between GEN MacArthur and President Syngman. These South Korean soldiers freed up US military combat troops by serving in logistical support roles. The language barrier and cultural differences hindered these early augmentation efforts. South Korean soldiers that spoke English were valuable enablers who understood the geography and could communicate with and question Korean citizens and North Korean prisoners. The front lines would stabilize again around the 38th Parallel, and now advisors had the time to train and grow the South Korean military. The US government pressured South Korean president Syngman Rhee to relieve ineffective senior officers before authorizing the expansion of the South Korean army and training program.¹²⁸ The Eighth Army instituted a

¹²⁶ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 17.

¹²⁷ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 150.

¹²⁸ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 18.

commander training course to instruct South Korean officers after the plan to replace Korean commanders with US military officers was dropped.

In 1951, the number of combat advisors at the South Korean division and regiment increased as the military advisory group expanded. At the South Korean division level, there were now twenty-one officers and eleven soldiers. A lieutenant colonel still led the combat advisor team as the senior advisor to the South Korean division commander. The advisor team added another lieutenant colonel as the assistant division advisor.¹²⁹ The increased numbers enabled advisors to partner with and advise and assist across the South Korean staff functions. The authorized ranks of regimental advisors increased to one lieutenant colonel and one major.¹³⁰ Even with the increase in combat advisors in 1951, there were still no advisor positions assigned down to the infantry battalion level. Artillery and armor battalions had small combat advisor elements similar in size to the regimental infantry advisor team.¹³¹ The smaller advisor teams lacked the redundancy for continuous twenty-four-hour operations to include communications with the military advisory group headquarters. The advisory group increased the rank authorization for advisors which reduced the rank gap between advisors and their South Korean counterparts and improved the experience level of advisors. The shortage of advisors often led to lower ranking offices filling advisor positions.

¹²⁹ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 20.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

The military advisory group competed for personnel with other US military units in Korea. Officers sent to the advisory group did not have the same job opportunity or potential for rapid promotion as officers in conventional units. The lack of incentives for officers to become advisors limited the number of skilled recruits. Short-term fills did not have the time in position required to build effective relationships with the South Korean partners to be competent advisors. During the war, advisors received no formal training on their role as an advisor or the Korean language or culture. The advisory group sent new advisors to the front who had little time to comprehend their mission and duties to fill the critical shortage of combat advisors. South Korean officers stated that an essential qualification for advisors was a good personality. From the South Korean point of view, advisors were often rude and impatient.¹³² Without a formal training process, advisors learned from peers and mistakes made, while advising and assisting South Korean soldiers in combat.

US advisors used the combat experience that South Korean soldiers and leaders gained in defending South Korea to improve and expand the South Korean military education and training system. Advisors expanded and re-implemented the branch-specific technical school system that advisors developed before the war in 1951. The expansion accounted for the growing South Korean army that had an authorized strength of 250,000 in 1951.¹³³ These branch specific training courses replaced the replacement

¹³² Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 29.

¹³³ United States Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAG), *Advisor's Handbook* (San Francisco, CA: Office of the Chief, KMAG, 1951), 23.

training centers that quickly trained soldiers across all functional areas. The larger military advisory group was able to dedicate more advisors to training centers. Advisors revised and updated US Army military and training materials for Korean instructors before interpreters translated the manuals into Korean.¹³⁴ Advisors selected South Korean soldiers that did well in the courses to become instructors. South Korean soldiers also attended military schools in the United States. This process grew the South Korean cadre that would be required to instruct South Korean soldiers. Advisors established a noncommissioned officer academy to increase the standards in the South Korean noncommissioned officer corps.¹³⁵ Advisors implemented this training course to improve the leadership abilities of junior level leaders in South Korean army formations. The Eighth Army and the advisory group oversaw the construction of several training centers to include the Korean Army Training Center. This facility included classrooms, a training area for maneuvers, and ranges for all weapon systems; centrally located on one installation.¹³⁶

The reinstated school system continued after the end of the war, as the system was effective in building and expanding the South Korean military's capacity. There was no quick solution to create a formidable South Korean army. Constraints before the war limited US advisors' ability to train and equip South Korean soldiers. Not until the front lines stabilized during the war, did advisors have the time and resources necessary to

¹³⁴ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 172.

¹³⁵ KMAG, *Advisor's Handbook*, 24.

¹³⁶ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 179.

implement the training courses required to turn raw recruits into combat-ready soldiers. The military advisory group remained flexible and expanded to almost two thousand soldiers as establishing the South Korean military education system became a priority.¹³⁷

The March 1951 Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea Advisor's Handbook defined the advisors' primary mission as advising Korean commanders and staff in combat. To support these combat operations, advisors had the task of assisting the Korean army in nearly all military functions. Advisors were responsible for providing recommendations on the organization, administration, training, equipping, and synchronizing combat operations between the Korean Army and the US Eighth Army.¹³⁸ As the link between the Eighth Army and the South Korean Army, the military advisory group was responsible for updating the Eighth Army on the South Korean army's tactical situation. Advisors sent operations reports to the advisory group headquarters three times a day to enable the headquarters to maintain situational awareness. Advisors maintained radio communications with the advisory group headquarters, which kept track of advisor locations. Advisors also sent a map overlay of South Korean army unit locations down to the battalion level to the advisory group headquarters every day.¹³⁹

This handbook stressed the importance of building a relationship with the advisor's Korean counterpart. Mutual trust, respect, and cooperation were the fundamentals that this manual emphasized for field advisors. Building and sustaining

¹³⁷ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, 179.

¹³⁸ KMAG, *Advisor's Handbook*, 1.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

positive relationships with South Korean counterparts were vital for honest and timely communication. This handbook captured the lessons learned by advisors before the outbreak of the Korean War in avoiding arguments over authority and sharing hardships by accompanying Korean troops during operations and training. In 1951, advisors were embedded in the Korean army headquarters all the way down to the company level in some areas.¹⁴⁰ As the United States created the South Korean army, there was not an experienced cadre of leaders or traditions. South Korean leaders relied on the advice provided by advisors to make up for their lack of experience. These teaching point discussions were often more effective behind closed doors instead of in front of subordinate Korean soldiers.

Daily reports from the South Korean S1 on personnel strength and casualties enabled advisors to analyze the casualty numbers and unit contact reports. This information was useful to adjust the tactics South Korean leaders employed to improve the combat effectiveness of units and limit casualties. Non-combat causality numbers were also important to identify and correct the source. When advisors brought these non-combat fatalities to the attention of South Korean officers, leaders were able to fix issues like trench foot to preserve combat power. Advisors were able to assist in this process by following up on equipment orders to ensure South Korean soldiers had the equipment needed to be effective on hand.

¹⁴⁰ KMAG, *Advisor's Handbook*, 3.

Advisors implemented a division rehabilitation and retraining course that was four weeks long.¹⁴¹ The plan was to rotate South Korean divisions from the front through the training course when available. This course allowed advisors to advise and assist during collective unit level training. As the front line stabilized this retraining course was an idea to improve the combat effectiveness of units that the Korean Army rapidly filled with replacement soldiers.

The handbook identified the high standards and discipline required in advisors whom the advisory group might task to operate in small teams in remote locations with partner forces. Continued issues with the lack of interpreters led to the advisory group recruiting civilians with little to no military experience and commissioning them as first lieutenants to incentivize them with pay and entitlements. The advisory group paired interpreters with field advisors, once advisors arrived and completed inprocessing at the advisory group headquarters. Korean army units supported the attached interpreters, but advisors had the responsibility for the interpreters' wellbeing, and advisors were required to report any interpreters' reassignment to the advisor group headquarters.¹⁴²

The advisor's handbook outlined the tasks, responsibilities and reporting requirements for staff functions advisors at different echelons across the Korean army. The manual also contained the task organization of advisors at the various staff echelons. The staff function sections of the handbook included advisors best practices and lessons learned. The advisor group tasked the G-2 staff function with counterintelligence to

¹⁴¹ KMAG, *Advisor's Handbook*, 24.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 5.

ensure the safety of US advisors embedded with South Korean soldiers. The G-3 section deconflicted unit boundaries and assisted in adjusting the South Korean task organization to account for changes in the operating environment. The G-3 also analyzed changes in enemy tactics and recommended updates to South Korean training and doctrine to counter battlefield evolutions.¹⁴³ Field advisors had access to training circulars that the G-3 developed which disseminated these tactical lessons learned. Advisors used these circulars to advise Korean leaders on new tactics, techniques and procedures. The G-3 also requested feedback from field advisors on changes to initial training courses to improve the effectiveness of South Korean soldiers.¹⁴⁴ The G-4 developed a technique to immediately request airdropped supplies when supply lines were cut to forward units.¹⁴⁵ These airdrops proved effective at preventing a units morale from dropping when cut off. Korean soldier's morale was an essential factor that advisors had to be aware of as morale directly affected the combat effectiveness of South Korean units. The S-4 also attempted to implement supply discipline in South Korean forces. Advisors stressed preventative maintenance as the South Korean military operated under the policy of repair and reissue.¹⁴⁶ S-4 advisors needed to keep an accurate count on ammunition stockpiles to prevent inventories from exceeding a unit's requirements and transportation assets.

¹⁴³ KMAG, *Advisor's Handbook*, 22.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

For enabler support, the G-3 advisor cell at the corps and division level coordinated and requested air support for South Korean units. Advisors submitted air requests to the advisory group 24 hours in advance of an operation.¹⁴⁷ Tactical advisors sent requests for close air support over the advisor communication network to assist South Korean troops in contact. Tactical air control parties embedded in the G-3 cell at the division and corps controlled close air support missions from forward positions.¹⁴⁸ The tactical air control party contained a forward air controller, radio mechanic, and a radio operator.¹⁴⁹ Advisors assisted the forward tactical air control parties by providing security in coordination with South Korean soldiers. The US Fifth Air Force assigned Tactical Air Coordinators (Airborne) daily to support forward operations.¹⁵⁰ These tactical air coordinators assisted advisors and the tactical air control party in identifying targets, communicating with inbound aircraft, and providing battle damage assessments. Airborne coordinators, call-signed Mosquito could also give the advisors reconnaissance information to assist South Korean forces.

The KMAG Advisor: Role and Problems of the Military Advisor in Developing an Indigenous Army for Combat Operations in Korea report published in 1957 made several recommendations for future US Army advisory operations from the lessons learned during the last year of the Korea War. The report recommended screening prospective

¹⁴⁷ KMAG, *Advisor's Handbook*, 26.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

advisors to ensure they had the temperament, emotional stability, self-discipline and mental fortitude necessary to be competent advisors.¹⁵¹ Officers recruited should have the command experience required to advise host nation commanders adequately. The advisory unit's task organization should contain assistant advisors down to the battalion level to reduce the stress on primary advisors. Selected advisors should attend a pre-mission familiarization course to understand their mission, duties and responsibilities, and the local customs and culture. Advisory units should prioritize recruiting soldiers who speak the local language and officers assigned to an advisory group should start language training before the deployment.¹⁵² Interpreters with military experience and training in the specific field that advisors will be advising local forces on will make communication and understanding easier. The US Army educational training curriculum for officers should include an overview of the military advisory operations.¹⁵³ Adding security force assistance to the curriculum would ensure that officers understand the advisory mission and have an understanding of the duty and responsibility if these officers are later selected to serve as a senior advisor.

Comparison of US Advisor Efforts in China and Korea

The US Army established advisor organizations in China and Korea to help achieve the United States' strategic objectives. These advisor units were ad hoc creations

¹⁵¹ Alfred H. Hausrath, "The KMAG Advisor: Role and Problems of the Military Advisor in Developing Indigenous Army for Combat Operations in Korea" (Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, 1957), 4.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

that lacked a formalized structure. As the advisor mission evolved in both China and Korea, the advisor organizations were adjusted and expanded. Advisors in both China and Korea needed to remain flexible to adapt to changes in the operating environment and political climate. In Korea, advisors had to adjust quickly from peacetime advising to advising Korean soldiers in combat. There were no established advisor units in the US Army to recruit trained advisors from to stand up either of these advisor units. US military training instructors were selected to form the core of the US advisory unit in China. Prior to World War II, there was a limited pool of combat veterans from which to recruit. As the United States mobilized and increased the army's size, there were many experienced instructors from which to recruit. In Korea, many World War II combat veterans had the points needed to demobilize which reduced the number of US advisors who had combat experience. Without an advisor training course or experienced advisors to recruit, advisors were forced to determine what their duties and responsibilities were through on the job training and trial and error in both China and Korea.

It took time for the newly established advisor organizations in both China and Korea to understand their mission scope, duties and responsibilities while these advisor units were forward deployed. There was no formal pre-mission training for advisors before they mobilized to China or Korea. When advisors first arrived in China and Korea they lacked the language and cultural skills to be effective. Advisors also had to learn how to communicate through an interpreter to advise partner forces. For US advisors working with Chinese soldiers, language and cultural training were taught to US soldiers in India at the Ramgarh Training Center. In Korea, there were only a few Koreans who spoke English when Americans arrived at the end of World War II. US soldiers did not

receive language or cultural training in Korea when they reported to the advisor unit. English language schools were established in Korea before the war for Korean soldiers to assist advisors in communicating with Korean soldiers and leaders. Without pre-mission training or regionally focused advisory units, the ad hoc advisor units created for both China and Korea would take time to learn to communicate with partner forces effectively.

In both China and Korea advisor units were continuously understrength and under-resourced. During combat operations in China and Korea, the advisor units and host nation security forces were supporting efforts in the overall campaign plan. For advisor units to be successful, advisors had to be resourceful and do more with less. As advisor units were understrength, combat advisors operated in small teams without depth in duty positions. Due to manning and recruiting challenges, advisors were often several ranks junior to their host nation partners. Advisors who were several ranks junior had command experience at lower echelons than the level which they advised partner forces. Advisor's experience shortfalls were mitigated by effectively building rapport and establishing and sustaining a positive relationship with their counterparts.

Advisors in the China-Burma-India Theater operated inside of a designated joint operational area where the military was the lead organization. In Korea, US advisors served in both possible environments that the security force assistance brigade can deploy into. Before the Korean War, advisors were employed outside of a designated joint operational area in coordination with the US Embassy and the Korean Government. During this time, advisors efforts were synchronized and coordinated by the US Embassy. When the United States intervened in the Korean War, advisors found

themselves operating inside of a designated joint operational area where the department of defense was the lead organization.

US advisors executed the security force assistance tasks of organize, train, equip, rebuild and build, advise and assist and assess from the current FM 3-22 in both China and Korea. These security force assistance tasks will be used to compare the US security force assistance efforts in China and Korea. For the task “organize,” advisors at the Ramgarh Training Center did not assist the Chinese with recruiting and manning Chinese divisions. The United States government coordinated with the Chinese Nationalist government to ensure Chinese soldiers arrived at the training center to fill the Chinese divisions. In Korea, US advisors assisted the South Korean government in recruiting and manning the Constabulary and later the Korean army. The South Korean government conscripted large numbers of South Koreans to reconstitute South Korean army units during the war. Advisors assisted the South Korean military in identifying individuals to promote to fill non-commissioned and commissioned offers billets. Advisors adjusted the task organization of Chinese and South Korean army units that were US military trained and equipped in accordance with US military doctrine. The United States helped stand up the South Korean army and was able to model its organization after the US Army.

The successful training and equipping of Chinese and South Korean soldiers were critical to improving their combat efficiency to achieve desired United States’ objectives. In both China and South Korea advisors used the “crawl, walk, run” methodology to train soldiers. Advisors with previous training instructor backgrounds were able to adapt the program of instruction for training courses taught in the United States to fit the

requirements of host nation security forces, and the operating environment. During the crawl phase, individual soldier training focused on personal and crew-served weapons. Advisors initially organized and led the training until host nation instructed were trained to support and later run courses. During the walk phase, host nation soldiers conducted military occupation specialty training and conducted collective squad exercises. Host nation military leadership planned and executed regiment and division exercises under the mentorship of advisor teams during the run phase. During the Korean War, South Korean soldiers were rapidly required to reconstitute combat losses in South Korean army units. US advisors suspended the training system advisors developed before the war to expedite replacements reaching the front lines. Before the front lines stabilized, advisors only trained South Korean soldiers in basic infantry tasks. In China, Chinese divisions trained together at the Ramgarh Training Center before they went on the offense against the Japanese. Executing crawl, walk, and run training for entire divisions takes time and extensive facilities. The camaraderie that units develop when training and living together can become a combat multiplier when compared to individual replacement Soldiers who do not have the same vested interest in the wellbeing of their fellow soldiers.

Advisors faced challenges equipping large numbers of host nation security forces with limited resources in both China and Korea. With constrained resources advisor had to be resourceful to acquire the weapons and equipment host nation forces needed to be successful. Before the Korean War, budget constraints and an internal security focus severely limited the equipment that US advisors provided to South Korean soldiers. Advisors often relied on relationships established with other United States and allied

units to obtain necessary supplies through unofficial supply channels. Host nation forces often lacked supply discipline, and enemy forces captured large equipment stockpiles further reducing the resources available for host nation forces. Advisors continuously worked with host nation logisticians and leaders to improve supply discipline and to ensure that host nation forces properly maintained the United States provided equipment. Advisors modified equipment and weapons issued to host nation forces to enhance its effectiveness in the local operational environment. The trial and error modifications to equipment advisors provided host nation forces improved the equipment's combat effectiveness.

US advisors in both China and South Korea built and rebuilt military infrastructure to include host nation bases and training facilities. US forces constructed ranges and training complexes to house and train host nation forces. The training and military education facilities advisors built in China and South Korea were essential in improving the combat effectiveness of host nation forces. The training centers US forces established in China later in the war used the Ramgarh Training Center as a model. In Korea, advisors built the Korean army from the ground up. Advisors worked with South Korean leadership to create a military education system that helped transform the South Korean army after the front lines stabilized during the Korean War. Advisors should plan to assist host nation forces in building or rebuilding infrastructure to include ranges and training facilities to improve the combat effectiveness of host nation forces.

US advisors provided combat advisory and assistance to host nation security forces in both the China-Burma-India theater and in Korea. Successful advisors established working relationships, navigated through language barriers, and built rapport

with host nation forces. US advisors at the Ramgarh Training Center embedded with the Chinese divisions that they trained and equipped at Ramgarh. Initially focusing advisor efforts to the Chinese units that trained in Ramgarh narrowed the advisory scope and enabled the limited number of advisors available to embed at the battalion, regiment, and division level. In Korea, The Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea spread advisors across the entire Korean army. Advisors were integrated from the ministerial level down to tactical front line units. While this vast advisor network facilitated communication across multiple echelons of the Korean military, it stretched the limited number of US advisors. In both operations, an additional advisory unit focused at the corps, and above echelons would have enabled US Army tactical advisory units to direct their efforts to front line combat forces.

Advisors continuously assessed both the Chinese and South Korean army during training and operations. This continuous assessment was crucial during these security force assistance operations to understand the capabilities and limitations of the partner force. From the initial evaluation, advisors can establish objectives for partner forces to reach in training through measures of effectiveness and measures of performance. A small team of US advisors embedded with Chinese units during their retreat into India. From these initial observations, advisors were able to assess Chinese troops and determine the appropriate training tasks to improve their combat effectiveness against the Japanese army. Once Chinese troops completed a training goal at Ramgarh, advisors were able to transition training to more complex tasks utilized the crawl, walk, and run framework. In Korea, advisors helped organize the South Korean army, and through continuous assessment, advisors established training schools to enhance the South Korean army.

During combat operations in Korea, the advisory group established a reporting system to evaluate the tactics, techniques, and procedures that US advisors trained South Korean soldiers on. Advisors used front line observations on new enemy tactics and South Korean effectiveness to update and refine the program of instruction taught at South Korean training centers.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The US Army has a long history of conducting security cooperation to include security force assistance operations. Even with this long history of security force assistance operations, the US Army has not maintained an active advisory unit. The US Army did not have an organized advisor unit to advise the Chinese army during World War II or the South Korean army during the Korean War. The US Army hurriedly established ad hoc advisor organizations in China and Korea to help achieve the United States' strategic objectives. The US Army had difficulties recruiting, selecting, and training advisors for these newly formed advisory units. The US Army could have mitigated these challenges if regionally aligned advisor units existed before these conflicts. The US Army did not maintain the advisor units created to advise Chinese and South Korean soldiers after the conflicts. Without a standing advisor unit, the knowledge and lessons learned during World War II and the Korean War were not institutionalized. A standing security force assistance brigade will be able to institutionalize the knowledge and experiences gained from training, advising and assisting host nation forces in Afghanistan and Iraq over the past 15 years.

The United States strategic documents to include the 2017 *National Security Strategy* stress the importance of security cooperation to include security force assistance to promote regional stability and to deter potential adversaries. The 2018 National Defense Strategy focuses the military's training and readiness for an operational environment of great power competition. The US military will need to support and enable

the United States' Allies and partners to deter and compete with adversaries in this great power competition environment. Regionally aligned security force assistance brigades can assist partner nations in building their military capacity and capability through security force assistance operations. Regionally aligned security force assistance brigades can adjust from peacetime training and advising to combat advising to support host nation forces while helping achieve the United States' strategic objectives. US advisor units in China and Korea functioned as liaisons between host nation forces and the higher allied command. The security force assistance brigade can help synchronize efforts between forward deployed United States, Allied, and host nation forces when advisors embed with host nation units. Security force assistance brigades can assist host nation maneuver by integrating US military combat enablers as advisor units did in China and Korea.

Standing security force assistance brigades will be more responsive to support partner nations than establishing the ad hoc advisor units that the army created to advise Chinese and South Korean soldiers. Security force assistance brigades can recruit and train soldiers with the appropriate attributes to be competent advisors. Regionally aligned security force assistance brigades can also focus on cultural and language familiarization training to prepare for a deployment, something that the advisor units in China and Korea did not accomplish before their deployments.

Recommendations

The US Army should regionally align security force assistance brigades to align with the geographic combatant commands. The regional alignment of security force assistance brigades will allow security force assistance brigades to gain experience and

establish relationships with regional partners and Allies. Rotating security force assistance brigades to train, advise, and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces severely limits the advisor's ability to maintain cultural and language proficiency outside of Afghanistan. The security force assistance brigade's task organizations should be expandable to fit the regional operating environment requirements. Expanding the task organization will enable the security force assistance brigade to be self-sufficient to not require additional augmentation soldiers from brigade combat teams to perform their mission. Security force assistance brigades can utilize army instructors from the Training and Doctrine Command to help develop the program of instruction to train host nation security forces when required. US Army Training and Doctrine Command instructors also can assist in training and certifying host nation instructors that can sustain improvements to the host nation military education system.

Security cooperation operations to include security force assistance continue to be the most likely deployment for US Army brigade combat teams. To prepare for a worst-case scenario, brigade combat teams will continue to conduct decisive action training environment rotations at combat training centers. These combat training center rotations should be scheduled earlier before a brigade combat team's deployment to support a security force assistance operation. If brigades executed their combat training center rotations earlier, soldiers would have more time to train on deployment mission specific tasks before arriving in the country. Increased time for training on deployment tasks could help prevent brigade combat teams from struggling to advise and assist partner forces during security force assistance missions. The regionally aligned security force assistance brigades can also be leveraged to support brigade combat teams with cultural

and advisor training before a brigade combat team deploys on a security force assistance operation. Advisors from the security force assistance brigade who recently returned from a deployment can provide relevant firsthand experience to help prepare brigade combat teams. Teams of regionally aligned advisors from the security force assistance brigade can also advise and accompany brigade combat teams during security force assistance operations.

If the army wants to transition the bulk of advising from brigade combat teams to security force assistance brigades the US Army will need more than the six planned security force assistance brigades. Additional advisor brigades should be formed in the National Guard to augment the regionally aligned active duty advisor brigades. The active component security force assistance brigades should train and deploy with state partnership program soldiers. The National Guard state partnership program has established relationships with countries across all geographic combatant commands. The contacts and experience that state partnership program soldiers gain during deployments can assist security force assistance brigades in building rapport with host nation forces during security force assistance brigade deployments.

The army needs to establish the planned deployable echelon above brigade advisor units. The establishment of these echelons above brigade security force assistance units would allow security force assistance brigades to focus on tactical advisor operations. Echelons above brigade security force assistance units would be better organized and experienced to advise partner forces from the operational and ministerial levels. These echelons above brigade advisor organizations would mitigate the issues that the limited number of advisors in the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea

had in advising across the entire Korea army. The US Army will have to develop the concept for how the limited number of echelon above brigade advisor units will integrate and synchronize their efforts with regionally aligned security force assistance brigades.

US military enablers need to be integrated into US combat advisor teams to support host nation combat operations. United States airpower continues to be a decisive enabler to support host nation ground combat forces. US advisors in the Korean War had tactical air coordinators to communicate with inbound aircraft and assist in identifying targets. Security force assistance brigades will have integrated air force joint terminal attack controllers during deployments to direct close air support in support ground force maneuver. As the US Army moves forward with multi-domain operations, the security force assistance brigades will need to integrate enablers across all domains of warfare, which consist of land, maritime, air, space and cyberspace to deter adversaries and support host nation forces. A multi-domain company composed of enablers from cyber, electromagnetic activities, and military information support operations can integrate into the security force assistance brigade. This multi-domain company will increase the combat effectiveness of host nation forces.

The challenges the US Army faced in rapidly establishing and deploying advisor units during the case studies from past security force assistance operations in China during WWI and in Korea during the Korean war validate the creation of the US Army's regionally aligned security force assistance brigades. While revised Army doctrine shifts the Army's focus to preparing for large scale combat operations, security force assistance operations continue to be a vital part of the United States' strategy.

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