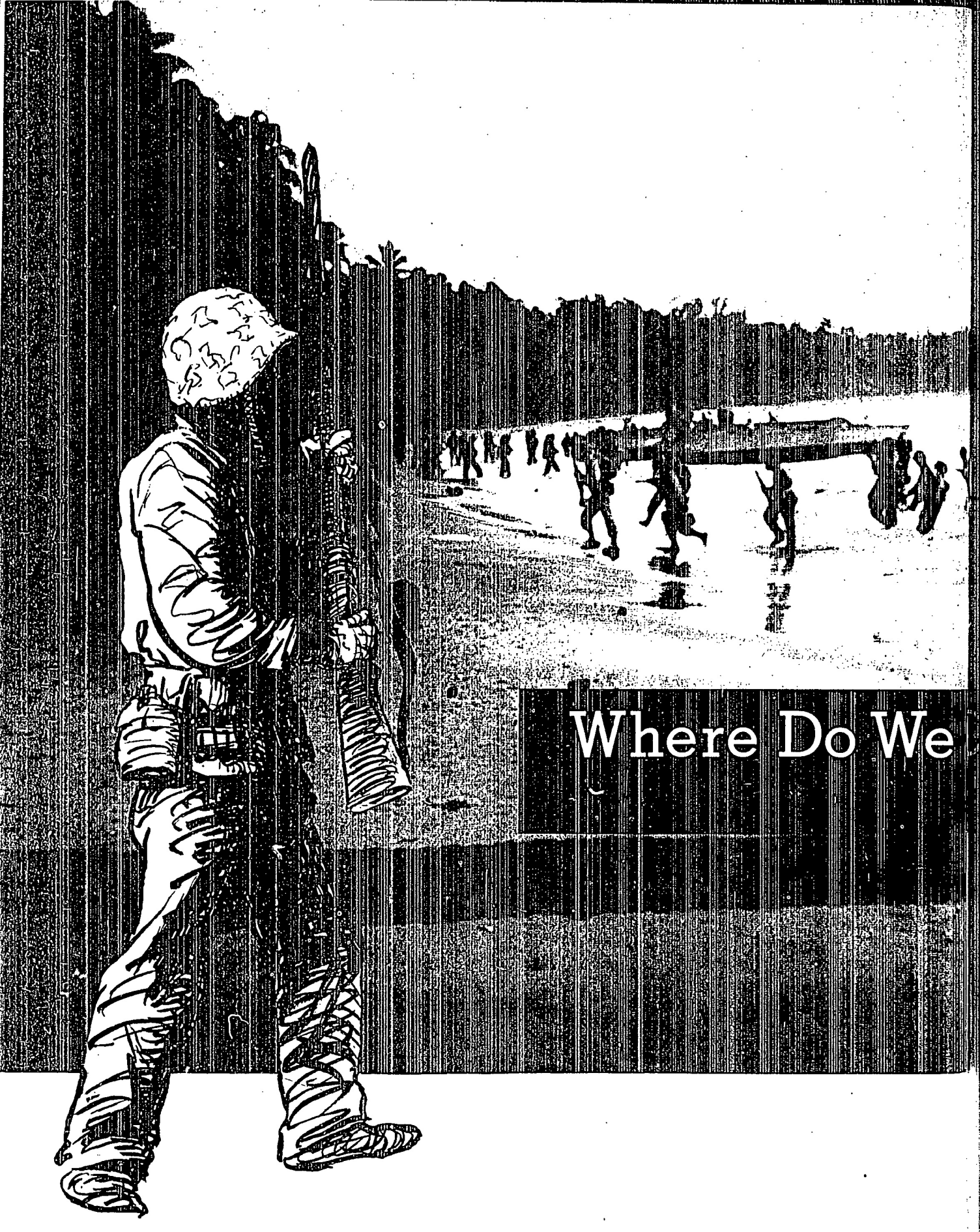

# Where Do We

# o From Here?

By LtCol Robert E. Cushman

"THIS IS THE ATOMIC AGE! AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS are out of date—all you need are airplanes and the Bomb."

There are a lot of self-styled prophets singing this refrain these days (usually with an axe to grind well hidden in the background), and it behooves us as marines to look into the fallacy of this reasoning and also to look into the future and chart our course.

As a point of departure let us examine our present status. Where do we stand today? It is evident that we can point with pride to our position as the originators and teachers of a doctrine which was the sound basis for the amphibious operations of the past war. We likewise note on the record that we were the executors of the tactics and technique of the landing attack in a sufficient number of operations to have contributed materially to the success of our country's arms against Japan. Finally we are recognized as an integral part of the Fleet, as an important instrument in the application of sea power. In short, the Marine Corps has now rationalized the doctrine and perfected the technique of the amphibious operation so that a very high degree of excellence would be attained in any such attack undertaken today with present equipment. To be sure, we are not perfect. Much work remains to be done and is being done to improve the present day amphibious operation. We must speed up the ship-to-shore movement, work out improved techniques for controlling exterior fires during that dash to the beach. There are other areas where improvements can be effected. But on the whole we have an eminently satisfactory solution.

But wait a minute! Don't lean back in that chair like a man that's just finished too big a steak, with fixin's. There's work to be done. We've got to figure out how to make a landing in the 1950s or even further in the future. Back in the lean days of the great depression, Marines were making actual landings in motor launches with nebulous fire support, but, and this is the important fact, at the same time they were doing the thinking and preparation which was to make the landings of the Second World War possible. The lesson is that we cannot stand still. Even were we so inclined, our mission will not let us rest on our laurels as we are charged by law with the development of amphibious warfare tactics. Furthermore, in this competitive world, there are always those who lie in wait for the leader to falter; hence we will be wise to continue to be "too fast for 'em."

Before we look into the future let us first refute the arguments of those who claim that we have no future. Since the Marine Corps is an integral part of the Fleet designed to seize and defend advanced naval bases, those who wish to argue that a Marine Corps is not necessary must prove that the Fleet is not necessary or that it will not need bases. Neither of these premises is tenable. To reach a decision against an enemy, those elements of our forces which close with the enemy must have staying power— they cannot be transient raiders—and thus will require bases of operation in proximity to the foe. The Navy is the instrument which provides the means for obtaining those bases. Initially it can establish floating and mobile bases off the hostile periphery, later support operations designed to gain footholds on the enemy shore itself. In performing these functions it must also control the seas, for the sea will remain the most economical medium for the transportation of men and materiel to carry the war to the enemy. Granted then that the Navy will have important functions to perform in war, it also must have advanced bases for its own support, otherwise it cannot most efficiently project its power across the vast stretches of water between us and the enemy. We Marines will take the advanced naval bases required. It seems clear

that although the surface engagement between opposing fleets may be a thing of the past, that the Naval campaign is most definitely here to stay and has a place in the future. Those who believe that now, or a hundred years from now, we can sit in the Western hemisphere, push buttons, and by this means alone manage to detonate enough high explosive, atomic or otherwise, to conquer the millions of people who hold the vast stretches of the Eurasian Continent are guilty of specious thinking. There is one thing which it is safe to prophesy would result from such a program—you would have an awful lot of people very mad at you!

THERE IS ANOTHER very important factor in relation to the future which has been said by several of our clearer thinkers but perhaps not loudly enough—namely that our Navy is our primary means of supporting and emphasizing our policies in time of peace. When local disturbances occur which it is to our interest to suppress, does anyone seriously suggest that we "atomize" the offenders, the hapless bystanders, and the surrounding countryside? No, but we certainly can employ the Fleet and its included Fleet Marine Force for the purpose of taking measures suited to the peacetime task, ranging from a show of force to offensive action of a limited nature as required by the local situation. Landings by Marines will surely figure largely in such Naval action.

The field of the amphibious operation thus extends into the future and our country has decided that it is our mission to continue its development. Let us examine this problem in more detail. It is twofold—we must *seize* and *defend* advanced naval bases. Amphibious operations and base defense—opposite sides of the same coin.

How must we direct ourselves in the solution of this problem? Until proven otherwise, we must base our development upon present basic principles—these have stood the test of centuries of time and we must presume them still valid. The big changes will occur in tactics and technique and in the related field of equipment. Now it is interesting to note that new equipment, new technical developments, can be introduced into the picture in two ways. An already existing item may present possibilities toward the solution of an existing problem of technique. On the other hand, an innovation in tactics or technique may only be possible by the use of some non-existent piece of equipment, which, if proper specifications are laid down and the desires of the tacticians made known, can then be developed to meet the need. Thus we must be ever alert to either press into service new materiel which was perhaps developed for some other purpose than the one which we propose, or to require the development of equipment which will permit us to execute new concepts of tactics and techniques.

One word describes the fundamental requirements which will shape all of our changes and development—that word is *dispersion*. History teaches that each new weapon has introduced the need for greater dispersion and we are now faced with weapons whose radii of destruction are greater than the fantastic imaginings of the comic supplements. We are thus required to effect still greater dispersion than ever before, particularly in the amphibious operation where present methods of execution result in presenting to the defender a target of such value that it is worthy of attack even by such a scarce and strategic weapon as the atomic bomb. The difficulty is that the requirement of dispersion is at variance with, and militates against, several of our most important basic principles. The Principle of Mass—we concentrate our forces against the decisive point and we present that beautiful target again. Economy of Force—we disperse and then we don't have strength at the decisive point and are weak everywhere. The Offensive—the individual will probably feel that he would be better off in a deep hole in the ground! Simplicity—nothing could be more complex than attempting to control a widely dispersed landing force. Cooperation—combining the efforts of all parts upon the task at hand is made doubly difficult when those parts are dispersed.

ON THE OTHER HAND the principles of movement and surprise may be carried forward more easily by dispersed units. On the whole, however, dispersion will present us with many problems. First and foremost is that to obtain the required protection prior to close contact with the enemy while at the same time preserving the ability to mass our force at the point of decisive effort, we must be dispersed in space but not in time. Successive increments of the landing force must be widely separated by distance out on the ocean but must strike the enemy at the landing area within a short space of time. It is immediately apparent from this that the present type of landing craft will not satisfy our requirements. Let us say that waves should still hit the beach at five minute intervals as a round figure, easy to work with, in order to maintain the momentum of the assault. In the future, however, the waves will probably have to be separated by at least five miles of distance and may have to travel from fifty to a hundred miles from the transports in order for the force as a whole to have the required dispersion. The various waves will of necessity approach from divergent directions also, rather than one behind the other, until very close to the beach. These factors indicate a landing craft or conveyance speed of from sixty to a hundred miles per hour with an added ability to traverse its medium for considerable distances. It would appear that three approaches might be made toward this solution. One, waterborne landing craft with the above capabilities; two, airborne landing craft which could carry small tactical units, maintain formation during the actual landing, and land the troops as tactical

units in accordance with a tactical plan; and three, high speed air transports which could move each wave close into the shore, from where it could proceed to the beach in landing craft of conventional speeds. The first of these methods has much to recommend it but only the engineers can tell us if it is possible. It is, however, a method they could well be investigating in order to either prove or disprove the necessity for considering it. The second method would require some sort of aircraft whose characteristics permit it to select its landing point and thus land units in tactical formations. The third method would make necessary large seaplanes which could carry landing craft and troops.

Does a voice from the rear make itself heard at this point saying, "What you're talking about is airborne operations. Let's just go in as paratroopers." The answer is no. We are talking about an amphibious operation which, you will remember, is by definition an attack *launched from the sea.* It seems to me we should direct our efforts toward development of a method of ship-to-shore movement by air which will accomplish the same result as one conducted by water; namely, landing the troops at the right place at the right time in the desired formation in accordance with the tactical plan. Paratroopers don't land that way nor can they take off from ships; hence we definitely are not considering the conventional airborne operation. In any event, an airborne operation makes a poor substitute for the precise, coordinated assault we have found necessary to take well defended advanced naval bases. We can do better than scatter paratroopers over the landscape and expect them to assault the fortifications characteristic of a desirable advanced naval base.

OUR FIRST PROBLEM, then, is to evolve a ship-to-shore movement which will give us the required dispersion in space yet will permit us to concentrate our efforts at the critical time and place. Next we are confronted with difficulties brought on by the dispersion of troops required by our solution to the ship-to-shore movement. Important among these is that of leadership. Command and leadership has always been a highly developed art in the Marine Corps. Faced with a wide dispersion of troops in future battles we must hold fast to the precepts we have always taught. Junior officers, and the responsible noncommissioned officers, must be leaders of the highest quality in order to properly command the small and dispersed tactical units which will be required in the future. As a corollary our training must continue, as it has in the past, to stress the development of leadership qualities among all ranks. A marine has always been a hard-hitting and aggressive fighting man carried forward by his loyalty and pride in the Corps and in himself as a marine—this spirit must be fostered and emphasized continually. Men must be prepared for much fighting by small units—units which present an unprofitable target to the enemy's major weapons. We train our troops now for just such action in the assault of a defended beach; we must make certain that we continue this instruction.

Dispersion will place an added burden upon signal communications; their range and reliability must be improved to keep pace with the increased separation of subordinate commands. In one way, we may benefit; perhaps we can get along with fewer channels since units will be widely separated, in which case the tight squeeze on number of frequencies available for radio might be alleviated somewhat.

Supply will not only have to retain its present flexibility but even improve upon it. Floating dumps may have to float in the air! With units fighting in many places the use of small unit rolling reserves may become necessary. Decentralization of dumps will be required—they are as vulnerable as troops when concentrated. Evacuation will become more difficult and new techniques must be worked out for this logistic function.

The above should give us something to think about, at least, as we seek to find the proper path for our efforts toward preparing for the future. In addition there are certain requirements in materiel which it would be well worth while to consider. We must give more protection and more mobility to our marine. Above all he must be imbued with the aggressive will to advance, for not only will it be decisive to close with the enemy, it will also be safest! Beyond that, protective equipment should be developed. We note that every analysis of battle casualties reveals the extremely high percentage caused by fragments from high explosive. With the advent of the proximity fuse and the use of showers of rockets delivered in a matter of seconds it is evident that more thought must be given to protection of the infantryman. The exhaustive experiments being conducted on light body armor should be continued. Conveyances used to land troops must include protection for embarked troops; in the case of waterborne landing craft this means overhead cover as well in order to shelter the occupants from air bursts. The use of lightly armored carriers for use in moving troops in areas subject to enemy interdiction fires should be considered. All methods which can be conceived by our materiel experts and brought to a state of practical usefulness should be exploited. But none of these methods should sacrifice mobility, for fast movement into close combat with the enemy will remain the surest way of removing our troops from the areas subject to the destructive effect of heavy high explosives.

All marines like to take the offensive, like to discuss the attack, prefer to conduct training in offensive combat. But we have to be prepared to defend those

bases that we seize! And we shall have to do that in the future also, as well as now. Without going into the details of building atom proof shelters and the many variations of technique that must be developed in relation to passive defensive measures against the weapons of the future, I believe it is safe to say that our primary concern must be to keep the defense as mobile and aggressive as possible. Once again we shall find that to pin our defenses entirely to fixed and static positions will invite destruction by powerful weapons. The decision must generally rest upon the offensive action of a general reserve committed with speed and aggressiveness against the enemy's main effort as soon as it can be determined. We must not make the attacker a free gift of the actual landing with all of its difficulties—that is his most vulnerable period and we must take some advantage of it. The answer is fire power, not masses of troops. Hit him with fire power as he lands, contain him as close to the landing point as possible, and hit him with everything that's left. And that "everything" should be the bulk of the force, held in mobile reserve. This principle is generally applicable now (there are of course special cases, such as atolls, wherein it will seldom be possible to employ this concept) and it will become more so in the future.

There is a final topic to be discussed under this general subject of preparing for the future, and that concerns the smooth functioning of the various elements of the Marine Corps toward the solution to the problem. Headquarters, the Fleet Marine Force, the Marine Corps Schools, and the Equipment Board all have complementary parts to play, each of great importance to the success of the whole.

Headquarters, Marine Corps, exercises over-all direction of the development effort, establishing policies and coordinating efforts, assigning objectives and assessing results. Every marine should be using his head, thinking through the problems involved, trying to reach solutions, putting them forward in the GAZETTE to bring them to the attention of others; but primarily the Marine Corps Schools should be charged with the rationalization of doctrine which is required. Much of the theoretical side of the changed tactics and technique which must be evolved can best be done in the cloistered halls of Quantico. But then it must be put to the acid test—it must be given a trial by the troops in the field. The Fleet Marine Force can thoroughly exhaust the theories advanced by thorough testing in training and maneuvers. Finally the equipment we need must be developed and the Equipment Board has an important part to play in relation to this vital function.

It must be understood, of course, that such compartmentation as is theoretically set forth above would in actual fact be undesirable. But the above does indicate the primary assignment of missions which would be most advantageous. However, it should not be construed that the Fleet Marine Force, for example, shouldn't think up new doctrine, just because Marine Corps Schools are primarily charged with that function. Far from it! All hands must be continually working on all aspects of the problem within their capabilities so that the Marine Corps, in the future as in the past, may come up with the approved solution. USMC

## Fighting Presidents

AT A TIME WHEN VOTERS all over the U. S. A. will be electing a Chief Executive for the next four years, it seems quite appropriate to recall the Presidents who weren't afraid to stick their chins out. Below you will find questions that ask you to identify ten "fighting Presidents." For each one you name correctly, credit yourself with 10 points. A score of 70 is fair, 80 is good, while 90 is excellent. The correct answers will be found on page 56.

1. What President gave up college to become a soldier in the Revolutionary War?
2. What President took his army across an icy river and won a famous victory on Christmas Day?
3. What President echoed the nation's feelings about dictators when he flung out the challenge, "We would rather die on our feet than live on our knees"?
4. What President led his army four hundred miles down the Mississippi to win a smashing victory over the invading enemy at a minimum cost in casualties?
5. What President was popularly known as "Old Three Stars"?
6. What President has gone down in history as "the Father of the American Navy"?
7. What President resigned a Cabinet position to organize a famous cavalry regiment and to lead it against the enemy?
8. What President was a volunteer in an Indian war and was chosen captain of his company?
9. What President rejected the enemy's demand to surrender, and with his order "A little more grape" to his artillery captain, turned a threatened defeat into a victory?
10. What President was principal of a preparatory school at the outbreak of the Civil War, and organized his students into a regiment?

## ANSWERS TO "FIGHTING PRESIDENTS"

On page 14

1. James Monroe
2. George Washington
3. Franklin D. Roosevelt
4. Andrew Jackson
5. Ulysses S. Grant
6. John Adams
7. Theodore Roosevelt
8. Abraham Lincoln
9. Zachary Taylor
10. James A. Garfield

veteran unit in handling the clothing problem.* The division was on the Anzio beachhead and there was little prospect of arrival of the divisional baggage and the spare clothes.

"The situation was far from encouraging. Each infantryman had on the beachhead only the clothing he wore. New issues were limited, being insufficient to provide a second uniform to each man. And there were no laundry facilities on the beachhead, even the civilians having been evacuated.

"The 7th Infantry Regiment initiated the new system on a small scale by building a small laundry unit. The new clothing issued by the Quartermaster was not issued to individuals but was put out by the Regimental Service Company to a regimental unit on an exchange basis. The soiled clothing received was immediately laundered and reissued on an exchange basis to another regimental unit (battalion). The two characteristics of the Regimental Reserve System were thus established. First, clothing lost its individuality, an infantryman no longer having any individually owned garment, but only one of each type of garment. Second, two sets of clothing per individual was not necessary, the second set being necessary only in sufficient quantity to change one battalion provided adequate laundry facilities were available.

"The system makes it possible to provide the infantry soldier with a clean uniform whenever his unit is not engaged with the enemy.

"The saving in clothing is one of the most astonishing aspects. Regardless of directives, punishment, and statements of charges, an infantry soldier in combat is indifferent to clothing responsibility, and no practical system has been devised to change his attitude.

"The practical solution is to have small mobile laundry units issued on the basis of one unit per regiment, one per division artillery, one per special troops in an infantry division. A complete unit of water heater, tumbler, extractor, and drier could be mounted on two one-ton trailers. The issue of one per regiment is by far the most critical need, and will solve one of the most difficult administrative problems now faced by a division."

Here we see how one of the Army's best combat divisions handled the task of supplying, cleaning, and maintaining the bulky and varied items of winter clothing that can become a burden to the combat infantryman. It would appear to be a good basis for administrative SOP to answer the problems of fast moving Marine units in winter operations.

In summary, the special problems of dressing for combat in cold weather that today face the Marine Corps consist of; a thorough understanding of how to wear and care for the fine clothing that is *today* available, how to apply the layer principle in dressing for cold weather, making cleaning and salvage plans that will care for and conserve the woolen clothing taken upon an operation. We must not burden the fighting marine with extra and spare clothing, but should have a workable supply SOP to get him clean, dry clothes when needed. And we must constantly supervise to see that all concerned are properly dressed so that at no time does cold weather, snow, or wet, interfere with the efficiency or well-being of the command. US MC

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**The parka hood affords protection for the chin as well as the head. It is worn over the storm cap.**