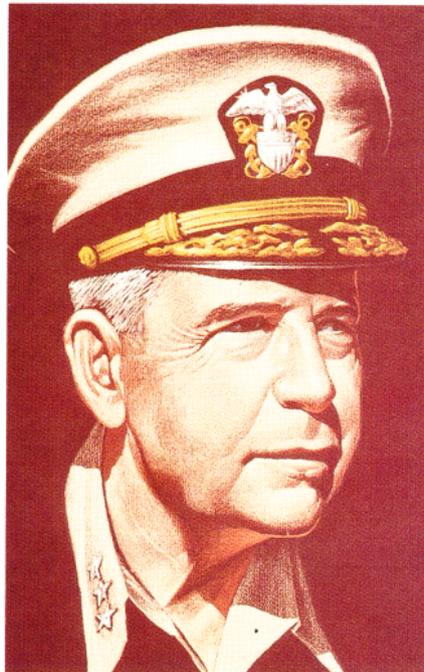


States would fight to defend Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines but, by failing to mention them, neither Taiwan nor Korea. So, when Kim once again asked Moscow and Beijing to approve his plans to conquer South Korea, they agreed, although Mao Zedong was somewhat reluctant. However, Mao promised to send the substantial number of ethnic Koreans in the Chinese Communist forces back to Kim.

By the late spring of 1950, the North Koreans had amassed formidable military forces. The NKPA then consisted of 135,000 men. The principal ground elements of this force were 10 infantry divisions, an armored brigade, 2 independent regiments and border constabulary troops. Two of these divisions recently had returned from China; many of the other soldiers were veterans of Mao's forces. The NKPA fielded 150 Soviet-made T-34 tanks, hundreds of light and medium artillery pieces and numerous heavy mortars. The North Korean Air Force included 70 Yak-3 and Yak-7 fighters and 60 Ilyshin 11-10 "Shturmovik" attack planes, all propeller driven. The navy operated a few small patrol boats.

The Republic of Korea military was inferior to the NKPA in quantity and quality. The ROK Army, composed of eight infantry divisions, various support units and headquar-



Navy Art Collection

Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, Commander Naval Forces, Far East, by Navy combat artist Herbert Hahn.

ters elements, numbered only 100,000 men. They lacked good field artillery and had no tanks. The air force flew only 20 unarmed training planes. The South Korean Navy (ROKN) manned 17 old U.S. and Japanese minesweepers, a few picket boats, one tank landing ship and one subchaser, renamed *Bah Du San* (PC 701), which the U.S. Navy sold to the Koreans in 1949.

The U.S. naval forces in the western Pacific in June 1950 were a pale reflection of the mighty armada that surrounded the battleship *Missouri* (BB 63) at Tokyo Bay in September 1945. Vice Admiral Arthur D. Struble, a veteran of World War II amphibious

operations in the Philippines, commanded the Seventh Fleet, based at Subic Bay in the Philippines. In this fleet steamed fleet aircraft carrier *Valley Forge* (CV 451, heavy cruiser *Rochester* (CA 124), 8 destroyers, 4 submarines and 5 logistics support ships. Fleet Air Wing 1, with two patrol squadrons, provided the fleet with long-range search and reconnaissance aircraft. Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, Commander Naval Forces, Japan, led a force that consisted of light cruiser *Juneau* (CLAA 119), the 4 ships of Destroyer Division 91 and the 7 minesweepers of Mine Squadron 3. Also under Admiral Joy were the five ships of Rear Admiral James H. Doyle's Amphibious Group 1. Joy was also Commander Naval Forces, Far East, and in the event of an emergency, Seventh Fleet would come under his direction, as well.

The closest American ground forces to the Korean peninsula were the four infantry divisions of Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker's Eighth Army, which served as the occupation force for Japan's Home Islands. Walker's units—the 7th, 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions and the 1st Cavalry Division (also infantry)—were in poor shape. Because of postwar defense cutbacks, these units were severely undermanned and badly equipped. Much of their material had been salvaged from World War II battlefields