

**The Morning Calm**

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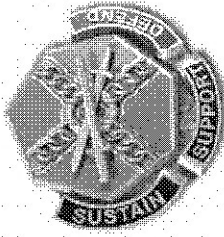
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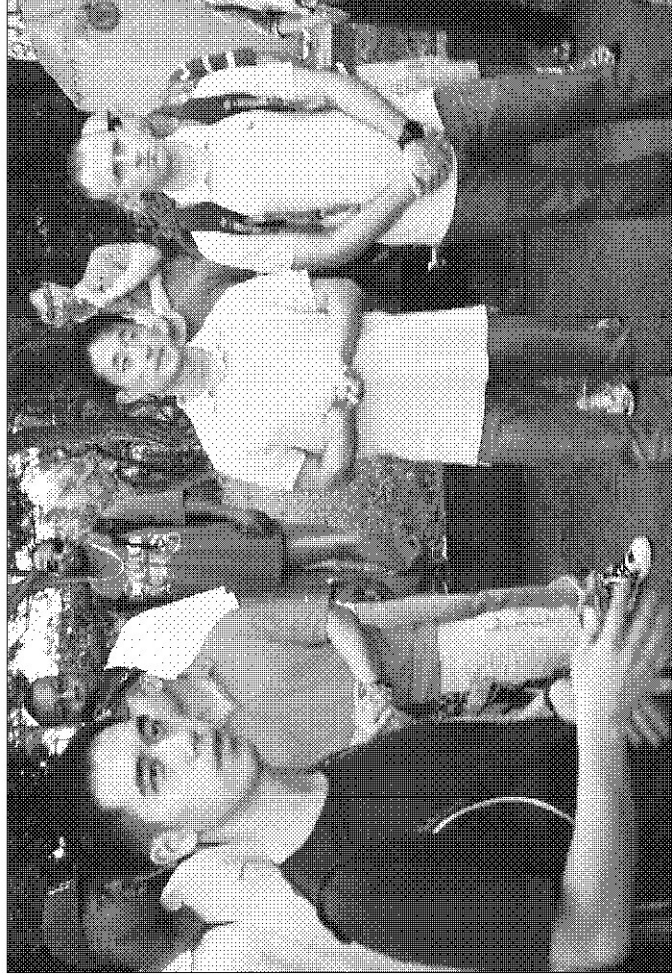
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Republic of Korea Army Maj. Kim Jong-suk (center), 3rd Battlefield Coordination Detachment-Korea assistant operations officer, asks a questions through the interpreter Pfc. Lee Yung-jin (left) to Dr. Lewis Bernstein, United National Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea command historian, about Task Force Smith. — U.S. Army photo by Lyrone D. Scott

**CFC unit revisits Task Force Smith site**

**By Lyrone D. Scott**  
**UNC/CFK/USFK Staff Historian**

OSAN — On July 1, the 3rd Battlefield Coordination Detachment-Korea conducted a staff ride at the Task Force Smith battle site here — just a few miles away from their duty station at Osan Air Base.

The detachment is a Combined Forces Command unit that is composed of American and Republic of Korea Army Soldiers. ROKA members also participated in the staff ride with the assistance of their interpreter.

The 3rd BCD-K is responsible for synchronizing air support from the Korean Air Operations Center at Osan Air Base with ground forces. They visited the site of the first U.S. Army engagement with the North Korean People's Army almost 61 years to the day of the battle.

Dr. Lewis Bernstein, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea command historian, supported the event as a subject matter expert. The USFK Military History Program

is tasked to support unit commanders and staff chiefs by offering professional development activities like staff rides.

The staff ride was a professional development opportunity for service-members serving in combat arms, combat support or combat service support roles.

On that fateful day July 5, 1950, Lt. Col. Charles Smith led the delaying force identified as Task Force Smith. He set up a defensive position three miles north of Osan with about 540 Soldiers. Task Force Smith had no armor, no effective antitank weapons and no air support.

The NKEA overwhelmed Task Force Smith with troops and armor. The engagement lasted about eight hours and resulted in an American defeat. Smith mustered only 250 Soldiers the next day, which was approximately half of his original force.

"To accomplish a staff ride that's more than just a tour, we had to prepare in advance," said Col. David Danikowski, 3rd BCD-K commander. "The officers, noncommissioned officers

and Soldiers did great work to research the tactics, the strategic setting, the operational conditions, the enemy forces, the equipment they had, and the conditions they were facing."

"Having that background when we came to the physical site we could appreciate not only what happened, but also some of the emotional connections to the Soldiers and the hardships that they faced, also an appreciation for the terrain."

Sgt. 1st Class Rufus Irick, 3rd BCD-K plans and targeting NCO, recognized benefits of the Staff Ride. He said one of them was "...being able to actually take a look at what happened in the past and being able to apply the lessons learned then to what we do today."

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Scott Ketchuck added, "The results were very good because we portioned off tasks: logistics, fire support and a strategic overview of Korea."

Overall, the 3rd BCD-K enriched their team cohesion and enhanced their practical application of Army Doctrine on the Task Force Smith Staff Ride. ■

**FAREWELL**

from Page 1

South Korea following a tour as the commander of U.S. Army Forces Command, which consists of more than 750,000 Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers.

A veteran combat commander who served in Iraq, Thurman said his priorities are to strengthen the ROK-U.S. Alliance, maintain combat readiness, transform the combined forces command structure and improve quality of life for those serving in South Korea.

Thurman said the combined defense team would stay ready to deter or defeat

any threats against South Korea. "This alliance stands ready to counter any provocation intended to destabilize the Korean Peninsula," said Thurman. "With your help, I promise to do all I can to continue to strengthen this great alliance."

"This alliance has a long and distinguished history. It has been tested on the battlefield and continues to be strengthened through rigorous training and the commitment of two strong allies," said Thurman. "I am committing all of my energy to ensure that the alliance transforms as an enduring deterrent against aggression and, should deterrence fail, as a lethal warfighting force for victory."