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RERUN
IN
FOCUS, FACT AND FUN

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REQUIEM

IN

RETROSPECT

DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US
IN THE 720TH OCCUPATION, AND THOSE ACROSS
THE BAY IN KOREA WHO ALSO FOUGHT AND DIED
IN THE REAL CALL TO ARMS

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PREVIEW

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IN 1952, I WAS A MEMBER OF COMPANY "A", 720TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION STATIONED IN TOKYO, JAPAN.

AT THE END OF THAT YEAR, THE BATTALION COMPILED AND PRINTED A FORTY FOUR PAGE BOOKLET, DETAILING IN PICTURE AND PROSE, THE YEAR 1952 IN BATTALION HISTORY.

TODAY, FIFTY EIGHT YEARS LATER, I TREASURE THAT BOOKLET, AND OTHER 720TH MEMORABILIA, AS MEMORABLE LINKS TO THAT PAST.

RECENTLY I HAVE READ WEB SITE REQUESTS FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF OTHERS WHO SERVED THE BATTALION AT THAT TIME AND PLACE, FOR INFORMATION AND DETAILS OF THAT PERIOD.

IN RETROSPECT, I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT 1952 WAS A PIVOTAL YEAR IN THE BATTALIONS MISSION TO TRANSFORM TOKYO FROM AN OCCUPIED, POLICED AND SERVICED CITY, TO THE PEACE TREATY MANDATED, SELF GOVERNING AND SERVICING, CAPITAL CITY OF JAPAN.

AS SET FORTH IN MORE DETAIL IN THE UP COMING PROLOGUE SECTION, I BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND THE 720TH'S M.P. BATTALION'S TEN YEAR FEAT OF NATION BUILDING IS ONE OF THE MOST OVERLOOKED AND UNDERRECOGNIZED STORIES OF MILITARY HISTORY.

WITH THE DUAL GOALS OF POSSIBLY SHINING A BELATED LIGHT ON THE U.S. ARMY AND THE 720TH'S UNIQUE ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND ANSWERING THE WEB SITE FOLK'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, I HAVE COMPILED IN WORD AND PICTURE, A MORE DETAILED, NUTS AND BOLTS, BOOTS ON THE GROUND, VERSION OF THAT 1952 BATTALION HISTORY BOOKLET.

I HAVE FOUND THREE DIFFERENT WEB SITES RELATED TO THE 720TH, AND PERHAPS ONE OF THEM COULD RELAY THE INFORMATION AND PROVIDE THE NEEDED SPOTLIGHT.

IN SO DOING, MAYBE A PROFESSIONAL WRITER OR HISTORIAN, WILL SENSE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN OVERLOOKED, TEN YEAR SAGA OF NATION BUILDING.

PROLOGUE

CONJUGATING

HISTORY

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THE DARK AND TRAUMATIC DAY THAT WAS TO LIVE IN INFAMY, TRIGGERED THE 720TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION'S RENDEZVOUS WITH HISTORY.

IN RESPONSE TO, AND JUST FORTY EIGHT DAYS LATER, ON JANUARY 20, 1942 THE BATTALION WAS OFFICIALLY ACTIVATED AT FORT MEADE, MARYLAND AND SOON BEGAN SEVERAL YEARS OF ACTIVE DUTY ASSIGNMENTS IN THE PACIFIC WAR THEATER.

THE SIGNING OF SURRENDER DOCUMENTS IN 1945 AUTHORIZED THE UNITED STATES MILITARY, UNDER THE COMMAND OF FIVE STAR GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR, TO COMMENCE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS IN THE JAPANESE HOMELAND.

AS PART OF THAT OCCUPATION TEAM, IN SEPTEMBER OF 1945, THE 720TH M. P. BATTALION WAS DEPLOYED TO TOKYO, THE THIRD LARGEST CITY IN THE WORLD, TO INITIATE ITS HISTORIC POLICING AND SERVICING MISSION IN THAT CAPITAL CITY, AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OVERALL UNITED STATES OCCUPATION FORCE.

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ANY BROADSTROKES PAINTING OF THE HISTORY OF THAT PACIFIC WAR CAMPAIGN AND THE RESULTANT OCCUPATION OF JAPAN, UNDERSTANDABLY, CANNOT DETAIL THE VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL UNITS SUCH AS THE 720TH M.P. BATTALION.

HOWEVER, THE BATTALION PROBABLY EARNED AND DESERVES EXEMPTION FROM SUCH ANONYMITY BY REASON OF TWO SEPERATE BUT INTERTWINED SUCCESSES.

FIRST, BECAUSE OF THEIR KEY, POINT GUARD ROLE IN THE INITIAL OCCUPATION AND REPATRIAZATION OF THE CAPITAL CITY FROM SEPTEMBER, 1945 TO FEBRUARY 1955, AND SECONDLY, BEGINNING IN APRIL 1952, THE ORDERLY TRANSITION OF GOVERNING AUTHORITY BACK TO SOVERIGN, JAPANESE RESPONSIBILITY.

BY ANY CRITERIA, THESE WERE TRULY UNIQUE AND MONUMENTAL UNDERTAKINGS BECAUSE THEIR JURISDICTIONAL MANDATE INCLUDED NOT ONLY ALL UNITED STATES AND ALLIED MILITARY, AND CIVILIAN PERSONEL, BUT THE JAPANESE CITIZENRY AS WELL.

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THEIR CHARGE WAS EVEN FARTHER EXPANDED AND COMPLICATED WHEN THE KOREAN POLICE ACTION OF 1950 RESULTED IN THE ADDITION OF THOUSANDS OF MULTI NATIONAL, UNITED NATIONS MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONEL TO THE MIX.

IN THE SUBJECT TIME FRAME, THE UNITED STATES MILITARY IN GENERAL, AND THE M. P. BATALUON IN PARTICULAR, WERE THE ARCHITECTS OF AN UNPRECEDENTED MILITARY ACHIEVEMENT AS THEY TRANSFORMED THE FORMER "LAND OF THE RISING SUN", FROM A BADLY DEFEATED, COMPLETELY DISORGANIZED, WAR DEVASTATED SHELL, TO A ONCE AGAIN INDEPENDENT, SELF-GOVERNING, SOVERIGN NATION CAPABLE OF EARNING ITS WAY BACK TO WORLD ACCEPTANCE.

THIS ENDEAVOR OF THE UNITED STATES FORCES, WITH THE 720TH IN ITS KEY TOKYO ROLE, MAY WELL BE ONE OF THE MOST OVERLOOKED, UNDER RECOGNIZED, ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE ANNALS OF MILITARY HISTORY.

AS THE OCCUPATION OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY FORCES AROUND THE COUNTRY, AND THE 720TH IN TOKYO, APPROACHED THE TREATY MANDATED TASK OF GRADUALLY REDUCING SOLE U.S. AUTHORITY TO JOINT, AND THEN SOVERIGN JAPANESE CONTROL, MUCH OF THAT GOAL HAD ALREADY

BEEN INFORMALLY AND SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED.

THE METROPOLITAN JAPANESE POLICE FORCE AND THE 720TH WERE ALREADY POLICING IN AN INFORMAL, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY MODE OF TO EACH HIS OWN, WITH THE BATTALION'S PRIMARY CONCERNS PITCHED TO UNITED STATES AND UNITED NATIONS PERSONNEL.

THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVE RELATES PRIMARILY TO THE YEAR 1952 AND THE DAY BY DAY, BACKGROUND EVENTS WHICH FRAMED THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF THAT IMPORTANT, TRANSITORY YEAR.

ITS GOAL IS A BOOTS ON THE GROUND, PICTURE OF WHAT I HAVE COME TO VIEW AS AN EPIC YEAR IN THE SIXTY EIGHT YEAR HISTORY OF THE BATTALION.

ANY BIG PICTURE SUCCESS WILL ALWAYS BE GROUNDED IN AN UNDERLYING, DAY BY DAY, NUTS AND BOLTS FRAME, AND THIS NARRATIVE PROPOSES TO BE A CROSS SECTION VIEW OF THAT PICTURE.

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THE WAY WE WERE

CHAPTER ONE

SETTING THE TABLE

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THE 720TH WAS STILL IN PLACE AND FULFILLING THEIR OCCUPATIONAL ROLES, WHEN, ON CHRISTMAS EVE, 1951, MYSELF AND OTHERS ARRIVED AT THE TOKYO CAMP DRAKE REPLACEMENT DEPOT FOR DEPLOYMENT TO KOREA AS FIELD ARTILLERY, FIRE DIRECTION SPECIALISTS.

WHILE AWAITING THE IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF BARGES TO TRANSPORT US ACROSS THE BAY TO KOREA, AN OFFICER ENTERED THE HOLDING AREA AND ADVISED US THAT HE WOULD CALL A LIST OF NAMES AND IF YOU WERE CALLED AND WISHED TO REMAIN IN TOKYO AND BECOME A MILITARY POLICEMAN, TAKE ONE STEP FORWARD.

WITH THAT STEP, MYSELF AND THE OTHERS BECAME PLAYERS IN THE UP COMING, CRITICAL PERIOD OF BATTALION HISTORY.

WE WERE AMONG THE EARLIEST ARRIVALS TO BEGIN REPLACING THE OLDER, LONG TIME, REGULAR ARMY VETERANS WHO HAD POLICED AND SERVICED TOKYO IN OCCUPATIONAL MODE SINCE SEPTEMBER 1945.

THE ROLE OF THESE VETERANS, WHO HAD INITIALLY HELPED WIN THE WAR AND ESTABLISH THE OCCUPATION, AND WERE NOW ABOUT TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTING THE

PEACE, WOULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERED, BEGINNING IN FOUR MONTHS WITH THE RATIFICATION OF THE JAPANESE PEACE TREATY IN APRIL 1952.

THAT TREATY WOULD SIGNAL THE BEGINNING OF THE LEGAL CHANGE OF THE UNITED STATES FROM PRIMARY OCCUPATIONAL STATUS TO SECONDARY SECURITY FORCE MODE.

IN THAT NEW ROLE AS SECURITY FORCE PERSONEL, THE REMAINING OLD GUARD, AND WE, THE NEW, WOULD BE CHARGED WITH BEGINNING THE TRANSITIONAL STEPS AND PROGRAMS MANDATED BY THE TREATY, TO GRADUALLY RETURN TOKYO TO SOVERIGN, SELF REGULATING, SELF GOVERNING AND SELF POLICING STATUS.

THAT TASK WAS FARTHER COMPLICATED BY THE NECESSITY TO TRAIN AND INTERGRATE WE THE REPLACEMENT PERSONEL.

THUS WAS THE STATE OF FLUX IN WHICH I, AND THE OTHERS, ON THAT CHRISTMAS MORNING, 1951, BEGAN OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE BATALION'S DATE WITH HISTORY.

FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF INITIAL, IN HOUSE SCHOOLING BY HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, AND FIELD ORIENTATION BY THE OPERATING COMPANIES, WE WERE ASSIGNED TO THE OPERATING COMPANIES TO BEGIN FIELD DUTY.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS INITIAL TRAINING WAS LATER AUGMENTED BY REGULARLY SCHEDULED, ADDITIONAL SCHOOLING PROGRAMS.

SHORTLY AFTER MY COMPANY "A" ASSIGNMENT, I WAS CALLED TO HEADQUARTERS COMPANY AND GIVEN THE CHOICE OF REMAINING WITH CO. A OR TRANSFERRING TO HEADQUARTERS COMPANY TO MANAGE THE BATTALION ARMY POST OFFICE #500.

I CHOSE TO REMAIN WITH "ABLE" AND THE LURE OF FIELD DUTY.

CHAPTER TWO

NUTS AND BOLTS

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LIFE AND DUTY IN A STRUCTURED MILITARY ENVIRONMENT USUALLY FINDS A TWENTY FOUR HOUR, TWO PART CYCLE, AND CAMP BURNESS WAS NO EXCEPTION.

WE SOON FOUND OURSELVES IN A RHYTHM OF DAILY DUTY, IN THE FIELD OPERATION, AND OFF DUTY, IN HOUSE, REST AND RECREATION.

THE FOUR LINE COMPANIES WERE SCHEDULED TO PROVIDE THREE, EIGHT HOUR ROTATING SHIFTS, WITH HEADQUARTERS COMPANY AND ITS ATTACHMENT OF P.M.I.S (PROVOST MARSHALS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE) PERSONEL PROVIDING THE GLUE THAT HELD IT ALL TOGETHER.

CAMP BURNESS, THE TOKYO HOME OF THE 720TH, HAD ITS MAIN GATE, FRONT ENTRANCE AT "Z" AVENUE AND 20TH ST.

IN PREOCCUPIED JAPAN, THE FACILITY HAD BEEN THE HOME OF A JAPANESE COAST GUARD UNIT AND FOR THAT REASON THE REAR AREAS WERE FLANKED BY THE SUMIDA RIVER, AND IMPORTANT WATER WAY TO TOKYO BAY.

"Z" AVENUE AND 20TH STREET WERE DOTTED WITH MOM AND POP SERVICE SHOPS LOCATED NEARBY TO CATER TO THE EVERY-DAY PERSONAL NEEDS OF THE CAMP BUSINESS OCCUPANTS.

SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL, A G. I. USUALLY CAUGHT ON WITH A PARTICULAR "MOMMA SAN" OR SHOP TO SUPPLY HIS PERSONAL SERVICE NEEDS SUCH AS LAUNDRY, CLEANING AND PRESSING, TAILORING AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS.

MANY OF US, IN DEFERENCE TO ALREADY ESTABLISHED, HIGH LEVEL, PERSONAL AND GROUP STANDARDS, HAD MOST OF OUR G. I. ISSUED CLOTHING TAILORED TO PERSONAL FIT.

THE HIGH QUALITY, LOW COST, SERVICES OF THESE MOM AND POP PEOPLE WAS TRULY AMAZING AND MUCH APPRECIATED.

AS AN EXAMPLE OF SPECIAL NEEDS, I STILL HAVE MY BRASS POLICE WHISTLE, FULLY ENGRAVED WITH CROSS PISTOLS, CO. A, 720TH M. P. BATTALION, YEAR 1952, TOKYO, JAPAN, AND THE ORDERLY REGULATION COAT OF ARMS WITH RESTRAINED IMP.

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**"Z" AVE MAIN GATE
LEFT GUARD BOX**

**"Z" AVE. MAIN GATE
RIGHT GUARD BOX**



**MAIN GATE ENTRANCE
— MOM AND POP SHOPS
IN BACKGROUND**

**1952
A CROSS PISTOLS XMAS**

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REAR AREA CAMP BURNESSE
"2" AVE. DRAW BRIDGE
OPEN FOR SUMIDA
RIVER TRAFFIC

CAMP BURNESSE
REAR AREA
SUMIDA RIVER



SUMIDA RIVER, "2" AVE.
DRAW BRIDGE CLOSED
POSITION



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AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE, ON MAY 2, 1952, THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY OFFICIALLY APPROVED THE 720TH BATTALION COAT OF ARMS FEATURING THE RESTRAINED IMP, AND WITHIN DAYS WE WERE ABLE TO PURCHASE THE FULL COLOR, BRASS UNIFORM PINS FROM MOM AND POP, WHICH MEANS THAT THOSE I HAVE ARE PROBABLY ABOUT AS OLD AS THEY COME.

THESE MOM AND POP FOLKS ALSO PROVIDED A MAJOR, NON COSTLY, BONUS SERVICE, IN THAT THEY WERE OFTEN THE FIRST TO PROVIDE US WITH KNOWLEDGE OR INFORMATION CONCERNING UPCOMING MAJOR OR MINOR CHANGES IN BATTALION OR FECOM STRUCTURE OR POLICY.

MOST OF THE MONETARY BARTERING WAS CONDUCTED IN AUTHORIZED, JAPANESE YEN, BUT ON OCCASSION OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE, NEITHER PARTY WAS ADVERSE TO AN EXCHANGE OF MILITARY SCRIPT FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT.

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CHAPTER THREE

THREADING THE BOLTS

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IN HOUSE

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A TYPICAL DAY IN BATTALION LIFE WAS RITUALLY BEGUN BY THE 7AM SCHEDULED DUTY COMPANY ASSEMBLING AT THE MAIN GATE ENTRANCE FOR A FORMAL FLAG RAISING CEREMONY BEFORE THEY WENT ON DUTY.

THE FLAG WAS RAISED, USUALLY BY THE INCUMBENT "COLONEL'S" ORDERLY" IN A CADENCE TIMED TO REACH ITS ZENITH WITH THE FINAL, AIRBORNE NOTE OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM.

THIS PROCEDURE WAS REVERSED BY THE 3 TO 11 DUTY COMPANY TO THE TWENTY FOUR NOTE, FADING ECHOS OF THE PLAINITIVE, MELONCHOLY TAPS.

TO THIS DAY, WHEN I AM AT ANY PUBLIC EVENT SPOTLIGHTING THE FLAG AND ANTHEM, I STILL CLOSE MY EYES AND RELIVE THOSE SPECIAL MOMENTS.

THE ABOVE MENTIONED COLONEL'S ORDERLY, WAS A RANK AND FILE M.P. WHO HAD WON A HIGHLY CONTESTED, MONTHLY COMPETITION TO SPEND HIS EIGHT HOUR DUTY TOUR IN THE BATTALION COMMANDER'S OFFICE AS HIS PERSONAL ASSISTANT.

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HONOR GUARD? SPECIAL DUTY
COLD WEATHER UNIFORM

REGULAR DUTY WINTER UNIFORM
AUGMENTED BY A HEAVY
DUTY PARKA WHEN NEEDED

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OUR IN HOUSE, OFF DUTY ROUTINES DIFFERED GREATLY FROM THOSE OF OUR PREDECESSORS.

MANY OF THE OLD GUARD HAD LONG ESTABLISHED, OFF BASE, LIVES AND HOUSING AND THEREFORE SPENT FAR FEWER OFF DUTY HOURS ON BASE.

IN CONTRAST, MANY OF US SPENT MUCH OF OUR OFF DUTY HOURS IN ESTABLISHED MONTHLY, CYCLICAL ROUTINES AND PRACTICES.

ONE SUCH CYCLE BEGAN WHEN THE "MYTHICAL PAY EAGLE", DEPOSITED OUR MONTHLY PAY IN MILITARY SCRIPT, NOT U. S. DOLLARS, BECAUSE OF THE FLOURISHING BLACK MARKET IN U. S. DOLLARS.

THE EAGLES DEPOSIT ALWAYS TRIGGERED A NUMBER OF FORBIDDEN POKER AND CRAPS GAMES THROUGHOUT THE COMPANY AND BATTALION AREA.

THE INDIVIDUAL SITE WINNERS PROGRESSIVELY CONSOLIDATED, AND AT THE END OF A 24 TO 36 HOUR PERIOD, THERE WERE SOME TRULY HIGH ROLLER SCRIPT DOLLARS CHANGING HANDS.

ANOTHER MONTHLY CYCLE REVOLVED AROUND CIGARETTES. ONCE A MONTH ALL BATTALION MEMBERS WERE ENTITLED TO PURCHASE AN ALLOTMENT OF U.S. CIGARETTES FROM THE BATTALION P.X. AT BARGAIN P.X. PRICES.

AGAIN, BECAUSE OF A LUCRATIVE BLACK MARKET IN U.S. CIGARETTES, THE FOLLOWING DAYS WERE A STUDY IN FREE WHEELING MONETARY EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE SMOKERS AND NON SMOKERS, AND YOU WOULD BE CORRECT IF YOU GUESSED THAT SOME OF THOSE CIGARETTES LATER WERE A FORM OF BARTER EXCHANGE WITH MOM AND POP.

IN HOUSE, THE 720TH FIELDED SPORTS TEAMS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO COMPETED REGULARLY WITH OTHER LOCAL MILITARY UNITS.

THOSE OF US WHO WERE NOT TALENTED ENOUGH TO COMPETE AT THAT LEVEL, ENJOYED HOURS OF RECREATION TIME AS SPECTATORS AT THOSE EVENTS, AND AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN COMPANY LEVEL, INTRAMURAL SPORTS PROGRAMS.

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BECAUSE OF THE TWENTY FOUR HOUR CYCLE OF OUR DUTY, THE BATTALION MESS HALL WAS ALSO A TWENTY FOUR HOUR ENDEAVOR.

SOME OF MY MOST PLEASANT AND ENJOYABLE MEMORIES SPRING FROM THAT FACT.

AT THE END OF THE 3 TO 11 PM OR THE 11 TO 7 AM TOUR, WE WOULD COME TOGETHER IN THE MESS HALL TO RELAX AND WIND DOWN, SHARING STORIES AND EVENTS OF THE JUST COMPLETED EIGHT HOUR TOUR.

AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT, SOME OF THEM BECAME LEGENDARY AS TIME AND REPETITION EMBELLISHED THEM.

AS GROWING YOUNG MEN, THESE SESSIONS WERE EVEN MORE ENJOYABLE BECAUSE THERE WERE NO LIMITS ON THE AMOUNT OF FOOD OR BEVERAGE AVAILABLE FOR OUR EARLY MORNING BREAKFAST OR LATE EVENING SUPPER.

OUR MESS HALL WAS EVEN FURTHER APPRECIATED BY ALL OF US BECAUSE IT DID NOT FEATURE THE UNIVERSALLY DISLIKED, K. P. DUTY.

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THOSE DUTIES WERE PERFORMED BY JAPANESE CIVILIAN WORKERS PAID FROM A VOLUNTARY, BATTALION WIDE FUND TO WHICH ALL CONTRIBUTED.

ANOTHER OUTSTANDING, BUT SOMETIMES PAINFUL MEMORY OF EVERYDAY ROUTINE INVOLVED A DAILY CHECKING OF THE COMPANY BULLETIN BOARD.

ON IT WAS A FREQUENTLY UPDATED POSTING OF THE NAMES OF THE AMERICAN KOREAN WOUNDED NEWLY ADMITTED TO TOKYO ARMY HOSPITAL.

WHEN WE FOUND THE NAME OF ANY OF OUR FRIENDS FROM OUR ARTILLERY BASIC TRAINING GROUP, IT MEANT A SOMETIMES PAINFUL VISIT TO THE HOSPITAL.

ON OCCASION, THE INJURED COMRADE WAS THE VICTIM OF SERIOUS DISFIGUREMENT OR LIMB LOSS WHICH ALWAYS LEFT ME WITH MELANCHOLY THOUGHTS OF WHY THE LUCK OF THE DRAW HAD ME STANDING THERE AS THE FORTUNATE VISITOR, AND HE THE BED RIDDEN VICTIM.

EACH COMPANY HAD A RECREATION DAY ROOM FEATURING PING PONG AND POOL TABLES, CARD PLAYING AND LETTER WRITING AREAS, AND EVEN QUIET READING AREA.

THE CARD GAMES OF CHOICE WERE POKER AND HEARTS. IF, AS EARLIER REPORTED, HIGH STAKES POKER WAS PAY DAY "KING" IN THE BATTALION, THE "QUEEN OF SPADES" AND HER THIRTEEN HEARTS OFTEN RULED THE DAY ROOM.

WHILE THERE WERE SOME LOW STAKES POKER GAMES, AND THE OBJECTS CHANGING HANDS ON THE TABLE, USUALLY HAD A WORTH IN EXCESS OF FACE VALUE, THE HEARTS PLAYERS WERE A SERIOUS PRESENCE.

THOSE PLAYERS TOOK GREAT PRIDE IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SKILLS, AND THE GAMES WERE FIERCELY COMPETITIVE WITH THE WINNERS SOMETIMES EXTENDING THEIR CHALLENGE TO OTHER COMPANIES.

THE BATTALION SERVICE CLUB FEATURED A FULL TIME, U.S.O. TYPE HOSTESS WHO, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR SCHEDULED AND HOSTED SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT NIGHTS AND EVENTS.

SHE ALSO PROVIDED US WITH HOURS OF HOLIDAY CHEER AND HOME MEMORIES, WITH HER MAJOR HOLIDAY THEMES AND PRESENTATIONS.

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT EXACT OVERALL STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS WERE IN PLAY WHEN INDIVIDUALS WERE SELECTED TO SERVE IN THE BATTALION, BUT THE PERSONAL MORALS BAR MUST HAVE BEEN VERY HIGH INDEED.

WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, THE INDIVIDUALS ENTRUSTED WITH THE BATTALION GOAL OF ORDERLY REGULATION WERE A CREDIT TO THAT TRUST, BOTH ON AND OFF DUTY.

INTERNAL INCIDENTS OF SERIOUS DISCIPLINE WERE RARE, AND I PERSONALLY SAW FEW INCIDENTS OF THE "POWER TRIP" REACTION SOMETIMES MANIFESTED WHEN SOME INDIVIDUALS DONNED THE ARM BAND OF AUTHORITY.

EVERYDAY CAMP AND QUARTERS CLEANLINESS AND ORDER, WERE ALSO A REFLECTION OF INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER, AND EASED THE OVERALL SPIT AND SHINE PREPARATION REQUIRED WHEN THE CAMP WAS SCHEDULED FOR ONE OF ITS FREQUENT V. I. P. VISITS OR INSPECTIONS.

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WHILE ABOARD THE TROOP TRANSPORT SHIP, THE U.S.S. MANN, I REMEMBER A DAILY RITUAL IN WHICH THE SHIP'S SPEAKER SYSTEM COMMANDED THE CREW: "SWEEPERS, SWEEPERS, MAN YOUR BROOMS, CLEAN SWEEP DOWN FORE AND AFT".

HERE AT CAMP BURNESSE WE PERIODICALLY PERFORMED OUR OWN VERSION WHICH WE JOKINGLY TITLED "THE POLICE, POLICING THE POLICE".

AREA WIDE LINES WERE FORMED TO WALK THE GROUNDS PICKING UP BUTTS AND OTHER DERIS, AND NO ONE EVER WANTED TO BE CAUGHT IN PRIOR CONTRIBUTION.

TO US, THE TEMPORARY OCCUPANTS, EVERYDAY LIFE IN CAMP BURNESSE WAS A JANUS LIKE, TWO FACED COIN, ONE FACE BEING THE REALITY OF HERE AND NOW, AS SET FORTH IN THIS NARRATIVE, AND THE SECOND BEING THE ALWAYS PRESENT THOUGHTS OF OUR FUTURE IN THE LIVES WE HAD LEFT BEHIND.

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THERE WAS NO CELLULAR OR E-MAIL OR TEXT MESSAGE OPTIONS, OUR LIFE LINKS TO HOME WERE THREE IN NUMBER AND ANCIENT IN MODE, THOSE BEING THE BATTALION POST OFFICE #500 WITH ITS TWO TO THREE WEEK DELIVERY SERVICE, ARMED FORCES RADIO MOSTLY IN DELAY MODE, AND FINALLY VENERABLE OLD, "MA BELL".

IN CONTRAST TO TODAY'S MENU, "MA" COULD OFFER US ONLY AN OCCASSIONAL, EXPENSIVE, STATIC DOMINATED, LAND LINE TELEPHONE CALL VIA OCEANIC CABLE.

ARMY POST OFFICE (APO 500) WAS OUR MOST UTILIZED DAILY LIFE LINE TO HOME, AND MAIL CALL THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY.

BUT AS WELCOME AS IT WAS, EVEN IT, ON OCCASSION, COULD BE A TWO EDGED SWORD.

SOMEWHERE IN CAMP, SOMEONE READ HIS "DEAR JOHN" LETTER AND WEPT, WHILE ELSEWHERE AT THAT MOMENT, A NEW FATHER READ OF A FIRST BORN AND REJOICED.

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ARMED FORCES RADIO Aired our favorite radio shows, and the dying, big band music of our life, found us weekly by way of your hit parade.

The nostalgic, moving words and music of "My Old Kentucky Home" saddened us just a bit even as the winners cheered home "Hill Gail" in his 1952 Kentucky Derby, Run for the Roses.

In early November A.F.B. brought us the excitement of the network anchors and their state by state coverage of the popular and electoral vote giving a presidential mandate to yet another military icon, General Dwight D. Eisenhower to end the Korean Police Action.

In late November, the Gillette Blue Blade Cavalcade of Sports, blow by blow description of Fazzard Charles Heavyweight Championship win over Rocky Marciano, was a big winner, even to the losers in the betting pools.

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WHILE OUR (MOS) MILITARY OCCUPATION SPECIALTY #1677, IDENTIFIED US AS MILITARY POLICEMEN, OUR BOTTOM LINE POTENTIAL WAS ALWAYS, ON THE GROUND, INFANTRY GRUNTS.

IN RECOGNITION OF THAT FACT, PERIODICALLY, GROUPS OF US LOADED INTO THE OLD RELIABLE, CANVAS BACK TRUCKS FOR TRANSPORT TO NEARBY CAMP DRAKE.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, THE COMFORTS AND ROUTINES OF CAMP BURNESS WERE TRADED FOR TWENTY FOUR HOUR, IN THE FIELD, SOLDIERING.

PUP TENTS, OUTDOOR LATRINES, AND FIELD KITCHENS BECAME THE REALITY OF THE DAY.

SQUAD ORIENTED EXERCISES WERE THE NORM AND OUR CAMP BURNESS, EIGHT HOUR, HAND GUN WEAPON WAS REPLACED BY THE OLD FAITHFUL CARBINE OR M-1 RIFLE, AND THEY, ONCE AGAIN BECAME OUR TWENTY FOUR HOUR COMPANION.

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OFF DUTY AND OUT OF CONTROL

LEFT TO RIGHT

P.J. COOK - STAN CLIFFORD - FRANCIS TIBANEY - S. CLIFFORD - F. TIBANEY



CAMP DRAKE

FIELD TRAINING

P.F.C. PATRICK J. COOK - P.F.C. JAMES SCOTT

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WE REHONED OUR BY THE NUMBERS, SKILLS IN THE NOMENCLATURE AND FIELD CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF THOSE WEAPONS AND SELECT SQUAD MEMBERS BENEFITTED BY EXTRA TRAINING WITH THE (BAR) BROWNING AUTOMATIC RIFLE AND THE HEAVY DUTY BAZOOKA.

THE FIELD KITCHENS REINTRODUCED US TO THE DREADED K.P. DUTY, AND OTHER BASIC TRAINING SKILLS WERE REVISITED IN GAS MASK AND OBSTACLE COURSE EXERCISES.

THE MORE RIGOROUS DEMANDS OF FIELD SOLDIERING, SENT MOST OF US BACK TO CAMP BURNNESS IN A BIT BETTER PHYSICAL CONDITION AND WITH A BETTER APPRECIATION OF OUR BATALLION LIFE.

WITH SOME, THESE FIELD EXPERIENCES ALSO TRIGGERED OR REINFORCED AN INTANGIBLE BENEFIT, THAT BEING THAT ANY NECESSARY ORDERLY REGULATION OF THE BROTHERHOOD SHOULD ALWAYS FIND SOME ROOM FOR HUMANE AND UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION.

THE FOREGOING, HIGHLIGHTED,
DAILY LIVING ROUTINES AND PRACTICES,
AND OTHERS LIKE THEM, WERE THE
FOUNDATION UPON WHICH TO BUILD
OVERALL SUCCESS.

ULTIMATE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF
A MISSION MUST THEN BE COBBLED
IN THE FIELD, BOOTS ON THE GROUND.

IN PRE-SUMMATION, CHAPTER FOUR
WILL DETAIL NOT ONLY MEMORABLE,
IN THE FIELD PERFORMANCE, BUT THE
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND EVENTS
WHICH CREATED OR MODIFIED THEM
IN THAT 1952 YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT.

CHAPTER FOUR

TIGHTENING THE NUTS

10-8

IN THE FIELD

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WHILE FINAL SUCCESS MUST BE FORGED ON THE GROUND, IT MUST BE PLANNED, NUTURED, AND SUSTAINED FROM SOME AUTHORIZED, COMMITTED, OR ORGANIZATIONAL GROUP.

THIS NARRATIVE WOULD BE INCOMPLETE AND REMIS IN ITS GOALS IF IT DID NOT RECOGNIZE AND CREDIT THAT NECESSARY GROUP, SAID GROUP BEING THE PROVOST MARSHALLS OFFICE OF THE METROPOLITAN TOKYO AREA.

ALL OF THE FIELD FUNCTIONS OF THE BATTALION WERE UNDER THEIR OPERATIONAL CONTROL AND SO BATTALION SUCCESS, IF ANY, WAS AN EQUAL AND DUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT.

I KNOW LITTLE ELSE ABOUT THEM, MY ONLY DIRECT CONTACT BEING WITH THE PMO RADIO DISPATCHER AND HIS AID, WHEN REPORTING FOR DUTY OR BRINGING A SUBJECT INTO THE DISPATCH AND HOLDING AREA FOR POSSIBLE PROCESSING.

THIS NARRATIVE WOULD ALSO BE INCOMPLETE IN MAKING ITS CASE FOR EXTERNAL SUCCESS, WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING A MUCH OVERLOOKED, INTERNAL SUCCESS.

BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S HARRY TRUMAN'S ORDER TO FULLY INTEGRATE ALL U.S. ARMED FORCES, THE INCOMING REPLACEMENT TROOPS HAD INCREASED NUMBERS OF BLACK AMERICAN SOLDIERS.

TO THE BATTALION'S CREDIT, OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE 720TH, QUIETLY ACHIEVED THAT MANDATED GOAL WITHOUT MAJOR INCIDENT OR DISRUPTION OF PRIMARY MISSION.

DURING THE SUBJECT PERIOD OF THIS NARRATIVE THERE AROSE A NUMBER OF CHALLENGING, POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE ISSUES THAT COULD HAVE BADLY IMPEDED PROGRESS.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE OCCUPATION, MOST FIELD DUTIES WERE PERFORMED BY TWO MAN M.P. TEAMS. THIS TWO MAN FORMAT WAS INITIALLY KEPT IN PLAY AS OUR SCHEDULE

MAKERS PENCILED IN TEAMS OF ONE VETERAN AND ONE NOVICE M.P.

SHORTLY AFTER THE APRIL PEACE TREATY MANDATED GRADUAL INTERGRATION, OUR TWO MAN TEAMS SOMETIMES BEGAN TO FEATURE ONE M.P. AND ONE JAPANESE POLICEMAN, WITH THE M.P. RETAINING FINAL AUTHORITY IN BOTH FOOT AND MOTOR PATROLS.

THIS LAND MARK CHANGE, AND OTHERS LIKE IT, MIGHT HAVE PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS HAD THE BATTALION ROSTER STILL CONSISTED MAINLY OF THE VETERAN, REGULAR ARMY TROOPS, MANY OF WHO, UNDERSTANDABLY, DEVELOPED AND RETAINED BITTER FEELINGS OF DISLIKE AND DISTRUST OF THE JAPANESE, AS THEY FOUGHT THEIR WAY ACROSS THE PACIFIC TO FINAL DUTY IN TOKYO.

THOUGH THERE WAS DISSENT AND RESENTMENT, IT WAS MINIMALIZED AND DEFUSED BY THE JUDICIOUS SCHEDULING OF US, THE LARGER NUMBERS OF NEWCOMERS.

WHILE ACHIEVING ITS GOAL OF GRADUAL INTERGRATION, THIS JOINT VENTURE ALSO EVOLVED INTO A TRULY INTERESTING AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

SOME OF THE POLICEMEN WERE VETERANS OF THE JAPANESE MILITARY AND INCLUDED FORMER PILOTS, SHIPS COMMANDERS AND SUCH.

MOST OF THEM WERE REASONABLY PROFICIENT IN THEIR ENGLISH SKILLS.

THE ROUTINE, QUIET PERIODS OF AN EIGHT HOUR TOUR WERE SOMETIMES PAINTED WITH FASCINATING STORIES AND MEMORIES OF THE WAR FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW.

THIS WAS UNQUESTIONABLY A UNIQUE, ODD COUPLE RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH THESE EDUCATED, SKILLED, EXPERIENCED VETERANS OF COMMAND, HAD TO DEFER TO OUR YOUTH AND INEXPERIENCE IN FINAL DECISION AUTHORITY.

ONE EVENT STANDS OUT IN MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. WHILE WALKING OUR PATROL IN THE GINZA AREA, WE WERE BEING VERBALLY ABUSED BY AN ENEBRIATED, MALE JAPANESE CIVILIAN.

FEELING NO THREAT, I CHOSE TO IGNORE HIM. MY POLICEMAN COHART GAVE HIM A VERBAL WARNING TO DESIST, AND WHEN HE DID NOT, THE POLICEMAN STRUCK HIM TO

THE GROUND WITH HIS NIGHT STICK AND CONTINUED TO STRIKE HIM UNTIL I INTERVENED.

LATER, WHEN I CIVILLY QUESTIONED THE EXTENT OF HIS REACTION, HE REPLIED THAT RESPECT FOR AND OBEDIANCE TO PROPER AUTHORITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A DEEPLY ENGRAINED FOUNDATION OF JAPANESE CULTURE AND THAT IN PREWAR JAPAN, SOME POLICEMEN EVEN CARRIED SMALL SWORDS INSTEAD OF WOOD BATONS.

OUR YOUTH AND INEXPERIENCE WAS ALSO A POTENTIAL NEGATIVE FACTOR IN YET ANOTHER FIELD ENFORCEMENT SITUATION.

THE LARGE NUMBERS OF REPLACEMENT PERSONEL IN ALL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN UNITS HAD RESULTED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NUMEROUS, NEW, SUB DIVISION LIKE HOUSING FACILITIES FOR COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

THIS IN TURN TRIGGERED A PROPORTIONAL INCREASE IN THE BANE OF ALL POLICING BODIES, THE DOMESTIC DISPUTE CALL.

OUR INITIAL RESPONSE TO SUCH SITUATIONS WAS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE "ENLISTED MAN VERSUS COMMISSIONED OFFICER EQUATION".

THESE CALLS WERE INITIALLY DISPATCHED BY THE P.M.O. TO THE NEAREST AVAILIABLE PATROL VEHICLE FOR POSSIBLE STABILIZATION AND CONTAINMENT UNTIL THE ON DUTY, SHIFT OFFICER, OR HIS COUNTERPART COULD ARRIVE.

IN TRAINING WE HAD BEEN TAUGHT THAT IF SERIOUS, IMMEDIATE NEED EXISTED, SITUATIONALLY, WE WOULD BE ONE RANK HIGHER THAN OUR SUBJECT OF THE MOMENT.

WITH THAT EMPOWERMENT, HOWEVER, CAME THE CAVEAT THAT THAT TOOL CARRIED WITH IT THE OBLIGATION OF RESTRAINED, JUDICIOUS, AND LAST RESORT APPLICATION AND IN FINAL REVIEW YOUR ACTIONS HAD BETTER BE ABLE TO SATISFY THOSE CRITERIA.

CONTAINING MOST OF THESE AND OTHER SIMILAR EVENTS TO MINOR INCIDENT STATUS AND AVOIDING MAJOR CONFRONTATION WAS YET ANOTHER REMARKABLE CREDIT TO THE "ORDERLY REGULATION" PROMISE OF THE BATTALION COAT OF ARMS.

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THE BATTALION'S UNHERALDED SUCCESS IN ITS TOKYO ASSIGNMENT IS ALL THE MORE REMARKABLE WHEN ONE FACTORS IN THE ADDITIONAL COMPLICATIONS OF THE KOREA POLICE ACTION BEGINNING IN 1950.

THE ADDITION OF THOUSANDS OF UNITED STATES AND UNITED NATIONS TROOPS AND THEIR SUPPORTING FORCES WAS AN UNEXPECTED AND UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGE AND BURDEN TO THE BATTALION'S TOKYO MISSION.

A MOST OBVIOUS AND MOST DIRECT IMPACT TO THE 720TH WAS THE (R AND R,) REST AND RECREATION PROGRAM WHICH PROVIDED THAT AFTER A GIVEN PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY IN THE KOREAN CONFLICT, THE MEN WOULD ALLOWED A TWO WEEK R. AND R. FURLOUGH, MOST OF WHICH WERE DESTINED FOR TOKYO.

IN GENERAL, THE UNITED NATIONS TROOPS WERE HARD NOSED, VETERAN, CAREER ORIENTED PROFESSIONALS WHO CAME TO TOKYO WITH A LARGE BACKLOG OF PAY CHECKS AND TWO WEEKS TO SPEND AND ENJOY THEMSELVES BEFORE RETURNING TO DEADLY DUTY IN KOREA.

WITH MANY OF THEM SPEAKING LITTLE OR NO ENGLISH, AND MOST OF THEM IN CAREFREE, PARTYING MODE, IT ISN'T DIFFICULT TO VISUALIZE THE PROBLEM POTENTIAL FOR THE 720TH.

ONE SPECIFIC SITUATION WAS THE FOOT PATROL ASSIGNMENTS IN THE GINZA ENTERTAINMENT AREAS.

ALONG THE WAY WERE SEVERAL HIGHLY POPULAR, NIGHT CLUB STYLE ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS OR DANCE HALLS WHICH WERE NEARLY ALWAYS IN FULL HOUSE, NEW YEAR'S EVE TYPE MODE, AS THE B AND B UNITED STATES AND UNITED NATIONS TROOPS CELEBRATED THEIR HARD EARNED, BRIEF RESPITE, FROM THE KOREA DANGER.

SOME IN THE PROVOST MARSHALL AND BATTALION POLICY MAKERS FAVORED THE SO CALLED, "SHOW THE FLAG", ROUTINE PREVENTIVE CHECKS OF THESE CENTERS, WHILE MOST OF THE OLD GUARD, STREET WISE M.P.s REGARDED THEM AS UN-NECESSARILY PROVOCATIVE IN NATURE, AND UNPRODUCTIVE IN RESULT.

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TO ME, THE INSTANT PALL, SOMBER MOOD, AND ALMOST ANGRY SILENCE THAT BEFELL THE SCENE WHEN OUR UNIFORMED PRESENCE WAS NOTICED, WAS REASON ENOUGH TO SEEK WAYS TO AVOID IT WHEN POSSIBLE.

AGAIN, SUFFICE IT TO SAY, THAT WHILE SOME ALTERCATIONS WERE NOT AVOIDABLE, COMMON SENSE AND HUMANE APPLICATION OF ORDERLY REGULATION COMBINED TO DEFUSE OR CONTAIN MANY OF THEM.

OUR GUARD DUTY ASSIGNMENTS CAME IN TWO PART MODE, ONE OF THEM BEING EVERYDAY, ROUTINE SCHEDULED, AND THE OTHER, SPECIAL OCCASION CEREMONIAL.

CEREMONIAL WAS ALWAYS WELCOME WHEN YOU WERE CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE.

AFTER DAYS OF PRACTICE AND SPIT AND SHINE PREP, THE MOMENT WHEN WE ALL CAME TOGETHER IN FULL BLOWN DRESS UNIFORM WAS ALWAYS EXCITING AND IMPRESSIVE.

ENJOYABLE MEMORIES OF BEING A PART OF THE PAGENTRY AT SUCH HISTORICAL SITES AS THE IMPERIAL PALACE

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FELONY HEADQUARTERS AT PERSHING HEIGHTS OR TOKYO AIRPORT FOR ARRIVING OR DEPARTING V.I.P.'S WILL ALWAYS REMAIN INDELIBLY VIVID.

ONE OF THE MORE INTERESTING REGULAR GUARD ASSIGNMENTS WAS AT AN UNDERGROUND, HOLDING CELL LOCATION.

IT WAS THE DETENTION FACILITY FOR FELONY CONVICTED, U.S. MILITARY AWAITING TRANSFER TO FEDERAL PRISONS STATE SIDE.

FOR YOUR EIGHT HOUR TOUR YOU WERE SEATED AT AN ELEVATED DESK FACING A BANK OF CELLS. PAINTED IN FRONT OF THE CELLS WAS A SAFETY LINE WHICH YOU WERE NEVER TO CROSS WHEN ALONE.

OF POSSIBLE HISTORIC NOTE, WE WERE TOLD THAT THESE WERE THE CELLS IN WHICH CAPTURED U.S. AIR FORCE MEMBERS WERE HELD AFTER THE INITIAL BOMBING RAID ON TOKYO

MY FAVORITE DUTY WAS VEHICLE TRAFFIC PATROL IN EITHER A JEEP OR A BLACK AND WHITE SEDAN, FULLY EQUIPED AND IDENTIFIED AS 720TH UNITS.

SURPRISINGLY, THE ADJUSTMENT TO DRIVING ON THE LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE STREET OR ROAD, CAME RATHER EASILY TO MOST OF US.

PERSONAL AND GROUP PRIDE IN APPEARANCE AND PERFORMANCE WAS A HALLMARK SIGNATURE OF THE 720TH.

THE BATTALION MOTOR POOL MECHANICS WHO REPAIRED AND SERVICED OUR JEEPS, TRUCKS AND SEDANS WERE NO EXCEPTION.

MOST OF THEM TOOK GREAT PRIDE IN PROVIDING US WITH SAFE, SERVICABLE AND SPOTLESS VEHICLES, AND WE IN TURN WERE EXPECTED TO DO "DO DILIGENCE", IN RETURNING THEM AT THE END OF A TOUR.

I MADE EARLIER MENTION OF THE TAILORED FIT OUR DUTY AND OFF DUTY CLOTHING AND THO MANY OF THESE MECHANICS FATIGUES BORE THE PERMANENT GREASE AND OIL STAINS OF THEIR TRADE, MANY OF THEM WERE ALSO TAILORED TO INDIVIDUAL FIT.

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MOST TRAFFIC PATROL DUTY WAS PULLED IN THE OLD RELIABLE JEEP, BUT SINCE THEY WERE GRADUALLY BEING REPLACED BY 1951 CHEVROLETS, OCCASSIONLY WE WERE HAPPY TO BE ASSIGNED A BLACK AND WHITE SEDAN.

AROUND THE CITY WERE SCATTERED HOUSING COMPOUNDS AND OTHER MILITARY INSTALLATIONS WHICH HAD ENLISTED MENS CLUBS.

BECAUSE WE WERE OFFICIALLY DISCOURAGED FROM EATING OR DRINKING FOOD OF JAPANESE ORIGIN, WE WERE PERMITTED TO "TEN SEVEN" AT THESE SITES FOR COFFEE OR MEAL BREAKS.

THESE BREAKS WERE USUALLY OF SHORT DURATION BECAUSE OUR UNIFORM PRESENCE USUALLY CREATED AN IMMEDIATE, SOMEWHAT STRAINED, AND CHILLY RECEPTION BY THE HOME FOLKS.

THE OFFICIAL PROHIBITION AGAINST CONSUMPTION OF JAPANESE PRODUCED FOOD AND DRINK WAS A NECESSARY HEALTH MEASURE.

WHEN PASSING BY THE NUMEROUS, OPEN FRONT, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STANDS, THE VERY LARGE SIZE OF ALL THE PRODUCT WAS IMMEDIATELY NOTICEABLE.



P.F.C. PATRICK J. COOK
ENCLOSED JEEP
WINTER WEAR UNIFORM
AUGMENTED BY HEAVY DUTY PARKA WHEN NEEDED



OPEN JEEP
SUMMER KHAKI

STRAWBERRIES, FOR EXAMPLE, WERE FOUR TO FIVE TIMES LARGER THAN OUR HOME GROWN VARIETY, THIS BECAUSE THE JAPANESE BASIC FERTILIZER WAS HUMAN WASTE.

OXEN DRAWN WAGONS MADE DAILY, MANUAL, HOUSE BY HOUSE PICKUPS FOR TRANSFER TO LARGE HOLDING AREAS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE IT WAS PROCESSED INTO FERTILIZER.

IT WAS A STANDING JOKE THAT THE MOST HAZARDOUS ASPECT OF MOTOR PATROL WAS THE POSSIBILITY OF ACCIDENTLY GETTING CAUGHT BEHIND ONE OF THOSE PUNGENT, SO CALLED "HONEY WAGONS", ON A NARROW WIDTH, NO TURN AROUND STREET OR ROAD.

IT REALLY TENDED TO QUELL ANY TEMPTATION TO OVERLOOK THE FOOD AND DRINK PROHIBITION.

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ONE OF THE FINAL STEPS IN PREP FOR A TOUR OF DUTY, WAS A VISIT TO THE BATTALION ARMS SECURITY AREA TO CHECK OUT A FORTY FIVE CALIBER HAND GUN.

THIS WAS USUALLY A TIME OF REFLECTION FOR ME, PONDERING THE POSSIBILITY THAT A SERIOUS MOMENT OF TRUTH MIGHT FIND THAT TOUR OF DUTY.

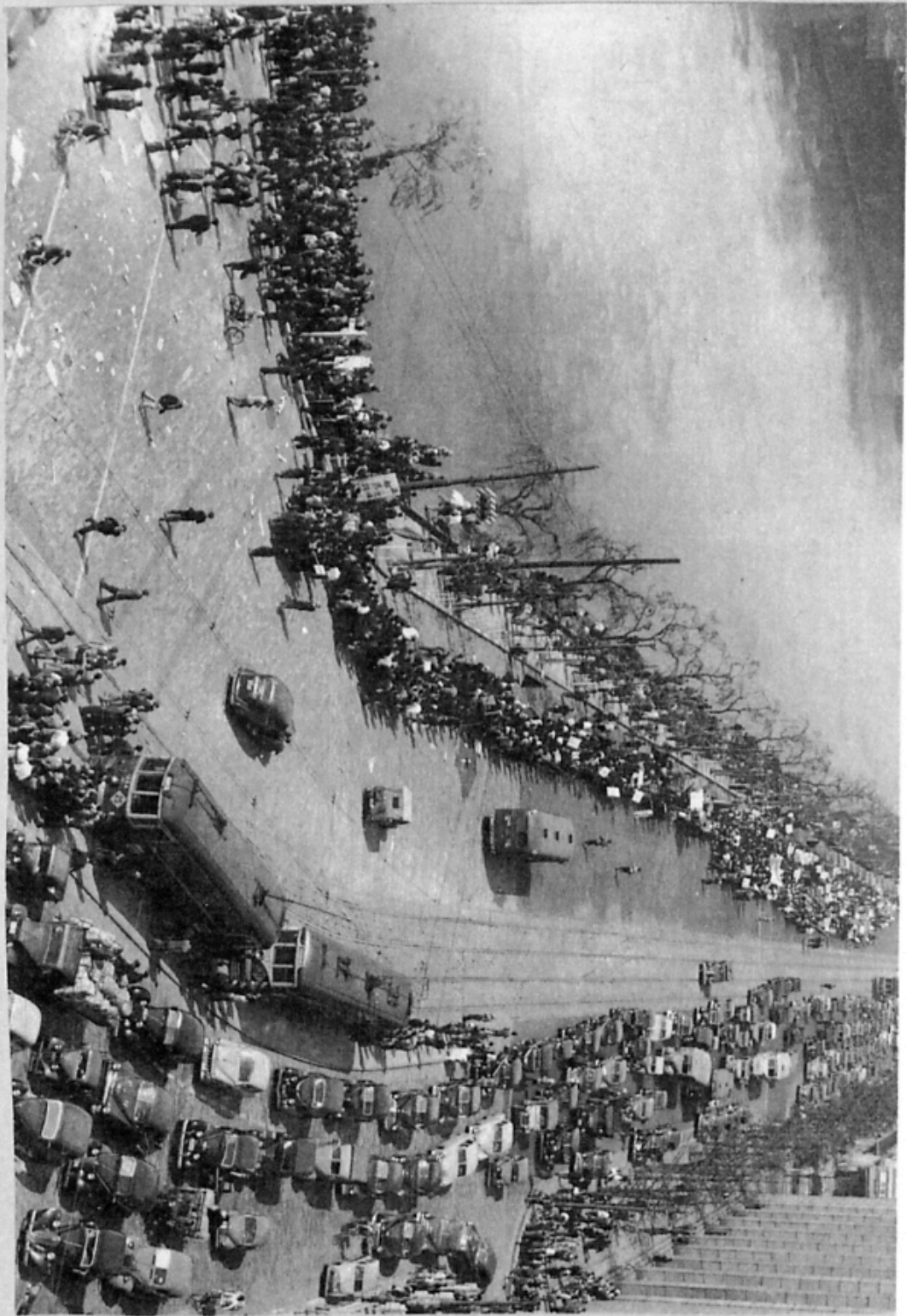
FORTUNATELY, DIVINE PROVIDENCE WILLED THAT I NOT COME FACE TO FACE WITH SUCH A MOMENT.

FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS PREVIOUSLY, TOKYO HAD BEEN THE SCENE OF WIDE SPREAD, COMMUNIST, MAYDAY STREET RIOTING.

I DO NOT KNOW THE EXTENT OR DETAILS OF 720TH INVOLVEMENT IN PREVIOUS YEARS, BUT OLDER MEMBERS SAID IT WAS USUALLY, AT BEST, A VERY HECTIC DAY FOR THE BATTALION.

THIS MAY DAY, 1952 WAS A RATHER QUIET BUT CROWDED DAY AT CAMP BURNES AS ALL NON ESSENTIAL AND OFF DUTY PERSONEL WERE RESTRICTED TO BASE AND HELD IN OFFICIAL STAND BY STATUS

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ON ARRIVAL AT THE Imperial Palace MOAT BRIDGE, THE RIOTERS WERE TURNED BACK IN A LONG AND BLOODY BATTLE WITH THE JAPANESE POLICE.

TOKYO JAPAN-1952-COMMUNISTS MAY DAY RIOTING

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COMMUNISTS RIOTERS FORMING AT HIBIYA PARK ENTRANCE
TO BEGIN THEIR MARCH ON THE JAPANESE IMPERIAL PALACE



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ALONG THE WAY THEY OVERTURNED AND BURNED CARS,
AND THREW U.S. MILITARY INTO THE MOAT.

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I BELIEVE THAT BECAUSE OF THE NEWLY SIGNED PEACE TREATY, A PRE-DETERMINED DECISION WAS MADE TO LIMIT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OUR EXPOSURE TO THE STREET TURBMOIL IN ACCORD WITH OVERALL UNITED STATES POLICY TO SHIFT MAJOR POLICING ACTIVITIES TO RESPONSIBLE JAPANESE AUTHORITY.

IN SUCH FASHION, THEN, PASSED THE YEAR 1952 IN BATTALION AND INDIVIDUAL HISTORY, A COMMON MEAL OF THREE HUNDRED SIXTY SIX DAYS, MARSHALLED IN TO THE EARLY MORNING ECHOS OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM, AND BID ADIEU IN THE TWILIGHT REVERIE OF TAPS.

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NEARING THE CLOSE OF MY 720TH TOUR, I WAS ONCE AGAIN CALLED TO HEADQUARTERS COMPANY AND INFORMED THAT I WAS TO REPORT TO FB COM FOR SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF MY CIVILIAN TRAINING AS AN ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE APPRENTICE.

LOCATED UNDERGROUND IN THE DEEP RECESSES OF THAT COMMAND WERE A NUMBER OF LARGE, DIESEL FUELED, ELECTRIC GENERATORS TO BE UTILIZED IN EVENT OF PRIMARY POWER FAILURE OF THE LOCAL JAPANESE ELECTRIC UTILITY.

THIS BEING THE OPERATIONAL CENTER FOR ALL THE FAR EAST COMMAND, INCLUDING NAVAL UNITS AT SEA, AND THE ENTIRE KOREAN THEATER, IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT RADIO AND RADAR COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY BE UNINTERRUPTED.

I WAS TO BE A MEMBER OF A SMALL GROUP OF TEAMS CHARGED WITH MAINTAINING AND OPERATING THOSE GENERATORS, AND PERFORMING RELATED SWITCHING OPERATIONS WHEN NEEDED.

TO MY DELIGHT, THERE WERE NO "SHOW TIME" OCCASSIONS DURING ANY OF MY EIGHT HOUR TOURS.

EPILOGUE

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TO SENSIBLY CONSTRUCT A NARRATIVE SUCH AS THIS, REQUIRES NOT ONLY FACT, BUT SOME DEGREE OF PERSONAL OPINION, CONJECTURE, INTERPRETATION AND EVEN SOME SPECULATION WITH WHICH TO STITCH IT ALL TOGETHER.

THE FACTUAL CONTENT IS AS ACCURATE AS THE FIFTYEIGHT YEAR OLD MEMORY OF ITS EIGHTY YEAR OLD AUTHOR CAN RECALL.

IF ANY MATTER OF FACT BE CALLED TO QUESTION BY ANY QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP, I YIELD TO THAT AUTHORITY.

IN MATTERS OF PERSONAL OPINION, CONJECTURE, INTERPRETATION OR SPECULATION, I HOLD FIRM BECAUSE THESE COMPONENTS WERE NOT LIGHTLY ARRIVED AT.

THEM STEM FROM MONTHS OF FIRST HAND, ON THE SCENE OBSERVATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTUAL EVENTS, AUGMENTED BY FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMMEDIATE AND LONG TERM SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THOSE EVENTS.

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DID THE 720TH MAKE THE MEN,
OR DID THE MEN MAKE THE BATTALION?

WHO CAN SAY?

I DO KNOW THAT PERSONAL AND GROUP
PRIDE IN MEMBERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE
WAS A HALLMARK SIGNATURE OF OUR TIME,
AND THAT I CAME AWAY FROM THE 720TH
WITH A LIFETIME GIFT OF INDIVIDUAL
AND GROUP SELF WORTH.

AS MAN ACCOUNTS THESE THINGS, I
WAS A MEMBER OF THIS SELECT GROUP
FOR ONLY A FEW SHORT CALENDAR
MONTHS, BUT AS MY HEART AND
MEMORY ACCOUNT THEM, MY LAST
"TEN EIGHT" TRANSMISSION IN TOKYO
IS STILL, AND WILL ALWAYS BE
AIRBORNE AND VIABLE.

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EPITATH

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TO CLOSE OUT A MILITARY NARRATIVE OF THAT TIME AND OF THAT PLACE, WHAT BETTER EPITAPH THAN THE WORDS OF THE FOUNDING FATHER OF THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION AND OF THE KOREAN POLICE ACTION, FIVE STAR GENERAL DOUGLAS MCARTHUR.

THOSE WORDS ARE A HAUNTING AND MELANCHOLY SOLILOQUY, IN WHICH HE BID FINAL FAREWELL TO HIS CAREER AND TO HIS COMRADES IN ARMS.

"THE SHADOWS ARE LENGTHENING FOR ME."

THE TWILIGHT IS HERE.

MY DAYS OF OLD HAVE VANISHED — TONE AND TINT.

THEY HAVE GONE GLIMMERING THROUGH THE DREAMS OF THINGS THAT WERE.

THEIR MEMORY IS ONE OF WONDROUS BEAUTY, WATERED BY TEARS, AND COAXED AND CARESSED BY THE SMILES OF YESTERDAY.

I LISTEN VAINLY, BUT WITH THIRSTY EAR, FOR THE WITCHING MELODY OF FAINT BUGLES BLOWING REVEILLE, OF FAR DRUMS BEATING THE LONG ROLL — — — BUT IN THE EVENING OF MEMORY — — — — ALWAYS ECHOS AND REECHOS

"DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY."

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COMPANY "A"
720TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION
APO 500

7 February 1953

SUBJECT: Award of Certificate of Proficiency

TO : Commanding Officer
720th Military Police Battalion
APO 500

1. Recommend that Private First Class Patrick J. Cook Jr., US55158117, this organization, be awarded a Certificate of Proficiency for outstanding performance of duties during the period 27 December 1951 to 7 February 1953.

2. Private First Class Cook has consistently performed his assigned duties as a Military Policeman in an excellent manner. His drive and attention to duty has materially contributed to the efficiency of this unit.

3. Private First Class Cook's moral integrity is of a high caliber. His actions both during and after duty hours serve as an outstanding example for his fellow soldiers. He has the respect and liking of the men and officers of this unit.

4. Private First Class Cook has participated outstandingly in company sports thereby contributing greatly to the morale of the members of his organization. He is one of the leading players on the Company A Basketball Team.

5. Private First Class Cook has no record of company punishment or other disciplinary action while a member of this organization.

6. The following citation is proposed:

"In recognition of efficient and faithful service during the period 27 December 1951 to 7 February 1953, as a military policeman, while serving with Company A, 720th Military Police Battalion, APO 500."

Milton W. Sweet
MILTON W SWEAT
1st Lt MPC
Commanding

720TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION



THIS
CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY
IS AWARDED TO

THIS FIELD WAS TAKEN BY THE 720TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION ON 17

IN RECOGNITION OF

Service and moral service during the period of December
1951 to 7 February 1953, as a military policeman, while serving
with Company MP, 720th Military Police Battalion, APO SAC.

Handwritten signature

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