



Honor for Turks in Korea. Eighth Army's Lt. Gen. James Van Fleet salutes Turkish honor guard at the front.

Round 2 in Korea: a record slaughter

From the bloody 125-mile Korean front, last week, came reports of the most vicious slaughter in the history of modern warfare. On May 17 the Chinese, with a brutal disregard for human life, charged in for Round 2 of their spring offensive. The U.N. won Round 1 in 12 days. Red casualties: 80,000.

The Communists hit first on the east central front. A quick rout of two ROK divisions caught the U.S. 2nd Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. Clark Ruffner, in a dangerous pocket with their east flank exposed. "Ruffner's Roughnecks" found themselves attacked on three sides by 96,000 Chinese. They came despite barbed wire, napalm (jellied gasoline) attacks, minefields and machine-gun fire in an endless procession of suicide attacks.

One officer called the Red onslaught "an astounding demonstration. They wade right through machine-gun or artillery fire. The bodies pile up and they walk right over the bodies and the pile of bodies gets higher."

Revenge Attack. Col. John Coughlin, a 2nd Division regimental commander, said the Reds had detailed maps of the 2nd Division's battle deployment. "They wanted revenge," the officer added, "for the defeat we handed them . . . when we smashed their offensive last winter."

They failed to get it. In what Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway described as a magnificent stand, the 2nd Division pulverized every attempt by the Chinese to storm its positions.

"If the unit on our east flank had not collapsed," said an officer, "we would have piled so many Chinks on the minefields to our front that our own troops would not have been able to climb over the hill of bodies."

All along the front the story was the same. A spearhead north of Seoul was ripped apart. Twenty-five miles east of Hange another drive tore a gap in the U.N. line, but the Reds did not have the strength left to exploit it.

By the first of the week Round 2 was over. It had cost the Reds 58,000 casualties compared with 1,618 (a 36-1 ratio) for the Allies. Whether the Communists could come back for another round still remained to be seen.