

Piotr Taras

**“The American and the South Korean air forces operations during
Korean war 1950-1953”**

ABSTRACT

The Korean War, but fought more than half a century ago, remains one of the most important conflicts of the "cold war" era. It was the first major conflict of this period, setting the first world on the brink of nuclear annihilation. It was the same time the only conflict that directly involved the armed forces of the then most powerful countries - the United States, the Soviet Union and People's China. As the only one remains today formally not completed.

At the same it is a conflict largely forgotten. The Polish literature is presented extremely rare. While the same issue of the Korean War comes up from time to time, the air operations are virtually unknown. In addition to several works devoted only tactics and conduct of air combat between American and Soviet and Chinese fighters and other forms of activity of the air forces they are not even reported. Therefore, the author was forced to use almost exclusively from foreign sources and materials, mainly American and Russian.

Korea, a country with centuries of history for most of its past remained under the influence and dominance of China. And just as China gradually weakened, in the late nineteenth century became the object of interest of other powers - Japan and Russia. The rivalry of these two countries led to the war of 1904-1905, the result of which was the announcement in 1907 Japan's protectorate over Korea, and in 1910 incorporation it to its territory. It has become an important element in this country, particularly in economic terms. Peoples of Korea did not come to terms with the annexation of the country, leading patriotic activities, as political and partisan. Political activities carried out in the country and abroad. In the US particularly active showed up Li Syng Man aka Syngman Rhee, who later became the leader of the Republic of Korea. At the same time, the communist movement developed, in 1932, led by Kim Il Sung.

During World War II, Korea has become an objective of the Allied Powers. At a conference in Cairo in November 1943 it was recognized the independence of this country, as confirmed in the final declaration of the Potsdam Conference, announced July 26, 1945. Several days later, on 8 August 1945, the Red Army launched an offensive on stationed in Manchuria, the Japanese Kwantung Army. The resistance of Japanese forces was easily

broken and on August 15 Soviet troops reached the borders of Korea. Meanwhile talks with the US were aimed at regulating the situation and the two powers, following the example of Germany agreed to a temporary division along the 38th parallel. Since the autumn of 1945 in both parts of Korea, which were under occupation began to take steps to appoint the seeds of state power. The progressive gap between the two powers meant that it was impossible to establish bilateral talks and in 1947 the case of Korea was moved to the UN. The progressive polarization between the two sides resulted in a further antagonisms. They led eventually to the formation in 1948 of two Korean states, ruled by Kim Il Sung of the Korean People's Democratic Republic in the north and the Republic of Korea south of Li Syng Man, as president.

Kim Il-sung since the beginning of the DPRK began to prepare for armed reunification of the country. Using the great help of the Soviet military “hardware” as well as in the form of numerous advisors to mid 1950 managed to build a strong and well-equipped army, which consisted of 238 000 soldiers, 258 tanks T-34/85, several dozen self-propelled guns, more than 250 guns and around 130 combat aircraft. Against this, the army of the Republic of Korea presented a moderately. She counted 98 000 soldiers and did not have a single tank or fighter aircraft.

The Korean War began on the morning of June 25th 1950. Using the advantage in men and equipment the North Korean army easily destroyed South Korean military units, asking them with considerable losses. Just after three days of fighting troops occupied the Korean capital city of Seoul. The outbreak of war caused a sharp reaction from the United Nations. Taking advantage of the absence of a representative of the Soviet Union in the Security Council voted on several resolutions recognizing North Korea as the aggressor and calling on members to provide the Republic of Korea assistance, including military. In this war, on the side of the armed forces of the United Nations involved a total of 15 countries. First joined to fight the United States.

But the armed forces of this country, especially units of the US Army, after the drastic reductions that took place after the end of World War II were not prepared to conduct such kind of conventional war. The first, already on June 27 1950. the activities begun aviation, and ground troops started preparation. At the beginning they have been able to send only one infantry battalion, supported by a battery of howitzers. The unit on July 4, 1950 was only after several hours of fighting completely wrecked. A similar situation occurred with more battalions and regiments, steered to the front. North Korean army occupied areas further south, July 21, gainig one of the most important cities in Korea Taejon. As a result of the

subsequent fighting US and South Korean unit stopped on the line Nakdong River. This area, called the Pusan Perimeter had dimensions approx. 145 x 95 km. According to the American commander gen. W. Walker this was the final line of defense. Fighting in the area were extremely fierce and lasted until mid-September 1950 year.

At the same time, preparations were underway to conduct a landing operation at the rear of the enemy. Commander of the UN troops, General D. MacArthur planned to carry it in Inchon, located near Seoul. His staff officers strongly objected, highlighting the extremely difficult hydro-meteorological conditions in the landing area. General's word prevailed and the operation was on the way. On the morning of September 15, 1950 year, the first US Marines units landed island of Wolmi do located at the entrance to Inchon. Due to the surge landing in the port itself took place only in the afternoon. The operation was a success, and after heavy fighting on September 28 capital of the country was regained. At the same time the offensive operations also passed UN troops fighting on the Pusan Perimeter. Suffering very heavy losses North Korean units started to retreat .

On 1 October 1950, the first South Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel line and UN forces moved north toward Pyongyang. After heavy fighting, the city was captured on October 19, a few days later the first troops reached the Yalu River border. There was a widespread belief that the war would soon be over and at Christmas soldiers will return to their homes. No one took seriously the warnings, led by the People's China. The authorities of the country watched the conflict on the Korean peninsula very carefully. When the UN troops onto the territory of the DPRK, 8 October 1950, Mao Zedong finally accepted in the war units called Chinese "volunteers". In the first wave he sent to the front eight Field Armies, counting 180 000 soldiers.

In the beginning of winter conditions, the Chinese attacked for the first time on October 26, eliminating II. Corps of a South Korean Army. This sudden attack was followed by a month long break. After strengthening the forces of "volunteers", they began the general offensive on Nov. 26, 1950 year. Gaining a total surprise they inflicted UN troops very heavy losses, forcing them into a general retreat. The heaviest fighting was isolated in the region of Chosin Reservoir by US Marines. Suffering heavy losses they managed to withdraw most units to the port of Hungnam, where they were evacuated by sea. Using motor transport UN forces were able to withdraw, and the Chinese followed them. Of December 5th, 1950 recaptured Pyongyang, December 25th reached the 38 parallel, and January 4th, 1951 again took Seoul. But they also suffered losses, caused inter alia by weather conditions, which stopped their attacks on the line Ansŏng-Wonju-Tanjang-Tonghae.

Therefore, in mid-January, US troops launched a series of counterattacks, which resulted in the passage February 25 general counteroffensive. Over the next few months on the front of the Korean permanent alternating offensives and counter-offensives were led by UN forces, then by the Chinese and North Korean armies. They lasted until the summer of 1952, when both sides stopped at the fortified lines of defense. From now until the end of the war in July 1953, the activities were very limited, much like the middle period of the First World War. The front line did not move during this period no more than a few kilometers. No less fights were often fierce and bloody, bringing high human losses.

Paralelly, since the summer of 1951 in Kaesongu and then in Panmunjon were conducted peace negotiations. They were often interrupted. The final agreement armistice was signed on July 27, 1953 year. It only ended military operations. The problem of a political solution and end to the conflict had to be resolved at the peace conference in Geneva, which was to start in October 1953. Deliberations on Korea began only in April 1954, despite long discussions there has been no agreement. This condition lasts until today.

In the Korean war aviation very actively participated from the first to the last day of the war. Building the armed forces of North Korea, Kim Ir Sen also created air force, fully equipped with fighter and attack planes supplied with the USSR. On the first day of the war attack planes stormed Seoul, and fighters Kimpo airport, destroying several planes from aviation South Korea and the US transport plane. Two days later there were the first clashes in the air with American fighters. Using an advantage in training the Americans easily won aerial duels, shooting down several enemy planes. At the same time US aircraft started bombing operations. Light bombers B-26 "Invader" launched raids on targets located in the hinterland, including in the area of Pyongyang. While the jet fighter-bomber planes attacked columns of North Korean troops. Especially intensively they attacked tanks. Since the South Korean army did not have any equipment for their destruction, in the first weeks of the war aircraft were the only means able to destroy them.

The US Air Force, however, had serious problems. Equipping most of the fighter-bomber units F-80 "Shooting Star" jet had little coverage, which almost precluded them from effective operations from bases in Japan. Therefore, in July 1950, some of them were replaced with a propeller driven airplanes F-51 "Mustang" brought in from the US, better suitable to work with primitive airfields in Korea. There were no suitable number of bombers. US Air Forces in the Pacific disposed just one group of B-29 "Superfortress" bombers, composed of 27 machines. To be able to develop effective measures against industrial targets on the territory of North Korea in July and August four more groups of bombers were transferred

from Strategic Air Command units in USA. This enabled the launch of a strategic campaign, whose first goal was one of the most important ports in Korea and an important industrial center - Wonsan. From now on, within two months the intense air raids of B-29 bombers destroyed an entire industry of North Korea. Later they were sent to the battlefield. Often, as tactical fighter-bomber planes they patrolled the designated areas to attack detected targets. There have been at the unimaginable situations, when one of the powerful bombers attacked a single cyclist, or an attack by machine gun fire from the lower turrets on a freight train carried out with the minimum altitude.

Bombers also sent into action against the enemy transport systems. Since 29 July 1950 they carried out "Interdiction Campaign No. 1", the aim of which was primarily bridges. There were selected 44 bridges, as well as 13 other facilities critical to transport system north of the 38th parallel. In view of the serious situation on the front of the B-29 bombers were sent up to the direct support of ground troops. Due to the lack of a sufficient number of field guns, from the first days of the war the US Air Force to a very large extent it has been involved in efforts to direct support of troops. It was the difference of the basic tasks performed by the Tactical Air Forces during the Second World War, when most important were activities involving the "isolation of the battlefield", called "interdiction". Initially, when the communication failed air operations were largely ineffective. Only when the control planes used to direct fighter-bombers by airborne control officers effectiveness of airstrikes had increased. A breakthrough in this regard was to use forward air control planes, soon named after the radio code, "Mosquito". The pilots of these machines worked with army troops pointing and marking targets for pilots.

The fighting over Korea from the early days was also attended naval aviation. Planes based on American and British aircraft carriers performed the same tasks as tactical airplanes. They mainly attacked airports, bridges, roads, railways, warehouses. Raids were also carried out for industrial targets, like a chemical plant in Hamhung. The specificity of naval aviation activities, as it operated mostly in large groups of several dozens machines created difficulties in conducting direct support of ground troops. The forward air controllers were not able to lead so large groups at a time. This led to numerous discussions and irritations that lasted almost until the end of the war. Far better to support the troops was provided by the US Marine Corps aviation. Such activities were basically the only ones for which USMC aviation was created. It is to support the ground troops of Marines. Tactics of cooperation has been developed and tested in the course of numerous amphibious operations, which were carried out in vast areas of the Pacific Ocean during World War II. These aircraft, from the lack of airports based on

light aircraft carriers decks appeared over Korea in late July and early August 1950, in parallel with offices 1st Brigade Marines. On the Korean soil was stationed at one squadron equipped with light aircraft and helicopters, placed under the direct command of the 1st. Brigade. Naval aviation was particularly active when the covered landing operation at Inchon. It performed both raids on positions of enemy troops, its warehouses and supply routes, and during the landing directly supported the attacking Marines units.

In addition to the US Air Force in the Korean War were also involved aviation units other countries. The first one, which went into action a few days after its commencement was the 77th Fighter Squadron Aviation Australia. In the fast pace also was created the first fighter squadron aviation South Korea. It was also equipped with "Mustang" fighter and gathered most experienced Korean pilots. The unit also served as instructors American pilots. They operate mainly on the front line. Taking advantage and gained air superiority fighter-bomber planes in autumn 1950 systematically attacked the retreating North Korean army troops. These fighter-bomber units were moved up north with attacking the UN troops. They based mostly on field airports, in very primitive conditions. This gave a toll primarily to jet-powered aircraft.

In autumn 1950, taught by sad experience Koreans more and more supplies transported at night. So US Air Force began the night actions. In those operations USAF primarily used light bombers. B-26 "Invaders" attacked mainly railroads and transportation pie. During the attacks night bombers repeatedly used the illuminating flares dropped from transport planes C-47 "Skytrain" called "Firefly". Initially, the raids were successful, for example at night 22/23 September 1950 there were destroyed three trains. In combination with daily massive raids they significantly reduced the supplies for the troops of North Korean army, being instrumental in helping to stop their offensive.

The aerial operations over the Korean front participated not only combat planes. From the first day of the war their flights performed auxiliary aviation aircraft as reconnaissance or transport. Their contribution is also considerable. Without data about the target obtained by reconnaissance aircraft bomber and fighter-bomber planes could not effectively carry out raids. It turned out that possessed by airmen maps are inaccurate and numerous, for example, bridges shown on them did not exist in reality. Transport planes also were used from the first day of the war. They carried to the front line most necessary goods, and on the way back to evacuated the wounded. They proved particularly useful during the autumn offensive of the United Nations. They also carried airborne forces of the 187. ARCT and made parachute drop in the area of Sukchon-Sunchon. In this operation, thanks to the use of heavy aircraft C-119

"Boxcar" for the first time it was possible to drop by the parachute heavy equipment like cars or artillery pieces. This eliminated the need to use so unreliable cargo gliders, used during World War II.

Cargo planes proved to be even more useful in the next phase of the war, started by a Chinese offensive and UN troops retreat. These aircraft then transported record numbers of wounded and sick soldiers, being at that time the only effective means of evacuation. As the only one they were also able to supply the 8. US Army troops fighting in a very difficult, mountainous region. When they could not land on even the most primitive airstrips, supplies were parachuted. In difficult winter conditions the turn of 1950 and 1951 Air Force fighter-bombers were also extremely active. Using more effective guidance system, these machines repeatedly rescued from destruction individual UN troops, which often fell into an ambush or strong Chinese roadblocks. During this period another aviation unit went into action. This was 2nd Squadron of the South African Air Force. As the advance of the enemy to the south and approaching it to the air bases of the United Nations, the individual planes performed a dozen combat flights a day. In the attacks on the massed Chinese infantry and cavalry troops most effective means of combating proved to be napalm. The raids with its use have caused huge losses, reaching tens of thousands of soldiers. In the face of a very serious situation on the front for the first time in direct support of troops were used bombers. There were situations when detected large clusters of enemy troops, bombers were returned from regular flights to earlier objectives and targeted attacks to these groupings.

These, especially the B-29 bombers still continued their attacks on targets related to the enemy's transport system. In the course of the next campaign, "Interdiction Campaign No. 4" the priorities for the bombers were changed. Because the Yalu river completely frozen, this enabled the Chinese to lay on the ice even railway tracks main purpose of raids were no more bridges. Now, the focus was on railway lines and marshalling yards. More and more attention was paid also to road transport, used much more frequently. In the hunt for trucks were used mainly B-26 bombers, fighter-bomber aircraft. Also the attempt to apply unconventional measures, such as spikes dropped from planes on routes that had to immobilize the enemy cars was tested. Increasingly number of flights performed at night caused the night raids needed good targeting for bombers, for targets located in the hinterland and on targets located in close proximity to the front. So Americans began to use radio navigation systems SHORAN and much more effective ground radar AN / MPQ- 2 for guided the aircraft in the night.

During winter of 1950 for the first time the US command seriously considered the use against Chinese troops nuclear weapons. Carried out by staff officers analyzes showed that the use of nuclear bombs against several groupings of Chinese troops could bring a loss of 35 000-45 000 troops.

Also on the eastern sector of the front, where American troops fought of the Xth Corps air operations they were equally intense. Operations here were led mainly by naval aviation and US Marine Corps. Since October 1950 to this area has been moved all the land based aviation units of Marines. They supported American and South Korean troops moving toward the Yalu. When November 28 they were attacked by a number of Chinese divisions aviation showed very effective aid. Individual USMC fighter squadrons performed a dozens of combat flights a day, and night fighters F7F "Tigercat" harassed the enemy during hours of darkness. Thanks to the cooperation with ground troops, air raids in this area were extremely effective. During the whole campaign, both in defense and subsequent retreat to the south. Of great importance were also activities observation aircraft and helicopters. They detected enemy positions directing at them fighter-bombers and artillery fire and evacuate the most seriously wounded. Also they provided supplies for ground units. Often airplanes and helicopters operated in very difficult weather conditions, with very strong winds and snowfall. The fighting in the area was first case of using airborne command post. On several transport aircraft R5D "Skymaster" technicians installed additional means of radio communication and the positions of the three controllers, tables with maps, additional oxygen installations and fuel tanks.

The success of the Chinese offensive resulted in the need to relocating in January 1951, almost all aviation units from bases in Korea to bases in Japan. To a large extent this has hindered air operations, again reducing the efficient time of aircraft flight over Korea, to 7-8 minutes over the target. No less during an unusually fierce fighting in the spring of 1951 years Air Force fighter-bomber did a maximum effort, trying to stop indiscriminate Chinese attacks. In order to improve the effectiveness in Taegu air base they left a group of mechanics that make any arming and refueling planes that performed circular flights. Modernized and improved equipment was used on tactical control aircraft, some aircrafts were used to retransmit data to facilitate communication in the mountainous terrain.

Also there were intensified operations against the enemy transport system. During the spring of 1951 enemy's transport has been reset almost entirely on the trucks. But these actions were very difficult. Dirt roads were easily repaired; Chinese were masters in camouflage and increasingly moved trucks only at night. From February activities of this kind

were started by naval aviation. It operated on the east coast of Korea, performing virtually separate raids. Priorities have changed repeatedly. Once there were bridges, once centers of transshipment, and once the direct support of troops. The range of naval planes, most of them propeller driven allowed them to conduct raids over almost all the territory of Korea, which made them were very flexible tools of fight. In addition to US aircraft carriers off the Korean waters, also permanently conducted aerial operations was one British aircraft carrier. British naval planes performed tasks similar to the US, while sailed west coast of Korea. There they operated together with US light aircraft carriers, which had embarked Marine fighter squadrons. Over Korea and coastal regions also operated boats and patrol aircraft flying.

From November 1st, 1950 the UN aviation operation conditions drastically change. That day American "Mustangs" patrolling the Yalu area were attacked by very fast, silver fighter for the inclined wings. It was combat debut at the war in Korea MiG-15 fighters of the Soviet 64th Independent Air Corps. Soviet highest authorities from the beginning closely watched the course of the activities of the Korean War. Initially, the North Korean army success against South limited aid to logistical support and advisors. Only after the landing at Inchon, the success of UN troops the situation has changed. Without the risk of global conflict, Stalin decided to send only fighter units that were supposed to protect the bridges on the Yalu and border regions of North Korea. In the Asian region Soviet Union had numerous air units, which since March 1950 actively participated in the defense of People's China, mainly Shanghai area regularly bombed by Kuomintang aviation. In October 1950 there were formed two fighter aviation divisions, which became part of the 64th Corps. The presence of Soviet fighters in airbase in the vicinity of Antung was noticed as early as 18 October but their mere struggle entrance was a big surprise for the Americans.

Even more surprising was performance of new Soviet fighter, far higher than all American fighters already used in Korea. Therefore, despite some successes in early December 1950 US urgently transferred one Fighter Wing equipped with the latest model of american fighter - F-86 "Sabre". Their first battle took place December 17, 1950. Since then, almost every day on the Korean skies occurred to numerous duels, often involving groups of several dozen machines. Region of fighting began to be called "MiG Alley". This was due to a number of constraints, which were subjected to the action of Soviet aircraft, which was not allowed to fly over the sea and exceed the Pyongyang-Wonsan line. In turn, the Americans were not allowed to cross the border river Yalu, which was, however, in many cases violated.

In the period of December 1950 to January 1951 dogfights were frequent and fierce. From the American side they took part in them also new F-84 fighter jets "Thunderjet",

which, however, did not match the enemy planes. At the beginning of the 1951 also the first unit of Chinese fighter aircraft went into action over Korea. In late February 1951 frozen Yalu river began to melt and American bombers again focused on the attacks bridges on located on this river. And the big "Superfortresses" bombers have become the main targets of attack Soviet fighters. Americans had reacted to this by starting aggressive actions of their own fighters, whose task was to guard bombers, and forcing enemy planes to fight, then and allowing the B-29 crews to do their job.

In the spring of 1951 there have changed the units composing the 64th Corps and the new units were sent to fight. Their pilots had very high qualifications, combat experience. New fighting erupted in April. Their presence made itself felt in the form of a growing number of successes. The largest one was reached on April 12, when 46 American bombers attacked bridges on the Yalu in the area of Sinuiju. The ensuing largest to date air battle, which was involved with a total of more than 100 aircraft. Despite a strong escort Soviet pilots managed to destroy or seriously damage the six bombers, prevented the two groups do the task. This resulted in a temporary suspension of the daily air raids on the area. No less air clashes have continued. To fight from time to time also involved North Korean aviation aircrafts, but they suffered heavy losses. In the spring of 1951 to the activities included in the Chinese aviation units, which were grouped together with aviation units of the DPRK in the Consolidated Aviation Army.

After a very intense aerial combat that took place in the spring, the summer of 1951, primarily due to weather conditions occurred to them occasionally. The actions of the Soviet and Chinese aviation focused now on fighter-bomber aircraft. Among other airplanes was "Meteor", which he has been equipment of 77th Australian Squadron. In September 1951 Koreans began to build many new airports for the MiG-s in the territory of North Korea. US command decided to destroy them immediately. Since night attacks proved ineffective, FEAF Bomber Command was forced to take the risky decision to carry out raids in the daylight. On the second day of action, on October 18 was lost one of the bombers. The next day, Soviet fighters shot down next one. The most successful day was October 23rd. As a result of a violent attack MiG pilots managed to shoot down or severely damage all of the nine "Fortresses" attacking Namsi. There were killed or declared missing in action 55 airmen and a further 12 were injured. This day was called "Black Thursday" and as a result of these losses, it was decided to completely abandon the daily flights of B-29 over "MiG Alley".

In November a big success in the fight against the enemy bombers was made by American fighter pilots who virtually destroyed the formation of Chinese planes attacking the

islet Taehwa-do. Since December 1951, Americans increased strength of their fighters units, pequipping with the "Sabre" fighters the other wing. This allowed for increased efficiency in operations and effectiveness in combat. This was possible also with the withdrawn to the USSR tired with continuous fighting divisions of the 64th Corps at the beginning of 1952, and sending the front new, but inexperienced units. Since then, US Air Force, despite the continued enemy's superiority in number of planes reached big success. Battles were still in progress, to the very end of the war reaching its peak in May - June 1953.

Transferring operations of B-29 bombers to the night time meant that aerial fights moved and for this part of day too. Night activities were assigned to one, separate regiment of the 64th Corps and there was also formed specially trained squadron. Soviets also increased the number of anti-aircraft guns, reflectors and radars, creating a system of area control and fire control. To counteract this US Air Force began electronic warfare operations and used to escort bombers own night-fighter squadrons.

Intensive night operations were also led by aviation of North Korea. Initially they used small biplane aircraft Po-2, which in this role perfectly worked during World War II. Carried out raids harassing the Americans confer a lot of losses, forcing to take a number of countermeasures. Later the in the nighttime activities North Koreans used newer types of aircraft. In contrast, Americans continued their nocturnal activity with "Invader" light bombers.

After the cessation of daily air raids on targets in North Korea by B-29 bombers burden of activities in this area have taken over the fighter-bomber aircraft. In addition to the systematic action against the transport system, they carried out in the framework of "Operation Strangle" or "Saturate" repeatedly participated in mass raids on selected strategic targets. They were performed mostly as a means of political pressure in the conduct peace negotiations. These activities are defined as an "Air Pressure Campaing". For the first time in June 1952 were bombed hydroelectric plants supplying electricity also cross-border regions of Manchuria, located on the Yalu. The next month there were bombed more than 30 important from a military point of view targets in the area of Pyongyang, and in spring 1953 a system of irrigation dams.

The transition of the war of the static activities in summer 1951 did not result in a reduction in the role of aviation and scale of its activity. Still, it led massive raids on enemy transport system, which received priority in that period. However reduced in the number of sorties, still carried out the direct support of ground troops, recognizing that in such war conditions a much better means of support for ground troops would be field artillery. These

activities intensified only during periods of increased fighting that took place, for example, in autumn 1952, and especially in the spring and summer of 1953. In raids of this kind again proved to be particularly effective attacks performed by the US Marines aviation.

Their own raids continued naval aviation. Again, the focus was on the east coast of Korea, attacking mainly transport system, mainly rail. Since a large number of targets in the area were within ships artillery range, they cooperated with them. Ships fire gave cover to attacking aircraft, and these in turn can effectively direct the fire, when the mountains prevented observers. Efforts were also carried out attacks, when the moon was full. Since October 1952 there were conducted raids on targets located behind the front line called "Cherokee Strike". They were a form of "distant support" and differed from activities associated with "close support" directly on the front line. In contrast, British aircraft continued operations on the west coast, focusing on railways and roads.

Reduced were role of cargo planes, which now focused on the evacuation of the wounded and sick and the transport of soldiers going to Japan for a rest. Transport planes were also used in a number of special activities as transferring to the North diversionary groups, dump leaflets or broadcasting propaganda. Always active, was aviation rescue. This led to an effect from the beginning of the war and was a very important element in raising the morale of airmen. During the Korean War were used rescue helicopters, airplanes and flying boats. These machines often operated behind enemy lines and rescues have had sometimes a dramatic course.

Korea was the first armed conflict in which more widely were used helicopters. They were used for many tasks. The best known are the medical machines from MASH hospitals used to evacuate the wounded from the battlefield. Helicopters were also used for observation, artillery fire control, command, delivery supplies and rescue. For the first time a squadron of Marine Corps aviation transport helicopters were used to conduct airmobile operations, or artillery raids.

In the course of Korean War military aviation played an important role. Especially in the first period of activities the impact of US Air Force was huge. It is practically stopped North Korean offensive, seeming so huge losses and cut off from sources of supply and has been instrumental in helping to maintain a Pusan Perimeter. In this war it became apparent to the vast preponderance of aircraft powered by jet, which resulted in the rapid development of this type of planes in subsequent years, both in the Air Force fighter and bomber. It was a war in which for the first time political decisions influenced the course of military operations, especially operations by air forces. Then there were many disagreements and discussions

particularly in command of the United States. Those disagreements were not conducive to a rational use of thin air forces, particularly concerned that the use of B-29 bombers.