

## US “Mightiness”: The Myth Exploded in Korea

The US describes the Korean war (1950-1953) that ended in its defeat as a “victorious war” and a “forgotten victory.” Just as truth cannot be turned into falsehood, however, the US defeat etched in history cannot be reversed.

This is evidenced by the tragic end of US brass hats.

When it incited the ROK army to start a war against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the US declared that the DPRK would be conquered in 72 hours. But from the outset of the war, it suffered setbacks one after another and had to send a number of its brass hats to the Korean front.

Even they couldn’t turn the tide of the war.

Dean, commander of the US 24th Division, the so-called “invincible division,” boasted a wealth of war experience as he fought in Europe during World War II and led his division against the Japanese forces to storm into Manila in the Philippines.

The seemingly invincible commander failed to save his division from being destroyed on the Korean front, and he himself was captured by a soldier of the Korean People’s Army while on the run for his life in a private’s uniform.

The fate of the US 8th Army Commander Walker was more tragic.

He was killed together with many of his officers in an ambush and mine attack by KPA units on the second front formed behind the enemy lines.

As the war lasted, US brass hats were successively sacked.

The war situation in late 1950 turned more unfavourable to the US in the wake of the shattered “Christmas General Offensive”, which prompted a tumultuous blame game in the US. The White House tried frantically to shift the responsibility to the Pentagon, Republicans did to Democrats, and Truman pointed an accusing finger at MacArthur.

As a result, the Korean war brought a shameful end to Commander of the UN Forces MacArthur, who had styled himself as a Napoleon in the East.

He was replaced by Ridgeway and Clark, both of whom failed to escape the fate of their predecessor. Van Fleet, newly appointed US 8th Army commander, was dismissed after being labeled as “incompetent”. US First Marine Corps Commander Smith was nicknamed a “grave commander” because he sent most of his men to the grave.

As seen above, the US commanders, who had shot to fame emerging victorious around the world, could not but bite the dust on the Korean front.

The myth of the US “mightiness” changed into bitterness.

“The Korean war was noteworthy as it left records in many aspects of the world history of wars,” a foreign military expert said. “First of all, it was the first war that ended in defeat on the part of the US which had maintained its position as a superpower in modern world history.

“The DPRK’s armed forces created such an incredible reality before the world, an outcome so unbelievable that people might take it as accidental from the existing viewpoint on and criteria for warfare. As a military expert, however, I don’t believe any accident in war in any case. Something may happen in nature by accident but there is only inevitability in war where they clash in military power and mental strength.”



US prisoners of war



US First Marine Corps Commander Smith nicknamed a “grave commander”



Ridgeway sits in despair on a paddy field.



Part of the US military equipment destroyed in the Korean war