

The "Sitting Ducks" Of Inchon



DATE: 15 October 2008

FROM: THE U.S. NAVY COMBAT VETERANS
OF "THE SITTING DUCKS OF INCHON"

TO: Mr. Charles Kiesling – USS COLLETT Association

Dear Charles: I called Marie Konecny who gave you as the Secretary of the COLLETT Association. The attached letter is about the "Sitting DUCKS" of Inchon, and I hope you can get the info out to your COLLETT sailors – especially the "Sitting DUCKS" veterans. Thanks, Charles.

Bill Barnes
Sincerely, Bill Barnes

SUBJ: The Quest of the "Sitting Ducks" for the Presidential Unit Citation for their combat action as "expendable" targets in the Battle of Inchon
13-15 September 1950

For those who don't remember, or never heard of, the Battle of Inchon, it is noted that on 13-15 September 1950, six old U.S. Navy destroyers became known as the "Sitting Ducks of Inchon" (DUCKS), when they sailed to their battle stations on the shoreline of Wolmi-do Island which guarded the entrance to the harbor at Inchon, Korea. The six U.S. destroyers were: DE HAVEN-727; MANSFIELD-728; LYMAN K. SWENSON-729; COLLETT-730; GURKE-783, and HENDERSON-785. The DUCKS faced off as point blank, expendable targets for the North Korean Army's (NKPA) shore batteries dug in on Wolmi-do. These NKPA guns had to be discovered and eliminated if the U.S. Marines were to avoid a killing field when they came ashore at Wolmi-do early on the morning of 15 September 1950. A compact review of the role of the DUCKS in the Battle of Inchon is found in the writings of historian Joseph Alexander of the Naval Historical Center – "Fleet Operations in a Mobile War – September 1950-June 1951":

"Admiral Struble tried to mask his intentions regarding Inchon. He ordered carrier air strikes against targets ranging from Kunson to Pyongyang...Struble and (RADM) Doyle, however, decided to forego the

feints and concentrate on reducing the threat posed by the NKPA guns on Wolmi-do. It was not clear where on that hilly island, even though denuded by napalm strikes, the enemy had positioned their guns. Struble devised an aggressive plan – dubbed the “Sitting Ducks” concept – that required a daylight attack on the island by a half-dozen U.S. destroyers anchored in the channel only a few hundred yards offshore...the Fifth Fleet had employed similar tactics successfully before D-Day at Iwo Jima, but no one denied the extreme risk to the Sitting Ducks...”

“The plan was harrowing. The six ships would present inviting, stationary targets, arrayed as close as 700 yards to the enemy. While the principal threat comprised North Korea coast defense guns, the destroyer skippers also took measures to repel boarders. A sudden sortie across the shallows from the island was considered not out of the question.”

“Then came an unsettling discovery. At 1145 MANSFIELD (the lead ship as the DUCKS transited the channel to Wolmi-do) reported moored mines barely exposed by the low water...less than an hour after their encounter with the mines, Allan’s destroyers anchored just off Wolmi-do, guns trained to port, awaiting his signal...Associated Press correspondent Relman Morin, observing the island through binoculars from the bridge of the U.S. Cruiser TOLEDO several miles away, described the enemy fire as a “necklace of gun flashes...soon they came so fast the entire slope was sparkling with pin-points of fire.”

“Gunfire from the island straddled several of the destroyers: “My God,” cried Lieutenant (John W.) Lee on TOLEDO, “They’re sacrificing these guys.””

“Admiral Struble had taken tremendous risks with this daylight bombardment mission, but another such operation was called for before he could order a Marine battalion-sized assault landing. He met with Higgins and Allan – and directed a return visit of the destroyers the next day, D-Day minus one. The task group paused at daybreak on the 14th to bury Lieutenant Swenson’s shrouded body at sea with full military honors. Then Captain Allan led his destroyers back up Flying Fish Channel.”

It is noted that “Swede” Swenson, a Naval Academy classmate of this writer, was killed by NKPA gunfire on 13 September 1950 while serving in the DUCKS’ ship LYMAN K. SWENSON. Another Naval Academy classmate, Marine 1st LT. Baldomero Lopez, came over the seawall on Wolmi-do on 15 September 1950. A short time later, “Baldy” Lopez was killed after he fell on a live grenade to save the Marines he was leading – he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor – posthumously.

The senior Commanders of the planned Inchon Invasion had accepted the fact that the DUCKS might not survive the gunnery firefights with the NKPA batteries, but the

DUCKS fought and won, and by their actions and those of the Marines at Inchon, they sent a message that the United States was not going to be pushed around by Communist aggressors. The current Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead, USN, stated in his 23 May 2008 address to the graduating class at the U.S. Naval Academy, that "the Navy doesn't build ships to decorate the piers, but builds ships to fight when called upon." The DUCKS' combat actions in the Battle of Inchon lend credence to the timelessness of Admiral Roughead's statement.

Rear Admiral John M. Higgins, USN, who commanded the Gunfire Support Group in the Battle of Inchon, and who was the only Flag Officer truly "on site" during the DUCKS' gunnery shootouts with the NKPA batteries, wrote on 21 September 1950 of the "extraordinary coverage" of the DUCKS in that battle (Enclosure 1). The DUCKS were awarded a Navy Unit Commendation (NUC) after Admiral Higgins' "extraordinary" was changed to "outstanding" as it passed through the Navy awards process. The NUC Award was deemed inappropriate; the DUCKS' combat veterans felt that it was not the proper award for what Admiral Higgins called "gallantry and determination in overcoming difficult and hazardous conditions beyond the call of duty." The Presidential Unit Citation was the award that the DUCKS rightly earned, and if a similar Navy ship action were to occur today, the PUC would be a given. However, the Navy Department refuses to right that wrong. What is so patently unfair in the rejection of the DUCKS' claims for the PUC is that not once has the Navy Awards Group (NAG) ever mentioned any of the DUCKS' combat actions in the Battle of Inchon. The Navy rejection letters are odes to bureaucracy, incorrectly stating that it would be unfair to change the decision of the original Awards Board, and that there are no eyewitnesses to the DUCKS' gallant gunnery actions on 13-15 September 1950. There is a gut feeling that the 800-pound gorilla that the Navy Department fears, if the DUCKS are awarded the PUC, is that a great amount of paperwork will ensue. The DUCKS feel that between the Navy Department and the DUCKS' six Ship Associations, service record changes and notifications could be handled quite readily. The Associations have rosters of who was aboard each DUCKS ship on 13-15 September 1950, and they have internal networks to get the word out to the veterans and/or their families.

The DUCKS' 1950 combat actions have risen in public esteem due to what Abraham Lincoln called "the mystic chords of memory." [1] Forty-five years after the Battle of Inchon, a 15 November 1995 survey of the 200 members of the "Society for Military History" put the Inchon Invasion in fourth place among America's greatest feats of arms behind 1 – Normandy, 2 – Midway, and 3 – Desert Storm. [2]

An anomaly in the matter of the DUCKS' combat award is that the Commander of the Inchon Invasion Force, VADM Struble, and the Head of the Amphibious Operations, RADM Doyle, had each expressed in forceful terms that the DUCKS must take out the North Korean shore batteries on Wolmi-do, if the invasion was to succeed. The DUCKS fought gallantly in their role as close-range expendable targets, and they defeated the enemy gunners. When the combat award for the DUCKS was decided, it seems as though the DUCKS disappeared from the Admirals' radars; and as the message

shown below reveals, the CNO was pleased, but not exuberant: remember, this was only a "police action":

PRIORITY 192041Z JUL 50 G-FOX-3446/S421/BM

PLAIN

FROM: CNO
TO: COMNAVFE
INFO: NAVOP

NAVOP TWO ONE X THE RECENT AIR AMPHIBIOUS AND LIGHT FORCE OPERATIONS CONDUCTED UNDER YOUR DIRECTION WITH LIMITED RESOURCES HAVE BEEN A SOURCE OF PRIDE TO THE NAVAL SERVICE X WELL DONE X PASS TO ALL HANDS CONCERNED

-DE DAJH BT

The first appeals for the upgrade of the DUCKS' combat award (NUC to PUC) were made in 1995 and 1996 by DUCKS veteran Joe Carillo, who served in COLLETT as a combat gunner in the firefights with the North Korean batteries. No neophyte to combat, Joe Carillo survived the sinking of USS NECHES (AO-5) on 23 January 1942. The NECHES sank after being hit by torpedoes fired by a Japanese submarine. Mr. Carillo wrote to President Clinton, SECDEF Wm. Perry, and SECNAV John Dalton; then, as now, the Navy Department ended up denying the award upgrade. Enclosure 2 is a copy of a 13 May 1996 letter sent to then SECDEF Perry, in which Mr. Carillo asked for research into the DUCKS' combat award for their Inchon actions. In a 2 August 1995 Navy Department letter (Enclosure 3) to Mr. Carillo's then Congressman, The Honorable Esteban Torres (CA), Navy Department Code 09833 sent its routine response, incorrectly stating that eyewitnesses to the DUCKS' combat are no longer available. At the time - 1995 - there were three Commanding Officers of DUCKS destroyers alive and well; at the present time, there are about 1,000 U.S. Navy veteran combat sailors available as eyewitnesses - a goodly portion of them topside eyewitnesses. The Navy Department has not ever contacted any of these eyewitnesses. Further, the 2 August 1995 Navy letter relates that "outside influences and speculation" might influence military awards. This is interpreted as saying that the writings of respected military writers and historians are rejected out of hand by the Navy Awards Group.

From 1995 to the present, the DUCKS Ship Associations and individual veterans have kept the Department of the Navy aware of the fact that these Navy combat sailors believe that they had earned a PUC at Inchon on 13-15 September 1950. The DUCKS' appeals for fairness have not ingratiated them with the Navy Awards Group. These DUCKS' appeals were made to U.S. Presidents, many U.S. Senators and Representatives, SECDEFs, SECNAVs, and CNOs. In the end it has always been the Navy Department which has fought the DUCKS, as it failed to appreciate "one of the great - if overlooked - chapters in American Naval History." [3] The DUCKS very respectfully paraphrase the profound and human words of SECDEF Robert Gates re the treatment of our Iraq and

Afghanistan wounded. The DUCKS' paraphrase reads – They fought the North Korean People's Army, and they should not now have to fight their own Navy Department!

A few of the many tributes to the DUCKS, as well as the roadblocks encountered as they continued the quest for the PUC in 2007, are attached to this letter. This "history" reveals a Navy Awards Group which would rather deter the DUCKS rather than properly evaluate their "extraordinary" combat actions. As evidenced by the 25 February 2008 retroactive recognition of the "Combat" status awarded to Vietnam hero, Navy LT Spence Dry, the Naval Awards Group can be bureaucratically tied up for years. LT Dry was finally granted combat status when some of his SEAL mates brought his heroic action to the attention of U.S. Senator James Webb (VA) and his staff. On 26 February 2007, the Annapolis *Capital* noted that awarding LT Dry combat status "was unusual because the deadline for award nominations was long passed." The SEALs had the great good fortune to gain the attention of three of Spence Dry's Naval Academy classmates, namely, U.S. Senator James Webb and retired Navy Captains Gordon Peterson and Michael Slattery. The latter two men serve on Senator Webb's staff. So after 25 years these men, and Senator John Warner (VA), saw to it that LT Dry received proper recognition for his combat action. The "Sitting Ducks" need a champion who will go to the mat with the Navy Department in the search for the truth about the historically important role they played in the Battle of Inchon, and by extension in the Cold War.

The DUCKS - Navy Combat Sailors – make no claims to exalted status, but they do claim the right to be numbered among those Korean War veterans characterized in May 2003 by Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White as "ordinary men forced to deal with extraordinary circumstances." They seek a just combat award – a Presidential Unit Citation. The history of the DUCKS' quest for the PUC in 2007 is attached to this letter.



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For the Sitting DUCKS of Inchon
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Attachments:

1. The History of the Sitting "DUCKS" Quest for the PUC in 2007
2. Acknowledgements
3. Enclosures and Footnotes
4. Distribution List

THE HISTORY OF THE SITTING DUCKS QUEST FOR THE PUC IN 2007-2008

FAIR SKIES:

As the year 2006 drew to a close, the prospects for “The Sitting Ducks of Inchon” (DUCKS) to win an upgrade of their Navy Unit Commendation (NUC) to a Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) were brightened. That award upgrade would be fitting for the combat actions of these six old U.S. Navy destroyers in the Battle of Inchon, Korea, on 13-15 September 1950. In early 2007 the prospects for the combat award upgrade became even brighter, when the Secretary of the Navy’s Board of Decorations and Medals (NDBDM) wrote in her letter of 20 February 2007 (1650 NDBDM/022) that the NDBDM and the CNO would, within 60 days, “reconsider” the combat awards of the DUCKS. Writing for the DUCKS, to then CNO Admiral Michael Mullen, USN, William Barnes – a MANSFIELD DUCKS veteran – noted in a 4-page, 9-enclosure letter of 15 March 2007 that the DUCKS were gladdened to learn that the Navy Department might at last grant these Navy combat sailors a PUC as just recognition for their successful battle actions against the North Korean (NKPA) shore batteries on 13-15 September 1950. The DUCKS’ survival was by no means assured, and had they been lost, that was a risk that the U.S. high command was willing to accept. In their letter of 15 March 2007 to the CNO, the DUCKS noted that the proposed award “reconsideration” had already been delayed by 180 days (NDBDM letter 1650/222 dated 21 September 2006) and that the many pertinent questions posed in the DUCKS letter of 15 March 2006 - concerning the way combat awards were handled – had never been answered by the NDBDM. That very important DUCKS letter of 15 March 2006 was declared “lost” by the NDBDM sometime in 2006; it was later “found” in one of the Awards Groups’ offices.

DARKENING SKIES:

The DUCKS hopes, re the PUC, were set back badly when their detailed letter of 15 March 2007 was sent by certified mail to the CNO’s Arlington, VA, P.O. Box 0685. That letter, mailed to the CNO on 18 March 2007, was returned to William Barnes on 21 June 2007, unopened, and with “Return to Sender” written large on the envelope. That meant a three-month delay in the DUCKS’ quest for a fair evaluation of their claim for the PUC. William Barnes once again checked the address given for the CNO by the Naval Academy Alumni Association and was again given the Arlington, VA, address. So, on 21 June 2007, the DUCKS 15 March 2007 letter, previously sent to Admiral Mullen, was repackaged and again sent by certified mail to the CNO’s Arlington, VA, address. That package was returned to William Barnes on 27 June 2007 – unclaimed, unopened, and marked “Return to Sender” (Enclosure 4).

A 5 July 2007 DUCKS certified letter was sent to the CNO’s Arlington, VA, address; that letter explained the problem that the DUCKS were having with their mailings – it too was returned, unopened and marked return to sender (Enclosure 5). Having meanwhile gotten a Pentagon address for the CNO from the Superintendent’s Office at the Naval Academy, a copy of the DUCKS 5 July 2007 letter was sent to Admiral Mullen at 2000 Navy Pentagon, Washington, D.C., 20370. That letter never

made it to the CNO's office – to the best of our knowledge. William Barnes had that letter traced by the U.S. Postal Service, and found on 31 July 2007 that the letter was received at the Pentagon on 9 July 2007 at 0642. The DUCKS have no idea who Eugene Julien is, or for which Navy group he works (Enclosure 6).

The DUCKS' several letters to the CNO's Arlington, VA, address were accepted and signed for in 2005 and 2006. Their 2007 mail was not accepted, for reasons unknown. This situation calls to mind the words spoken by U.S. Marine Captain Nathaniel Fick, a combat veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Speaking on a TV review of his book "One Bullet Away", Captain Fick stated that when a person is commissioned into the armed services of the United States, that person swears to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America, but does not lose the right to question the policies or decisions of the U.S. government or its agencies. That is why the DUCKS posed their (never answered) questions regarding the procedures for handling Navy combat awards; those questions were posed in the DUCKS very explicit letter of 15 March 2006 to the CNO.

In retrospect, it would have helped greatly if someone at the CNO's Arlington, VA, address, or the Arlington Post Office, had written a note to the DUCKS stating that the Arlington address was not to be used and giving a viable address for the CNO.

Due to the 2007 mail problems, the DUCKS were cut off from the Navy Department's Award Codes – DNS-35, NDBDM, and 09B13 – and that put their quest for the PUC in irons for almost a full year. The hard truth was that the DUCKS' hopes for the PUC were badly hurt when none of their 2007 letters to the CNO were accepted. The DUCKS did not know if Admiral Mullen had any knowledge of the deep feelings of the DUCKS in their quest for the PUC, when he flected up to relieve Marine General Peter Pace as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). That greatly admired Marine served his tour as Chairman of the JCS with great dignity and grace during a time of great political turbulence (Enclosure 7).

A DOUBTFUL RECONSIDERATION AND A DELAYED REBUTTAL:

The reality of the 2007 mail fiasco was that the DUCKS lost very valuable time in rebutting the Navy Department's Code DNS-35 letter of 26 April 2007; that letter, addressed to Captain William Barnes and signed by Mr. William Navas, reiterated the status quo of the DUCKS' combat awards. This 26 April 2007 letter was viewed as a "back door" answer by DNS-35 to the long-awaited "RECONSIDERATION" of the DUCKS' combat actions. The "RECONSIDERATION" was supposedly to be done by the CNO and the NDBDM (see NDBDM letter of 20 February 2007). The DUCKS' first rebuttal to the DNS-35 letter of 26 April 2007 was made in their 5 July 2007 letter to Admiral Mullen, which was first rejected at his Arlington, VA, address, and then at the Admiral's Pentagon address. Mr. Navas, an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, has signed off several letters vis-à-vis the DUCKS; Mr. Navas was not unknown to the DUCKS, as Inchon veteran Richard Bowman of Roy, UT, learned (Enclosures 8A and 8B).

MUM'S THE WORD:

The Navy Department's letter DNS-35 of 26 April 2007, addressed to Captain William Barnes, and signed by Assistant SECNAV William Navas, lists no other addressees. NO copy to the White House; NO copy to SECDEF; NO copy to SECNAV; NO copy to the CNO; NO copy to U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin; NO copy to U.S. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo; and NO copy to Dr. Russell Lee, a MANSFIELD DUCK. There was one in-house copy to DNS-35 who at that time was the ultimate "Decider" in the Navy's entrenched awards bureaucracy. If one were to surmise that DNS-35 cobbled together the 26 April 2007 letter to Captain Barnes, and then had Mr. Navas sign it – one might just be right. That 26 April 2007 DNS-35 letter is hardly the "RECONSIDERATION" envisioned by the DUCKS after they had read the NDBDM's letter of 20 February 2007.

Another DNS-35 letter (DNS-35/6UB30664 of 6 June 2006) infers that the DUCKS' Korean War actions did not qualify as combat actions. That inference is demeaning to the Navy veterans who fought in the DUCKS. THREE of the many reasons to refute that same inference are: (1) The award of the Purple Heart Medal to each of the 28 U.S. Navy sailors wounded in USS MANSFIELD (DD-728) on 30 September 1950, when their ship's bow was nearly severed by a Soviet-supplied mine in the North Korean Harbor of Chosin-Ko when the MANSFIELD was on a rescue mission to save a downed U.S. B-26 pilot under enemy fire (Enclosure 9) (see "U.S. Navy in the Korean War (page 209) e.g. Marolda, Ed., Naval Institute Press 2007); (2) In his December 1950 Fitness Report, his Commanding Officer wrote of then Ensign William Barnes, "his performance as Machine Gun Control Officer was outstanding during the assault on the Inchon-Seoul Korea 13-23 September 1950 when under direct fire from enemy coast defense guns."; and (3) All U.S. sailors who fought in the DUCKS in the Battle of Inchon were awarded the Combat Action Ribbon. The DNS-35 letter of 6 June 2006 smacks of ad hominem ill will.

The DNS-35 letter of 6 June 2006 also refutes the statement made in the DNS-35 letter of 15 July 2005, which claims sacrosanct status for the decisions of Navy Awards Boards. The 6 June 2006 DNS-35 letter, by its very content, shows that those decisions and Navy Awards Boards are malleable. Another DNS-35 letter, 5U833307 of 30 September 2005, states that the decisions of Navy Awards Boards may not be questioned, and that no records are kept of Board decisions – thus insulating the Navy Department from ever having to correct a possible erroneous judgment: that posture jumped up and bit the Navy Department in the already noted case of Navy SEAL hero – LT Spence Dry, USN – more about that later. Finally, the DNS-35 letter of 26 April 2007, signed by Mr. Navas, ignores the DUCKS' petition for answers to the questions posed in their 15 March 2006 letter to the CNO. One of those questions was if the DUCKS should be denied their combat earned PUC, would the Navy Department grant permission to the DUCKS to wear a combat "V" on their Navy Unit Commendation ribbon? That is a reasonable request in view of the fact that the NUC has become an "atta boy" award, now often awarded for non-combat service.

BAD NEWS:

In the Navy Department's letter of 26 April 2007, signed by Assistant Navy Secretary William Navas, it is stated, "Since no new or relevant evidence regarding the specific actions of the Sitting Ducks has been presented, there is no basis on which to reconsider the Navy Unit Commendation previously awarded to the Squadron." Immediately, we know that Mr. Navas and the Navy Awards Group (NAG) will suffer no allegiance to history. The DUCKS note the rising valuation of their Inchon combat action as its history unfolds. As columnist Michael Barone noted regarding long-ago actions: "They just might be linked to the distant past – to what Abraham Lincoln called the mystic chords of memory." [1]

Mr. Navas stated that all of the DUCKS' submissions to the Navy Department have been thoroughly reviewed – that statement is suspect and demeaning to the U.S. Navy combat sailors who manned the DUCKS' destroyers at Inchon. It seems incredible that none of the DUCKS' detailed letters piqued Assistant Secretary Navas' curiosity sufficiently enough to elicit any specific questions about the "extraordinary" combat actions of those six old U.S. Navy destroyers in the Battle of Inchon under enemy gunfire at close range.

Mr. Navas also failed to comment on the fact that the DUCKS' seminal letter of 15 March 2006 detailed a telephone incident of 7 June 2004 in which the Head of Navy Department Code DNS-35, Captain A. M. Hartlaub, voiced an attitude that presaged heavy weather ahead for the DUCKS because DNS-35 was the "Decider" in Navy Awards matters, and she was also the only person who received a copy of Mr. Navas' 26 April 2007 letter to Captain Barnes. As previously noted the DNS-35 letter of 30 September 2005 stated that Awards Boards' decisions may not be questioned – thus, erroneous judgments must not be challenged. Further, no records of Board discussions are kept, and Board members may not discuss their deliberations outside of Board meetings. Well enough! However, the DNS-35 letter of 6 June 2006 relates a sudden flip-flop in an Awards Board's decision. Who declared the first Board's decision as erroneous, and what person or Board was called to correct the initial Board's decision in this flip-flop?

It would appear that Mr. Navas and DNS-35 have chosen to employ the "rhetorical tactic" spelled out by columnist George Will in the Washington Post of 15 April 2008: "The tactic is to dismiss rather than refute those with whom you disagree." Having adopted that tactic, Mr. Navas and DNS-35 easily produce a two-page bureaucratic letter devoid of any description of the action that transpired in the fierce gunnery exchanges of 13-15 September 1950, and which denies the PUC quest of those "uppity" old U.S. Navy combat sailors. This scenario means that the DUCKS have to go to the well again to let the President, the U.S. Congress, and the Navy Department know about what is readily acknowledged as our Navy's greatest surface ship action since World War II – i.e., the gunnery duels of the "Sitting Ducks" as they outfought the North

Korean People's Army (NKPA) gunners in the Battle of Inchon; the Navy Department has never refuted that statement.

The Navy Department has also never referenced any of the books, magazines, or newspapers which have told of the DUCKS' "extraordinary" combat actions at Inchon in September 1950. To remedy that situation the pages that follow will corroborate the DUCKS' actions in the works of war correspondents, military writers, and historians. The many submissions made by the DUCKS are apparently "terra incognita" to the Navy Awards Group.

LET THE SUN SHINE IN:

In a December 2007 *Washington Post* "OUTLOOK" essay, historian Joseph J. Ellis argued that it's not possible to theorize exact answers to past actions (e.g. Inchon) "because the time gap makes it intellectually problematical" – but Ellis also conceded that "this is unacceptable to many of us because it suggests that the past is an eternally lost world that has nothing to teach us." The DUCKS believe that history has elevated the importance of the DUCKS' role in the Cold War. In the long run, history counts, and even today, as regards Russian intervention in Georgia, George Will writes: "We are not past such things after all. The end of history will be postponed again." (*The Washington Post*, 12 August 2008).

Boarding several Navy ships of the Inchon invasion fleet in September 1950 were war correspondents who covered the action that evolved as the Battle of Inchon. Embedded in the DUCKS' USS COLLETT, William L. Warden of the *Saturday Evening Post* wrote for that magazine's 11 November 1950 edition:

"The Trick that Won Seoul"

"The Captain's orders were to anchor his ship (USS COLLETT), one of the Sitting Ducks destroyers, within point-blank range of the enemy. He probably would draw murderous fire – but the lives of thousands of U.S. Marines hung on his being a successful decoy."

An editorial in that same edition of the *Saturday Evening Post* reads as follows:

"The Key to Korea"

"General Douglas MacArthur himself is authority for the fact that the fall of Wolmi, made possible by the forgotten destroyer action described in this article, was the key which opened Korea to amphibious invasion and accomplished the sensational American turnabout in the war. The general has allowed it to be known that he personally sailed with the fleet for the purpose of calling off the entire Inchon invasion if the capture of vital Wolmi, commanding the harbor, had failed. The feat of the USS