Under Cover

By DAVID BURR, '52ba

The time was 3:30 a.m.
The date was January 3, 1956.
The place was South Korea.
The Battalion Commander of the 31st Field Artillery was wide awake in his quarters. The radio was tuned to the Armed Forces Korean Network. A strategic attack was to be launched.
The Assistant S-3 joins the Battalion Commander. Important plans must be discussed for the coming attack. Both men are tense and alert. Early intelligence reports are inconclusive but give a slight advantage to the friendly forces.
The time draws closer and closer to H-Hour—pulses quicken. A voice comes over the radio. "Good afternoon, this is Red Barber speaking to you from Miami, Florida, where we are on hand for the annual Orange Bowl Classic."

Both men breathe a sigh of relief. Communications with the front line forces are perfect. They settle down to listen to a direct report on the battle.

Halfway through the conflict, things look bad for the fighting platoon from Oklahoma. The enemy has managed to sneak through the main line of resistance and score a direct blow to the Oklahoma defenses. The Oklahoma platoon fights a delaying action, and prepares to regroup for a full-scale frontal attack.

The Oklahoma boys see an opening in the enemy line. Quickly they take advantage and when the smoke clears the enemy has been repelled, and the friendly forces have a firm advantage.
The battle continues, and again the fighting group from Oklahoma scores another hit. The enemy is on the run—a victory is in sight.

As the Battalion Commander, Major Frank R. Labrucherie, a firm supporter for the friendly forces, turns to the Battalion Assistant S-3, 2nd Lieut. Leonard A. Dalquest, '54journ, a graduate of the Oklahoma War College, a smile comes over his face. Both men know that the victory is sealed for the Oklahomans. The New Year is off to a good start.

(The foregoing account of the War of
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the Oranges as prepared in South Korea was forwarded by Leonard Dalquest.)

The editor was privileged to be among those who attended the game in person. Some post-game observations:

Perhaps the finest rooting section the Sooners had were seated highup in the Orange Bowl stadium. They were the football players' wives. Too far from the field to effectively join the organized cheering, they sponsored their own pep rally. Nor did they have to yell alone. Seated next to them were football players from O.U. who were not in uniform for the game. But they were in fine voice for the battle.

As the tide began to turn in Oklahoma's favor, and the chant, "Go, Go, Go," began to swell, spectators, who from the surprised looks on their faces had never expected to offer vocal assistance, joined the chorus. The wives and players-turned-spectators continued throughout the afternoon to initiate each battle cry.

In pre-game activity, Oklahomans settled across the cities of Miami and Miami Beach like Spanish moss. Confident of an Oklahoma victory upon arrival in Miami in mid-week, some of the stories about Oklahoma's weak schedule and kindred doubts cast by newspapermen began to create tension among Sooner fans. From the middle of the preceding week to game time January 2, the cobweb of concern was being spun.

When 850 Oklahomans gathered in the McAllister Hotel for breakfast January 2 the effect was much like a lighted match held over an open tank of gasoline. The words of confidence expressed by Senator Mike Monroney, President Cross, Eddie Crowder and others were offset by Harold Keith's words of caution.

It would have been hard to find an Oklahoman who did not believe that O.U. would win, but all of them looked like they would like to get on with the game . . . that the period of waiting was taking its toll of optimism.

And when the crushing second half was finally over, many an Oklahoman looked like he should have had extra time in Miami to unwind before starting back to report to the home folks.

This was almost certainly Oklahoma's finest football hour. Sportswriters in attendance were unanimous in their post-game stories. This was one of the finest teams they had ever seen, they reported to the sports world.

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