

Old Baldy Scene Of Bloody War As Shells Rip Area

By GEORGE WHEERS
Associated Press Photographer
ON A HILL OVERLOOKING
BALDY, Korea (AP)—Old Baldy was
a smoking mess today.
Once, when a Marine Corsair
swooped low to bomb the flat top
of Baldy the explosion looked like
a slow motion movie of a volcano
eruption.
Flames shot up from the center
of the bare mountain.
Smoke rose slowly, gathering in
a great black cloud about a mile
overhead. On the scarred surface
of Baldy, Chinese soldiers scurried
about, trying to get out of the way
of United Nations air strikes and
thundering American artillery fire.
One group of eight Chinese hid
from the Allied planes under a sort

of bridge covering a trench line.
Under the bridge they were direct-
ly in front of the sights of a 90
millimeter gun on a Patton tank
on the hill where I was standing.
The tank fired three times. The
bridge and everything under it
appeared smashed.
Some Chinese hid in an aban-
doned American tank on the south-
ern slope of Baldy.
One of the tanks where I was,
on a hill southeast of Baldy, set
afire the stricken tank, with the
Chinese in it, with eight rounds of
90-mm fire. The tank's gasoline
went up in a flash.
Nobody got out.
It didn't look like anything could
live above the ground on Baldy.
But the Chinese were probably
deep inside positions dug by Amer-
ican and Colombian soldiers.

I watched the shelling and bomb-
ing of Baldy for about two hours.
U. S. Air Force Thunderjets or
Marine Corsairs came in regular-
ly, dropping bombs.
The Corsairs dropped bombs at
about 50-foot intervals along the
ridgeline.
U. S. artillerymen marked tar-
gets for the fighter-bombers with
white phosphorus shells, then
pounded the targets with the planes
left.

Troops of the U. S. 7th Division
withdrew this morning from their
last foothold on the southeast slope
of Baldy, which was overrun by
some 900 Chinese.
A division officer said one reason
for the withdrawal was to enable
planes to plaster the hill freely.
When the Americans held a knob
of the hill, the officer said, pilots
could not distinguish which posi-
tions were American and which
Chinese.

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Draft Calls May Be Reduced Soon

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Defense Department said Wednesday draft calls may be reduced, starting in July, from the current monthly rate of 53,000 to around 37,000 or lower.
A spokesman explained that the possible trimming of draft quotas represents a projection of earlier estimates that 450,000 men will be required in the year starting July to replace soldiers who will complete their two years service in the fiscal year 1954.

Battle Story Blames Order

WESTERN FRONT, Korea (AP)—The commander of the Colombian battalion which was knocked off Old Baldy Monday night by a crushing Chinese attack said today he could have stuck there if American reserves promised him hadn't been diverted to save Pork Chop Hill.

The commander, Lt. Col. Alberto Ruiz-Novoa of Colombia, told reporters that before the attack he had a U. S. company in reserve for defense against any strike at Old Baldy.

But when the Chinese roared in, he said, he learned for the first time that higher headquarters had ordered the company to support American troops embroiled in a similar attack on nearby Pork Chop Hill.
The Americans on Pork Chop won their fight, but Old Baldy's crest fell to the Reds. The Americans abandoned Baldy today.

Ruiz said the Communists had 10 to 15 artillery battalions in the Old Baldy area alone and "our defenses cannot withstand such fire."

Ruiz said the present trench-fighting requires plenty of reserves.

The Colombian commander said today in a Spanish-language message to the people of Colombia that he joins in the sorrow of families who lost men in the battle.

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