

[Mobile book] East of Chosin: Entrapment and Breakout in Korea, 1950 (Williams-Ford Texas AM University Military History Series) by Appleman, Roy E. (9/1/1990)

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From Texas AM University Press : East of Chosin: Entrapment and Breakout in Korea, 1950 (Williams-Ford Texas AM University Military History Series) by Appleman, Roy E. (9/1/1990) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised East of Chosin: Entrapment and Breakout in Korea, 1950 (Williams-Ford Texas AM University Military History Series) by Appleman, Roy E. (9/1/1990):

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Task Force Faith: What Happened, and Why?By sixtring"...after General Almond left to return to Hagaru-ri, Lieutenant Colonel Faith and Lieutenant Smalley ripped their Silver Stars off their jackets and threw them into the snow."This pivotal passage from the text "East of Chosin" reveals Lt. Col. Don Carlos Faith's disgust not just with his increasingly desperate situation, but with also his chain of command. Author Roy Appleman offered little to explain the military culture and key personalities behind this event. This book provides a very good description of WHAT happened during the 100 hours that it took for the 31st Regimental Combat team, a U.S. Army unit of 3,000 men, to be encircled and destroyed in North Korea in December 1950. The book is a good page-turner for anyone wanting a blow-by-blow account of what happened. The writing style is well above average for a military history book; drama and tension are woven into a story that is constructed primarily from survivors' first-hand recollections.The bulk of the book is a timeline of events. Chapter 22 provides a lengthy analysis

entitled "Could Task Force Faith Have Been Saved?" The author synthesizes his conjecture with observations shared by survivors. By failing to examine military organizational culture as it then existed, and especially the personalities of the key leaders, the story of Task Force Faith remains unexplained. Why would such a reckless mission be undertaken, and why was it executed the way it was? Or in so many words-- What were they thinking? To be fair, an excursion into personal backgrounds would have made the book more laborious to read. Fortunately, separate analyses appear elsewhere to complement to "East of Chosin." One is Ray Vallowe's research as posted on the "Korean War Educator" website. Another is the 2007 master's thesis "Organizational Leadership in Crisis: The 31st RCT at Chosin Reservoir," prepared by Maj. Paul Berquist, also available online as of late 2011. The latter not only describes the event, but also examines the personalities involved. For example, we now understand that Lt. Col. Don Carlos Faith was politically shrewd in obtaining promotions and selecting his staff for occupational affinities rather than experience. We also learn that Gen. Edward M. Almond had put Faith on notice for a perceived lack of aggressiveness during earlier campaigns. This suggests that Faith may at first have suspended his better judgment at Chosin as he strove to prove himself to his superiors. The same thesis also analyzes the rapid deployment of forces under Gen. Almond's command in Korea just prior to the Chosin campaign. Almond's penchant for the strategies displayed by U.S. Civil War Confederate cavalry apparently didn't apply well to road-bound, mechanized troops dependent on long supply chains. The Berquist thesis describes a perfect storm of poor organizational design, limited communications technology, and interservice rivalry that doomed the men of Task Force Faith. It's also useful to remember the dynamics of professional advancement in the military: one bad fitness report from a superior can derail an officer's career. This may help to us to understand not only General Almond, but also the curious final actions of Col. Allan MacLean, the initial commander of the task force who would be succeeded by Lt. Col. Faith. One may conclude that Task Force Faith's demise ultimately reflects the misplaced arrogance of Gen. Douglas MacArthur and his advocacy of atomic weapons as a solution to Chinese intervention in the Korean War. To wit: Why bother to deploy fully equipped field armies when you can always drop the bomb?

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Surprising facet of the Chosin Reservoir battle that is largely unknown. By Twilliam If you read any book about the Korean War or the Chosin Reservoir battle in particular, make sure that you read this account. The story would make a terrific movie as there are so many powerful personal attributes involved. This book is a very in-depth and detailed and tragic account of the encirclement, siege, breakout attempt, disintegration and destruction of Task Force Faith (US Army Regimental Combat Team 31) during the Korean War. Whenever I see 'Chosin Reservoir', I think of the USMC's breakout from encirclement by the Chinese. That the US Army, particularly Task Force Faith played such a significant and tragic role in this battle was unknown to me, and I suspect by many people not intimately informed about the Korean War. The book gives first hand combat accounts from US forces about the battle. I suspect that if detailed information about this battle was available from the Chinese perspective, it would have been included. That would be very interesting. As it is, the book details the on-the-ground conditions that Task Force Faith faced, and the book also briefly discusses the strategic situation in Korea at the time. The book in my perspective is a sobering reminder that the US military should not be complacent in thinking that they will inherently prevail over any enemy just because they have a slight technological advantage. What really stands out in this chronicle is the heroism of various combat officers, the ineptitude of some staff officers calling the shots, the necessity of well established and functioning intelligence and communications, and what happens to soldiers when unit cohesion and leadership are severely depleted or destroyed. It is a sad and tragic story, and unfortunately largely unknown in the US populace. Hopefully it is well known by the US Military so that it does not happen again in some future conflict. Unfortunately, it's just my opinion that the US Military has far too many social and other issues that are being concentrated on instead of more preparation for situations like this. If a similar situation develops in the future with an enemy that has similar resources to US forces, it's my opinion that the US forces will not fare any better than Task Force Faith, and will probably fare worse. The odds and horrid conditions that these men faced were tremendous.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The truth comes out. By Cannon 6 Outstanding! I joined Battery A 57th FA Bn In late 1951 and heard of some of the events 2nd handed and wanted to know more. People just do not understand why the 7th Div performed as it did. Losing 6500 troops, who were replaced by the Katusas, reduced the effectiveness of the Div. Even at that, they did well. Putting a Task Force together as the Div was moving up was a chance for disaster. Mixed Bns, i.e. from different regiments, with no effective communication to the rear should not have happened. The 3/5 pulling off of the line before the replacement Bn could get into position violates all military doctrine. The CG of the 1st MAR, in his ignorance of the status of the 7th, was too critical. I understand that an update was printed in the Washington post in the late 90s or early 2000 finally gave the credit that the Div deserves