Abstract
United States Marine Corps Fighter Squadron 214 (VMF-214), the "Black Sheep," is perhaps the most widely recognized fighter squadron of the United States military. The Marine Corps, by tradition and doctrine, assigns as top priority to its air units, air support of ground forces, or close air support (CAS). Ironically, during World War II, VMF-214 flew only one mission that could qualify for CAS among the hundreds of combat missions it flew. VMF-214 instead gained its notoriety from air-to-air combat, or "dogfighting." In a general sense, this was the case for all of Marine fighter aviation. Five years after the end of World War II, almost to the day, VMF-214 was back again in combat, this time in Korea. It was the first Marine Corps unit, ground or air, to see combat in that war. Black Sheep pilots were still flying the same aircraft that they flew at the end of World War II, the F-4U 'Corsair' and most of its pilots were World War II veterans. In Korea, instead of aerial duels, Marine pilots flew predominately CAS missions; that was their specialty. In this relatively short time, it appears that a shift in priorities in Marine fighter aviation had occurred beyond the exigencies of two different wars. The Black Sheep and other Marine squadrons were prepared to implement their superior CAS system from the beginning. Consequently, Marine aviation became widely recognized for its CAS capabilities and outshone the U.S. Air Force, and made the U.S. Army long for a similar type of air support. Using this most famous squadron to represent all of Marine fighter aviation, this dissertation depicts first how this unmatched close air support system was developed, and secondly its manifestation in the Korean War through documenting VMF-214's activities in that war. Although Marine Corps CAS has its roots in Marine Corps doctrine,
They will protect the Marines with close air support and some aerial reconnaissance as needed. Additionally, they have their own different logistical requirements that necessitate use of the heavys (like the C-130 Hercules, and the CH-53E). There are also Marine fighter squadrons that regularly deploy on carriers that conduct various missions. In the United States Marine Corps, the aviation combat element or air combat element (ACE) is the air arm of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF). It provides rotary-wing, tiltrotor, and fixed-wing aircraft, support equipment, pilots, maintenance personnel, as well as command and control assets to the commander. "Black Sheep Squadron" redirects here. For the USMC squadron called the Blacksheep, see VMA-214. The Black Sheep join forces with an Army Air Forces squadron on a top secret mission to shoot down Adm. Isoroku "The Hawk" Yamamoto, head of the Japanese fleet. Wiley has a romance with a young Eurasian woman who is hiding a secret. Filming of airfield scenes was primarily done at the now-closed Indian Dunes Airport in Valencia, California.[5]. Some air-battle scenes were actually short clips from the 1969 film Battle of Britain, and German markings on the planes can clearly be seen.[original research?]