The Korean War

I. Origins of the Korean War

A. The Russo-Japanese War and Korea

1. Korea had thought that the *U.S.-Korean Treaty* (established May 22, 1882), specifically the good offices clause in Article 1, was a promise to protect Korea's sovereignty and independence. This premise was further encouraged both directly and indirectly by the Americans in Korea.

2. When the Russo-Japanese broke out, Japan laid siege to the Korean capital, violating Korean neutrality. Korea's Emperor Kojong expected that the American government would help him maintain Korean independence. When the Korean envoy in Washington asked Secretary of State John Hay for help, he replied that the U.S. had "'friendship and good wishes for Korea,' but American interests where commercial rather than political." (Nahm 204). Korea was denied aid.

3. President Theodore Roosevelt encouraged the Japanese to become aggressive in Korea in order that he might secure their consent for the Open Door policy in China. He viewed Korea as a weak nation and admired Japanese expansionism.


5. After the Russo-Japanese War ended, the Japanese government published the Taft-Katsura Memorandum and proclaimed it a secret pact in which the U.S. gave Korea to Japan in exchange for Japan's guarantee for the security of the Philippines. Roosevelt disagreed that it was a secret agreement, but made no further comment. By November the Japanese Prime Minister Katsura told Roosevelt that he planned to take charge of Korea's external affairs. Roosevelt told his diplomats in Korea to prepare to leave the country.

6. On November 15 the Korean Emperor was presented a draft agreement making Korea a protectorate and demanding immediate Korean compliance. America refuse to lend any aid, and on November 15, 1905, the treaty was signed.

7. On July 1907 the Japanese force Emperor Kojong to resigns, marking the end of Korean Independence and the monarchy.

B. Rise of Korean Nationalism and Communism

1. Resistance to Japanese rule led to the creation of various nationalist and communist groups in the 1920s and 1930s.

2. Spurred by Woodrow Wilson's promises of self-determination, nationwide mass protests
began on March 1920. Japan had to employ the army and the navy to quell the roughly half a million protesters.

3. After World War I Korea had an internal political clash between liberal idealism and socialism. The Japanese actively targeted any individual with "Bolshevik" ideas.

4. The **Korean Communist Party** (KCP) was founded in 1925.

5. **Yi Pom-Sok** was a fierce Korean nationalist and an anti-Japanese WWI war veteran trained in guerilla combat. He had studied military affairs in Germany in 1993, and was Chief of Staff of the Nationalist's Fifty-first army and commander at the Nationalist Military Academy in Hangchou. His ideal of a self-contained Korea did not support a social revolution.

6. The **Blue Shirts**, a fascist-style paramilitary youth group, emerged in the 1930s as a creation of Chian Kai-shek. Yi was a member.

7. Yi became known for his use of the Chinese slogan, "minjok, chisang, kukka chisang," meaning nation first, state first. (Cumings 207). To him nation and race were synonymous. His ideology was a bit muddled. He admired the Jews and their preservation of identity throughout the ages, and at the same time remarked his support of Hitler's attempt to unify and preserve the German people.

8. These nationalistic ideals were very popular in Korea, reaching a zenith in the 1940s.

C. Korea after World War II

1. On August 15, 1945, Emperor Hirohito broadcasted Japan's surrender and Korea's liberation. That same day John J. McCloy of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) directed two colones to find a place to divide Korea. The 38th parallel was chosen because it "would place the capital city in the American zone'; although the line was 'further north than could be realistically reached...in the event of a Soviet disagreement." (Cumings 187). War Hero **General Douglas MacArthur** made the division public, which the Russians quietly accepted as the new division of spheres of power. Neither the Koreans nor the British or the Chinese (who were to take part in a planned trusteeship of Korea) were consulted.

2. As the Japanese government had begun to fail, the **Korean People's Republic** (KPR, formed September 6, 1945) had begun to form as a provisional government of Korea. It was a communist group backed by Russia, and it enjoyed widespread, specially in the North.

3. The U.S. occupied Korea between 1945-1948. They enforced a military government, and supported a group of exiled nationalists and a few domestic politicians who formed the **Korean Democratic Party** (KDP) in 1945. They actively shunned the KPR in the South.

4. "The political and ideological divisions that we associate with the Cold War were the reasons for Korea's division; they came early to Korea, before the onset of the global Cold War." (Cumings 186).

5. America contemplated a full military occupation of Korea, including total control for an indefinite amount of time. After the first 3 months of U.S. occupation, America held the belief that Korea was not ready for independence, and that instead it was "extremely fertile ground for the establishment of Communism." (Cumings 198). The U.S. began to help in the creation of a Korean army.
D. The Internal Politics of South Korea.

1. The *Korean People's Republic*, also known as the *Republic of Korea*, formed in Seoul in September 1945. The U.S. saw as one of their mission to break down this Communist government in the North.

2. South Korea had almost no middle class. The left consisted of the majority of the people tended to side with the People's Committees, which were communist. Only a small group of people supported the Korean Democratic Party, but they held the majority of the wealth and power in Korea.

3. In 1947 a rightist movement arose in the South, resting on a myriad of youth groups, an incipient corporatist organization of the working class, and a set of Korean political ideas that amounted to a kind of home-grown fascism (Cumings 206). Its leader was Yi Pom-Sok of the Korean National Youth.

4. By the late 1940s Korea was in the grip of a police regime and wanted all foreigners to withdraw, including the Americans. The U.S. felt that if they left the country, a civil war would ensue. (Cumings 209)

5. In May 1948 observed elections in May 1948 decided the final emergence of a separate southern government, raising the issue of permanent division.

6. The National Police organized the election, requiring that peasants have their food ration cards stamped at the polls (otherwise they would lose their rations).

7. On May 10, 1948, the *Republic of Korea's First National Assembly* was elected, composed mostly of supporters of *Syngman Rhee*, who became the Southern President.

8. Rhee was an ardent anti-communist, anti-Japanese catholic. He was an honest, unpretentious career military officer who was well known for hard work and plain living.

9. The ROK was inaugurated on August 15, 1948, with General MacArthur present. The *Truman* administration replaced the military government with a 500-man *Korean Military Advisory Group* (KMAG), established an aid mission (known as the Economic Cooperation Administration, ECA), pushed big aid bills through Congress to get the economy moving and to equip an army capable of defending South Korea, and arranged for KMAG to retain operational control of the Korean police and military as long as American combat troops required.


11. The ROK Army was born in 1949.

12. Rhee was influenced by a "*Kitchen Cabinet*" made up of longtime associates who were almost all either Americans or Koreans who had spent many years in the U.S.

13. The *Korean Democratic Party* (KDP) opposed Rhee. While liberal, it was the organ of landed wealth and local power.

14. The *South Korean Labour Party* (SKLP) was a communist organization of the south largely independent of North Korea and Soviet influence.

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E. The Internal Politics of North Korea

1. *Kim Il Sung* was the Soviet-appointed leader of the *Democratic People's Republic of Korea*
The DPRK diverges from traditional Marxist-Leninist systems in that its goal is to reassert native Korean political practice, including the superordinate role of the leader to his self-reliant ideology, to the Hermit Kingdom foreign policy.

2. A small group of Soviet-Koreans influenced the North Korean government, but not much. This group was eliminated by 1956. Ho Ka-i was the leader of this group, and the CIA viewed him as the link between the Soviets and the Koreans.

3. Korea was not under heavy Soviet control.

4. Kim maneuvered politically first to establish his leadership, then to isolate and defeat the communists who had remained in Korea during the colonial period, then to ally with Soviet-aligned Koreans for a time, then to create a powerful army under his own leadership (in February 1940) that melded Koreans who had fought together in Manchuria and China proper with those who had remained at home (Cumings 227).

5. In March 1946 Kim Il Sung passed a land reform dispossessing landlords without compensation.

6. The North Korean Worker's Party (NKWP) arises August, 1946. It had its social base in the vast peasantry. Its open door policy allowed almost anyone to be a party member, regardless of background. Membership in the party granted position, prestige, privileges, and a rudimentary form of political participation. It came to dominate politics by the fall of 1946, and helped to form the army.

7. The Korean People's Army (KPA) was the backbone of Kim's dominance. It was led by Ch'oe Yong-gon.

8. Kim suppressed most other political parties, and gave the illusion of political power to the two largest ones, the Choson Democratic Party (CDP) and the "Friends Party" of the Ch'ondogyo religion. Kim even managed to have his trusted ally Ch'oe Yong-gon as leader of the CDP.

9 Christianity was a target for the Kim regime. While no more than 2 percent of the population converted to it, most of its members had power and influence, and even the Americans believed they were the best source for assistance. By the late 1940s, many pastors were charged and arrested. Christian Churches remained open until the warm and worship allowed, but Christian political activities were eliminated.

10. Freedom of the press was abolished by the end of 1946, with all newspapers carrying the same news.

11. The North had an advanced and very efficient security and intelligence organization.

12. The police was reformed. They were veered away from torture and terror tactics, and instead became an agency of intense thought surveillance aimed at weeding out rebellious sentiment. The police began amassing files on everyone they could, listing every possible bit of information. Suspected individuals were placed under surveillance, and punishments were severe.

13. Economic conditions were severe. While the upper class was well off, the middle and poor peasants survived on a marginal existence, owning none of the land and paying 30 percent of their production to the landlord. The government would then extract taxes, which, coupled with the various "contributions" expected from the populace, brought about a loss of anywhere between 48 to 70 percent of the annual crop yield.

unification by force, supported the belief that North Korea was preparing for a war.

F. Korean International Relations

1. Korea was important to American global policy as part of a new, dual strategy of containing communism and revising the Japanese industrial economy as a motor of the world economy.
2. The U.S. decided to revive Japanese heavy industry and end the purges of wartime leaders. In order to revive Japanese economy, the U.S. sought to combine Japan with its old provider of raw materials and markets.
   a. The Japanese recovery program formed the sole large-scale American effort in Asia. Secretary of State George Marshall sought to connect South Korean economy with that of Japan.
3. The United Nations, dominated by the U.S. at the time, agreed to form a committee, the **United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea** (UNTCOK) to observe democratic elections in Korea. The North Koreans and Soviets opposed UNTCOK and refused to participate in such elections.
4. After investigations in 1948 UNTCOK decided that elections were under the control of the KDP and that conditions were not suitable in either the North and South for a proper election.
5. The Soviets did not trust Koreans. In 1937 **Stalin** ordered the deportation of some Koreans to Central Asia and the Far East. All Korean communists were killed for fear of pro-Japanese seditious elements.
6. The Soviets were displeased that their Korean occupation did not yield a warm-water port.
7. Tens of thousands of Koreans fought in the **Chinese Civil War**, establishing the obligation of reciprocity in the case of need.
8. Chinese Nationalists extracted postwar reprisals from the Koreans, judging them in the same scale as Japanese. This turned many Korean recruits into communists.
9. Suppression of Communist guerrilla threat in South Korea leads U.S. officials to believe in containment of Communism through military action.
10. Late February, 1949, Kim Il Sung went on an official and highly publicized visit to the Soviet Union. When he returned, he brought with him an economic and cultural agreement, with rumours circulating of a secret military agreement.
11. While both the Soviet and American forces left behind a large amount of surplus military equipment, the Soviets made the Koreans pay for everything, including a loan with 2 percent interest (which was profitable at the time).
   i. Stalin appeared to be more interested in profiteering than in any possible South Korean invasion.
12. By 1950 American influence in South Korea is massive, keeping the government, the army, the economy, the railroads, the airports, the mines, and the factories working. The U.S. supplied money, electricity, expertise, and psychological succor, with American gasoline fueling all vehicles.
   i. American culture becomes dominant, with scholarships to study in the U.S., several strong missionary denominations, traveling cinemas and theaters that played mostly American films, and even big league baseball arising in South Korea.
ii. At the time South Korea was getting more than $100 million a year from the U.S., most of it in the form of outright grants.

13. The 1950 South Korean second National Assembly elections lost the Rhee regime a lot of power, bringing into the assembly a large collection of moderate leftists and neutral members. As a result, John Foster Dulles, then adviser to Truman, visited Korea on his way to see MacArthur in Tokyo.

i Rhee pushed for a direct American defense and advocated an attack on the North, but Dulles did not believe it wise. Historians are unclear, but they indicate that the U.S. was preparing to support a coup d'etat in China, and a Korean war would just get in the way. In fact, an entire campaign was to be devised and handed to the military (Cumings 297).

G. Internal Turmoil

1. The suppression of the massive Autumn Harvest Uprisings in 1946 consolidated state control in the county seats, making seizure of power by county people's committees unlikely thereafter. The SKLP supported guerrilla forces in the South.

2. The ROK Army was forced to suppress massive uprisings in Cheju and Yosu. North Korea was blamed for the incidents. People began to demand the departure of all Americans from Korea. Thousands were left dead as American forces joined the ROK army in dealing with this communist threat.

H. Border Conflicts of 1949

1.a. In early 1949 the CIA estimated that the total number of Communist guerrillas in the South was somewhere between 3,500 and 6,000 (Cumings 243), not counting those found on surrounding islands. While lacking equipment (most were armed with rifles of American and Japanese make, but some wielded clubs and bamboo spears), they continuously raided villages along the Southern side of the 38th parallel, pillaging supplies to ensure their survival.

i. Except for remote village, the guerrillas were unable to hold small towns or create a protected base area outside of the mountains.

ii. They would enter a village at night, give speeches, recruit soldiers, and secure food and supplies. They concentrated their attacks on police stations, due in part to the fact that hatred for the was widespread, as well as to obtain the records of anyone suspected of leftist sentiment. In short, they managed to both secure a small measure of trust from the villagers as well as procuring recruits.

iii. There is little evidence of Soviet or North Korean support for these Southern guerrillas.

b. The police retaliated brutally against guerrilla members, torturing them for information and tying them to trees as examples (whether they were living or dead can be debatable).

c. In the Spring of’49 Syngman Rhee dispatched a young colonel of Japanese army background, Chong Il-gwon, to command a suppression force of 3,000 men. Chong set up a pass system requiring citizens in the area to hold identity cards, established a civilian defense corps in each
village, and posted sentry watchtowers armed with bamboo spears. The soldiers were also ordered to leave the villagers alone, especially the women.

i. After an all-out offensive, he manage to eradicate a large number of the guerrilla forces, but the victory was short-lived and by summer guerrilla strength rose yet again, surpassing previous forces.

d. The principal source of external involvement in the guerrilla war was American. Americans had never left the ROK completely, as they had promised and led the people to believe. James Hausman was one of the key organizers of the suppression of the Yosu rebellion, and for the next 30 years was the nexus between the American and Korean militaries and their intelligence officers.  
   i. "[He was] a wily operator of hid his skill behind the mannerisms of an Arkansas hayseed, he was the Edward Landsdale of Korea, without the latter's concern for civic action. Hausman called himself the father of the Korean Army in an interview, which was not far from the truth. He said that everyone knew this, including the Korean officers themselves, but could not say so publicly." (Cumings 246)

e. At the end of September 1949, an all-out ROK drive, complemented by U.S. forces, set out to exterminate the guerrilla bands. In the period between November 1949 and March 1950, 6,000 guerrillas had been killed, as well as 813 KPA soldiers out of an engagement with 12,000. The guerrillas were left decimated.

f. The suppression of the guerrillas was viewed as a success for American-backed communist containment in Korea, proving to U.S. officials that American forces were capable of eliminating Communist threat.

2. Before the summer of 1949 the South launched many small raids across the parallel, and the North reciprocated each one.

3. The first important border battle occurred at Kaesong on May 4, 1949, in an engagement begun by the South. It lasted four days and had an official toll of 400 North Korean and 22 South Korean soldiers, as well as over 100 civilian deaths.
   i. The South had committed six infantry companies and several battalions, and two of the companies defected to the North. Based on the testimony of these two battalions, the North accused Southern forces of crossing the parallel on the morning of May 4, near Song'ak Mountain.

4. On the last Sunday of June, 1949, heavy fighting opened in the dawn hours on the Ongjin Peninsula; three days later the South sent about 50 "Horim" (forest tiger) guerrillas on a long foray across the parallel, creating problems for a few days until being wiped out by July 5.

5. A June 26 battle prompted UNOK investigation, which arrived courtesy of an ROK vessel. They placed the blame for the incident on Northern forces, disregarding any possibility of Southern hostility.

6. The bloodiest encounter of 1949 occurred in early August, when North Korean forces attacked ROKA units occupying a small mountain north of the parallel. The fighting went on for days, until the early morning hours on August 4, when the North fired a massive barrage of artillery and mortar fire, followed by an attack of upwards of 5,000 North Korean border guards.

7. ROKA commanders attempted to persuade the U.N. to allow them to recover the North by conquest, but the American Ambassador warned that all American aid would be stopped.

8. Northern commanders plotted with Soviet assistance on a campaigned based around the
capture of the Ongjin peninsula. They are told not to attack first, however, and awaited Southern hostilities before implementing their plan.
9. "The reason that war did not come in 1949 is at once simple and essential in grasping the civil origins of the Korean conflict: the South wanted a war then, the North did not, and neither did the United States or the Soviet Union." (Cumings 247). All this would change with the rapid increase in North Korean army strength by 1950.
10. After the 1949 border fighting died down, both Syngman Rhee and Kim II Sung sought backing from their allies for a major assault on the other side. Rhee did this primarily through his "Kitchen Cabinet" American link, while Sung secretly visited Moscow and Beijing.

I. The Korean War Catalyst

1. During an Allied meeting in Cairo, Egypt, on December 1, 1943, the representatives of China, the United States, and the United Kingdom pledged their determination that, in due course, Korea should become free and independent. That same pledge was repeated by the same three powers at Potsdam, Germany, on July 26, 1945.
2. Upon their entry into the war against Japan, the Soviet Union adhered to the Potsdam Declaration, stating so on August 8, 1945 and later reaffirming it at Moscow on December 27, 1945. At the time, the U.S., U.K., and Soviet Union representatives agreed that a provisional Korean democratic government should be set up for all Korea with a view to the re-establishment of Korea as an independent state (Paschall 8).
3. By 1949 Mao Tse-tung's Communist forces had taken China, nullifying all earlier pronouncements. The U.S., however, refused to acknowledge Mao, supporting Chiang Kai-shek's defeated regime-in-exile on Taiwan.
4. Through the Joint Commission, which acted as intermediary between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, arose a heated argument. The U.S. began to pressure the Soviet Union into standing by their Moscow declaration and allowing Korea to become an independent Democratic state. The Soviet Union replied by discussing the exact terminology of the term "Democratic," citing that they would only fulfill the Moscow Decision with those parties and organizations and their representatives who "fully, without reservations, support this decision and did not compromise themselves by active opposition against it."-Colonel General Christiakov (Paschall 12). Tensions Arose.

II. The Korean War

A. The Beginning

1. On Saturday, June 24, 1950, while away on a family trip, President Truman received a phone call from Secretary of State Acheson. South Korea was being invaded by the North.
   i. North Korean artillery had begun firing artillery along the 38th parallel eight hours earlier.
2. The United Nations promptly declared North Korea an aggressor.

B. The North Korean Invasion: June 25-August 31, 1950

1. North Korea launches an all-out invasion against South Korea. The North Koreans sent their main attack against the **Uijongbu Corridor**, an ancient invasion route leading straight south to **Seoul**, the South Korean capital. While small divisions participated in small battles entering south through different routes, the North Koreans had focused their strong armored columns and their artillery on this route, and by midmorning of June 24 they were deploying aircraft against **Kimpo Airfield**, which served Seoul.

   i. The battle for Chunchon was costly; while the North Koreans eventually prevailed, they lost 3 days in the engagement, delaying their advantage of a quick surprise attack.

2. Their second objective applied their second largest force against **Chunchon**, which was close to the parallel and was the gateway for the best communication and transport net leading south through the mountains in the central part of Korea. They would then drive south to Hongchon.

   i. The battle for Chunchon was costly; while the North Koreans eventually prevailed, they lost 3 days in the engagement, delaying their advantage of a quick surprise attack.

3. On June 27, 1950, Truman orders the U.S. Air Force and Navy to support South Korean Forces. The main North Korean forces managed to push back ROK troops to the **Han River** and continued pushing forward towards Seoul.

   i. The ROK government and the Army headquarters began to leave the South Korean capital, followed the next day by the U.S. Embassy and the American Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG).

   ii. On the 28th, panic set amongst the population of Seoul as they attempted to flee. The ROK army decided to destroy all bridges across the Han leading south from Seoul. They were a bit hasty in the decision, however, and 500-800 people were drowned when the bridge was blown.

   iii. "The premature blowing of the bridges was a military catastrophe for the ROK Army. The main part of the army, still north of the river, lost nearly all of its transport, most of its supplies, and many of its heavy weapons. Most of the troops that arrived south of the Han waded the river or crossed in small boats or rafts in disorganized groups. The disintegration of the ROK Army now set in with alarming speed." (Paschall 30)

5. Seoul had fallen by the fourth day of the invasion (June 28), and by the sixth day everything north of the Han river had been lost. Of the 98,000 men in the ROK Army on June 25, 34,000 were either killed, captured, or missing in the first week of the war.

6. On June 29th **General Douglas MacArthur**, hero of WWII and the American military commander in the Far East, is placed in charge of the U.N. effort to assist the South Koreans. By 30th, he convinces Truman to send in infantry.

7. American forces were unable to do much and were defeated in many battles. North Korean supply lines were stretching beyond serviceability, however, and the advanced slowed down drastically.
C. The U.N. Drive North: September-October, 1950

1. MacArthur devices a daring campaign to take back the offensive. The key to his plan was an amphibious attack at **Inchon**, which was relatively close to the capital. It was a difficult maneuver, however, as the tides only allowed landings during three hours out of every twelve. While Marines came by sea and headed for the capital, the U.S. Army 7th division would divert enemy attention and cover the marines. The division was understrength, however, so it was decided to supplement it with Koreans. A massive bombing effort would destroy the North Korean supply lines. The operation began September 11, and by September 16 Seoul was recaptured.

2. The drive north begins. On October 1, amidst American victories in the South, South Korean units cross the 38th parallel heading north. MacArthur meets with Truman on the 9th to discuss Chinese intervention, but they concluded it was too late for them to be the decisive element.

3. By October 19, 1950, the U.S. Army captures the North Korean capital, **Pyongyang**. However, their supply line is now stretched far too much, and morale plummets without the traditional American amenities of food, shoes, and heating.

4. Large number of **Chinese troops** are found amidst the North Koreans, alarming many.


1. A massive **Air Campaign** is launched on November 5, 1950. This all-out assault on Communist intrusion in the South fails miserably.

2. Winter came, and the lack of supplies resulted in not only extremely low morale, but also the death of many Americans unequipped to deal with the cold.
   i. American quartermasters had not been ready to deal with cold weather fighting. All the cold gear that they distributed consisted of overcoats.


4. By December 5 1950 Communist forces recapture Pyongyang. On December 15, President Truman announces that the U.S. is in grave danger, and by the 24th U.N. forces complete evacuation by sea from the North Korean port of Hungnam.

E. The Second U.N. Offensive: December 26-April 11, 1950

1. The resurgence of U.N. forces is accredited to **Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway**. He had been recently promoted when his commander officer was killed during the U.N. flight South. He became almost legendary in his initiative to complete a task by any means possible, even if it meant doing it without technological advantages (for example, he employed messenger carriers when forced to do so), as well as his interaction with the soldiers. He provided stationary and writing utensils for the soldiers to be able to write letters home, gave up his gloves to any soldier that really needed them, and was rumored to once have tied a soldier's bootlace while on a march.
He raised morale significantly.
2. On December 30, the first mass flight of Communist MiG-15 jet fighters attack U.S. jets near the *Yalu* river.
3. He decided the army was not yet ready to attack, and withdrew his forces from Seoul when the North Koreans mounted an all-out *New Year's Offensive*.
4. When on January 15 the North Korean offensive begins to stall, Ridgway begins to form a thing defensive line and starts a small-scale offensive. By February 1, 1951, the U.N. brands China as an aggressor.
5. He mounts a major battle on *Chipyong-ni*, were overmatched U.S. soldiers hold off a large number of Chinese, killing many in the process. An American armored tank force was mobilized for support. The U.N. forces won the battle, but there were hundreds of casualties on each side, which amounted to a large percentage of the small divisions that had battled.
6. Ridgway mounts a major U.N. offensive, code-name *KILLER*, on February 21, 1951. By March 14 Seoul is retaken, and by March 25 they begin to cross the 38th parallel. While some battles were lost, the overall campaign kept moving forward.

F. Ridgway against the Renewed North Korean Offensive: April 11-November 27, 1951

1. *MacArthur's "heroic" glory approach goes against Truman's principle of sustaining the war through minimal support, leads to Truman firing him. Ridgway is assigned commander of the U.N. forces in his stead.*
2. On April 22, 1951, North Korean forces launch a *Spring Offensive*, pushing the U.N. forces back below the 38th parallel, but failing to take Seoul. The U.N. offensive begun by Ridgway and continued by his replacement, *General Van Fleet*, could not be sustained due to the massive amounts of Chinese foot soldiers pushing south.
3. The U.S. Air Force launches *Operation Strangle* in May of 1951, mobilizing to create a large number of holes in the ground (to facilitate flooding in North Korean supply routes) and destroying bridges, all aimed to cut the North Korean supply line. There were too many Chinese footmen to allow much success to this plan.
4. U.N. Forces begin to push forward again, stopping within 5 miles of the 38th parallel.
5. On June 23, the Soviet U.N. delegate, *Jacob A. Malik*, proposed cease-fire talks, and on July 10, Military armistice negotiations begin at Kaesong.
6. Air-to-air campaigns increase in frequency, and the first Jet Ace, captain James Jabara, surfaces.
7. When negotiations stalled in August, Van Fleet began a series of small offensives.

G. Cease-Fire Talks: November 28, 1951-October 30, 1952

1. On July, 1951, false rumours of a cease-fire spread throughout the front. Fighting virtually stopped. On August the Communists withdrew from the negotiations, and the U.N. advancement continued at a rate of about five miles per month.
2. When negotiations resumed in November the fighting also halted, until restarting again in April of 1952 when the Communists once again withdrew. During that rest period U.N. strength grew about 10% while North Korean grew about 22%.
3. Truce talks stalemate as the Communist forces demand the forced repatriation of prisoners.
4. This pattern is repeated throughout the year. On April 28, 1952, Ridgway is promoted as N.A.T.O. commander, and General Mark W. Clark replaces him.
5. ROK Forces undergo training and an influx of weaponry. Suddenly, on October 6, 1952, the North Koreans stage the largest offensive of the year, suspending all truce talks. Surprisingly, the massively outnumbered ROK divisions hold their grounds and the North Koreans retreat amidst heavy casualties.
6. Truman approves a Defense Department recommendation upgrading ROK weaponry and greatly enlarging the size of their military.

H. The Negotiations: November 1952-July 1953

1. On March 30, 1953, the Chinese Communist Premier Chou En-Lai announced that the Communist side will agree to exchange all prisoners on voluntary repatriation basis. By May 3, only the sick and wounded are exchanged.
2. On June 14, 1953, the North Koreans launched the biggest offensive in more than two years, pushing the South Korean troops more than eight miles.
3. On May 22, the President Eisenhower authorized Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to relay a message to the Chinese and Russians: if the stalemate continued, the U.S. was willing to attack the previously untouched Communist sanctuary of Manchuria. The Communist negotiator agrees to deal.
4. As negotiations furthered, South Korean President Syngman Rhee decided that in order to save any U.N. converts from repatriation, he would stage the escape of some 25,000 Communist prisoners. This stalled negotiations for a while, and Eisenhower threatened Rhee.
5. On July 27, 1953, the cease-fire was signed.

I. Military Strength

1. The North Koreans had:
   a. 150 medium tanks mounting 85-mm guns.
   b. Three types of artillery: the 122-mm Howitzer, 76-mm self-propelled gun, and the 76-mm divisional gun with a maximum range of more than 14,000 yards.
   c. Triple the number of artillery pieces of the south.
   d. Small tactical Air Force.
   e. 89,000 combat troops, 18,600 trained troops in its Border Constabulary, and 23,000 partially trained troops in three reserve divisions.
   f. A small coast guard and navy.
2. The South Koreans had:
a. No tanks.
b. 105-mm Howitzer with a maximum range of 8,200.
c. 1/3 the number of Korean artillery.
d. No Air Force.
e. 45,000 national police untrained for tactical use.
f. a small coast guard and navy.

J. Technology

1. The North Koreans relied on Russian Technology. While their YAK planes were not as effective as American airplanes and bombers, they had the advantage in the beginning, and would be replaced by MiG jet fighters later in the war. The U.S. Bazooka was unable to penetrate the Russian-made T-34 tanks, resulting in various American losses.
2. When South Koreans were used to strengthen American divisions, trouble arose regarding the equipment. Shoes, clothes, and helmets were just too large for the South Koreans, who were physically smaller. In addition, Koreans were unfamiliar with the use of equipment such as Jeeps, and had to be trained on the spot.
3. The U.S. heavily employed the use of B-29 bombers to clear targets in order for footmen advance.
4. Troop Rations begin to go changes, as the implementation of plastic spoons increase troops morale. Easier access to can openers also do wonders to troop morale.
5. The implementation of regular bathing as well as fresh set of clothes helped to improve morale greatly.
6. Napalm was one of the newest and deadliest of weapons devised for the Korean war. Coupled with the heavy use of aerial warfare, thousands of civilians were killed.
7. While nuclear and chemical weapons were considered, they were never used (although moved for easy positioning if the need arose).

K. Tactics and Strategy

1. North Korean tactics relied on fast-moving tank divisions attacking vital points and moving forward, stretching supply lines to their limits while covered by artillery fire superior to the enemy's. There seems to be an obvious Blitzkrieg influence. While at first the tanks were deployed openly in order to lower enemy morale, successful American air strikes resulted in night movement as well as use of buildings and destroyed villages for cover.
   i. North Korean footmen attacked in columns of four, spreading out whenever artillery was used against them in order to minimize losses.
2. South Koreans had no real tactics to speak of; instead, they preferred either massive footmen attacks or they would follow American orders.
L. Resistance Movements and Guerrilla Warfare

1. As U.N. forces approached Communist-held towns, oftentimes rebels within the town would strike against the North Korean Army men, retaking the town if conditions were favourable. All of the communists would be kill, and they would be able to retain 1/3 of all military equipment they found, giving the rest to the U.N. forces.

2. On February 15, 1951, the U.S. establishes **island support bases** to aid North Korean partisans attacking Communist forces on the mainland. These mostly serve to train Koreans in guerrilla warfare, as instructed by American soldiers.
   i. The North Koreans begin a sweep of these bases on August 3, 1951. Fierce battles continue on until well into 1952.

III. Non-Combatants and the Korean War

A. The Economy

1. North Korea was the industrial center, containing all of Korea's iron, steel, and chemical industries. The majority of hydro-electric plants, as well as mineral resources, were also located in the North. The South was more of an agricultural area.

2. In order to maintain self-sufficiency, the North sent 2,000,000 refugees into the already crowded South, thinning its population and abating food shortages. On the other hand, the South began to suffer from overcrowding and lack of adequate food supplies.

3. American bombing of key dams in North Korea resulted in massive floodings, which ruined the rice harvest and damaged the economy greatly. Entire villages were swept away and with the crop destroyed, starvation was the certain fate of many.

B. The Home Front

1. Americans supported the Korean war from the beginning. When Truman announced the soldiers would be home by Thanksgiving, 1950, the war effort was viewed kindly. However, when Truman reworded it postponing the homecoming until Christmas, the public was wary.

2. On December 15, 1950, Truman goes on a national radio broadcast to appeal to the people and warn of the dangers to the U.S. and democracy in general by the Soviet Union and the Korean War. He announces that the future of civilization depends on what is done to protect the principles of freedom and justice, namely in Korea. He also encourages the production of weapons and increases the mobilization for the war effort.

3. At around mid-January, 1951, newspaper articles begin detailing the possibility of a cease-fire. The Chinese demand acknowledgement of their Communist regime in the U.N. as well as the withdrawal of American forces from Taiwan. After consideration, the U.S. declines.

4. The Firing of General Douglas MacArthur on April 11, 1951 causes a period of support for him, with some talk of his running for president. The furor dies, however, when the
dissatisfaction with the war reassert itself.  
5. General Dwight D. Eisenhower is elected President of the U.S. in 1952, and when he assumes office in '53 the people hope for a way to win or end the war that many were coming to believe as pointless, unending bloodletting in Korea.

C. Women

1. Women did not have many rights in Korea at the time, and were instead responsible for the keeping of the household unless she was of the upper classes, in which case she expected to be treated luxuriously.  
   i. Interestingly enough, the Communist movement had at one point advocated Women's Rights, but the point was unpopular enough as to lose importance as an issue.

D. The Arts, Media, and Propaganda

1. American culture had a heavy influence in South Korea, were everything and anything American became fashionable, and Koreans would barter whatever possible for American goods.  
   2. In the South the Media was mostly an offshoot of American media, with American music quite popular. In the North, however, the Media was a propaganda tool, with countless anti-American programs running around the clock and attack on South Korean and the American Capitalists.

IV. The Effects of the Korean War

A. Alliances

1. U.S. leaders made solemn pledges to come to the aid of no fewer than 49 friendly nations should the conditions warrant, creating a large world-wide mutual defense network.  
   2. Syngman Rhee demanded a mutual security pact.

B. Treaties

1. An east-west cease-fire line, the Demilitarized Zone, straddled the 38th parallel. Some western territory was lost, but a larger amount was gained in the eastern side.  
   2. Rhee demanded a treaty where the U.S. would commit itself to South Korean economic expansion and provide long-term economic aid.
C. Post-war Changes

1. For the first time in over 150 years, the U.S. abandoned its peacetime tradition of avoiding "entangling alliances."
2. Koreans lost all hope of reuniting the country.
3. The 347 Americans who refused to be repatriated to the U.S. aroused popular talk of Communist brainwashing, leading to even greater Cold War paranoia.
4. From then on, the U.S. was heavily armed and ready for war during peacetime.
5. South Korea, carried by the U.S., was pushed rapidly into industrialism, resulting in massive inflation.
6. Overall, the situation in Korea has not changed much since then. The war failed to accomplish any of its goals.
Works Cited


Works Consulted
