

# The KOREAN WAR

## COMMUNISM in ASIA

In China, in 1949, MAO ZEDONG led the Communist Party to drive CHIANG KAI-SHEK's NATIONALISTS out of power. The Nationalists fled to TAIWAN, where they set up a government that the West recognized as the legitimate Chinese ruling body. On the mainland, the PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA was established on October 1, 1949. Many Americans felt that their government should have done more to stop a Communist nation and ally of the USSR from forming.



In 1949, the Soviets detonated an atomic bomb, which meant that the U.S. no longer had a nuclear monopoly.

## The 38th PARALLEL

After World War II, a lot of colonized nations gained independence. In some cases, the imperial nations had to be forced to grant independence and the process turned violent.

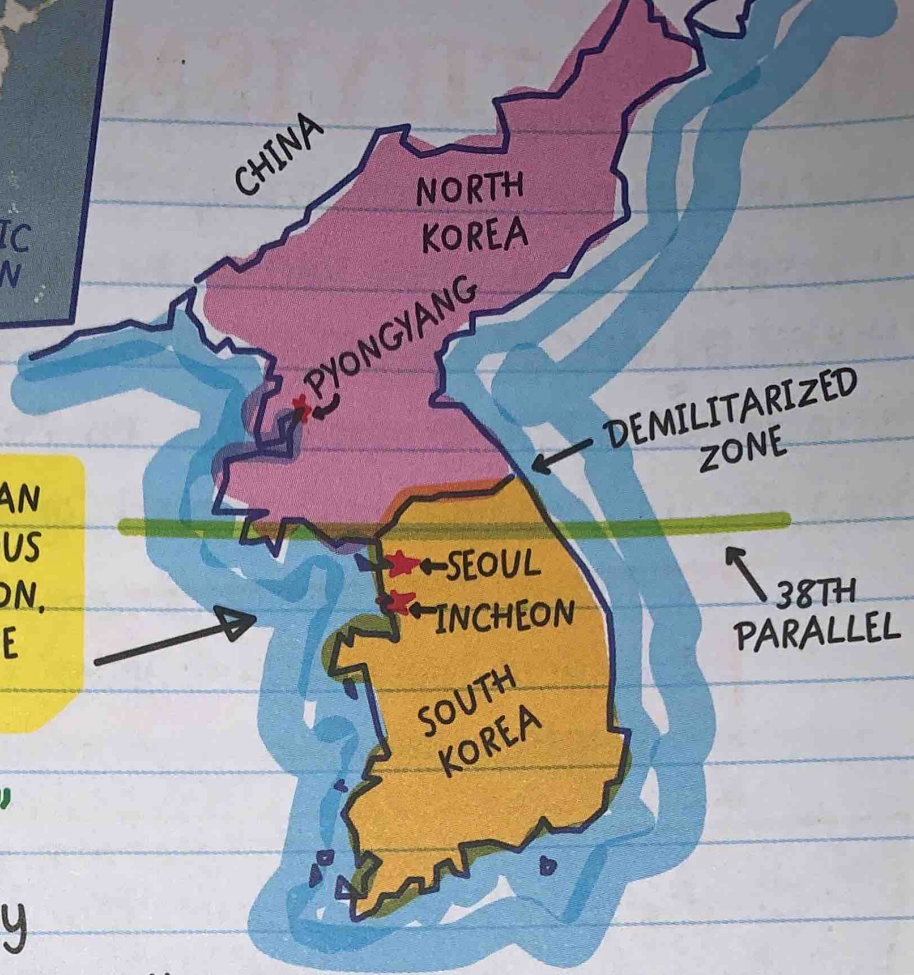
KOREA had been an occupied Japanese colony. The U.S. proposed dividing Korea on the 38th PARALLEL. The Soviets helped Communists take power in North Korea, and the U.S. supported the democratic government in SOUTH KOREA.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops crossed the border to try to take over South Korea and unite Korea under one Communist government. Figuring that the Soviet Union was involved, Truman sent military assistance to South Korea and asked for assistance from the United Nations. He didn't declare a Korean war.

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The United Nations put together soldiers from 16 different nations, but the majority were American. The forces were led by U.S. General Douglas MacArthur. MacArthur forced the North Korean troops to retreat, and the UN forces pushed them back toward China. MacArthur assumed that China and the USSR wouldn't intervene, so he got permission from Truman to invade North Korea. But on November 25, 1950, the Chinese army entered North Korea.

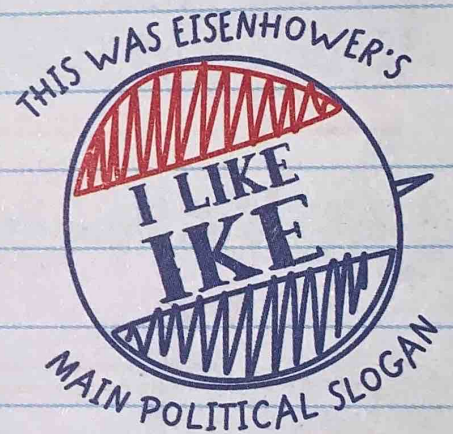
By 1951, the two sides reached a stalemate at the 38th parallel. General MacArthur wanted to go nuclear against China, but Truman refused. MacArthur publicly criticized Truman, and Truman fired him. Peace talks began in July 1951, but progress was slow.



MACARTHUR MADE AN UNLIKELY AMPHIBIOUS INVASION AT INCHEON, WHICH TURNED THE TIDE OF WAR.

## "I LIKE IKE"

Americans were angry about what seemed like pointless fighting in Korea. The Republican nominee, DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (known as "Ike"), promised to end the war and easily defeated Democrat ADLAI STEVENSON. He was the first Republican to defeat a Democrat in a presidential election since 1928.



It took more than a year, but a cease-fire finally ended fighting on July 27, 1953. A

**DE FACTO**  
in effect

DEMILITARIZED ZONE (DMZ) was established not far from the 38th parallel as a no-man's-land and **DE FACTO** border. There was still a North Korea. Thirty-three thousand Americans and nearly 2 million Koreans and Chinese died to show that neither side was afraid to use force. Still, it is often referred to as the "Forgotten War."

WE STILL DON'T HAVE A PEACE TREATY WITH NORTH KOREA.