
The Korean War – a Conflict Between the Soviet Union and the United States

During the year of 1950, a new tension came to light. Eventually, the conflict got so bad that it led to a war. It happened in Korea, but many countries ended up getting involved. This war would have a huge impact on the world and will help determine how to go about dealing with tensions and wars in the future.

Not too long before this conflict, there was the Cold War, which was between the Soviet Union and America. The Soviets wanted to expand, but the U.S. was not having it and came up with a containment policy. A product of this was NSC-68, a document stating that more effort would be given to contain communism. It applied to the spread of communism anywhere in the world, because of the fear that the Soviets would be able to develop everything they needed to destroy the United States. So, when the Soviet Union showed up in Korea, it was a problem. Korea was divided by the 38th parallel, which split it into North and South Korea. The Soviets took over the North, while the U.S. occupied the South. They both formed separate governments and everything kind of calmed down, so they both withdrew. In June of 1950, President Truman got a call about North Korea's attack on South Korea, and this is when the war began.

The call led Truman to believe that the invasion had something to do with the Soviet Union, and he was right. The President then decided to declare war and the United Nations supported it. This would make the Korean War “the first military action authorized by the United Nations”, rather than being approved by Congress. Truman did it this way because he thought it take Congress too long to make a decision, and he wanted to act fast as possible. The Security Council made it official on June 27th that the U.S. would be assisting in the war in Korea. Soon after, President Truman instructed all U.S. military forces to take action. Even though it was approved by some, not everyone in the nation, including the Truman's administration, agreed with it. Mainly because the fact that the President had violated the Constitution by not getting a declaration of war from Congress. Also, at the beginning of the war South Korea was not doing so well with the help of the United Nations. Truman defended himself, but people still were skeptical. This is why the war can also be known as “Mr. Truman's War”.

As the war continues, things take a turn and South Korea and the UN forces are not doing as bad. The General of the UN forces at the time was Douglas MacArthur and one of his plans is the reason the roles switched in the war. He planned an attack on Seoul's port city. This took the North by surprise, which resulted in South Korea taking back Seoul. After that General MacArthur felt really good about himself and thought that it would be a good idea to invade the

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North, and Truman agreed. Instead of just containing communism, MacArthur wanted to completely get rid of it. The plan was going good for the South and the UN, up until the month of October. They were just about to take over the capital of North Korea when China started sending threats. The General had ignored them and proceeded to head toward the border of China. When they got there, the Chinese were waiting to attack them, which caught MacArthur off guard. This led to a retreat of South Koreans and U.S., and North Korea taking back Seoul. MacArthur was failing at his job, and nobody really trusted him with the forces anymore. He started undermining the President, and this is when Truman agreed that he had to go. He was replaced with General Matthew Ridgway. Once Truman made this decision, many people in the nation thought he made the wrong decision and that MacArthur was still the one to lead them to victory. Many failed to realize why Truman did it, so he stated that if MacArthur was still had his position “he’d have had us in the Third World War and blown up two-thirds of the world”.

The fighting continued until a truce was made, but it was after Truman’s presidency. The war ended in 1953 on July 27th. Unfortunately, Korea remained divided and still is today. Many people still question if the Korean War was a success? It really could be both though, because it had its negatives and positives. The war did keep its promise and contain communism, but it also failed to bring peace to Korea, which was supposed to be the main reason for the U.S. and the other countries to get involved. Another question was if the war was worth all the casualties? The total amount of casualties caused by this war was around 5 million, and that is not including missing people. Also many were injured or wounded during the war. The impact was actually major for the more involved countries. One thing that the war did point out was that there was an issue with communism spreading. The Soviets had a plan to expand and have control, and if it was not for the war that could possibly have happened. Before Truman’s presidency ended, he had to make sure the Korean War was not just a distraction. He assumed that the Soviets could be trying to sneak an invasion of Europe and maybe other countries, so he decided to extend U.S. military forces in several places that he thought could be targets.

Overall, the war could have had a better outcome, if communication was right and they stuck to the original plan. The war has ended, but has not been officially called off. Even after everything died down, America still had fear that communism would find its way in. They tried dealing with it by testing everyone that was suspect and hunting down people working with the Communist. The built up fear eventually led to an act called the McCarran Internal Security Act. This stated that it was illegal to contribute in anyway to “the establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship” in the U.S. Truman did not agree and vetoed it, because he thought it was controlling, but Congress enacted it anyway. The fear of the expansion of communism caused a lot and many say it is about time that it is all put in the past. “Because of the involvement of the United Nations and countries such as the United States and China in the war, these nations will need to be signatories on an official peace treaty”. This quote is talking about how the leaders in today’s time should be the ones to sign a peace treaty, but some say that bringing it up now

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could cause more unnecessary tension between North and South Korea.

In conclusion, the Korean War was really a conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States taken place in Korea. It was basically a result of the Cold War, and if it was worth all that it cost is still up for debate. It had its pros of cons of course, but if it did not happen where would we be today? They say it is the “forgotten war” because it was not broadcasted like every other war the U.S. was involved in, but it has had just as much of an impact.

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