



After WW II, **Chiang Kai-shek** wanted a Republic in China, faced Communist opposition, was supported by the USA, and was the chief power in Southern China of the “Nationalists.”

In Northern China, Communist **Mao Zedong** was gaining power and peasant support. He wanted a Communist revolution to occur in China. After Japan was pushed out of China, at the conclusion of WW II, the North and South ceased cooperation, since their common enemy was defeated, and started competing for power with one another. In May of 1949, Chiang and his followers were forced to flee to the island of **Taiwan**. Mao Zedong established Communism on the mainland of China. The USA refused to accept China as a nation. The Truman Doctrine of Containment failed. Communism was gaining strong holds around the world, particularly in Asia. Many claimed that Communist spies had infiltrated the United States and radical hysteria began to spread.

When WW II ended, Japan relinquished control at the **38th parallel** of Korea to the USSR. This gave the USSR the power to implement Communism in the area. In 1948, The Republic of Korea was formed in **South Korea** and was led by **Syngman Rhee** in Seoul.

Also in 1948, The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, led by **Kim Sung Il**, in Pyongyang, was formed as a Communist nation in **North Korea**. They had the support of the USSR. In June of 1950, The Northern Communists invaded the Southern Peninsula. The Korean War began. South Korea asked the United Nations for help, the USSR boycotted the meeting due to the existence of Taiwan. The absence of the USSR helped the vote to pass. Truman sent troops to support South Korea. **General Douglas MacArthur** led the effort in Korea to keep the South free for Democracy.

In response to the northern invasion, MacArthur launched a defensive attack to keep the southern region free. China sent troops to assist North Korea. The war was between North and South Korea, but it was also about the Chinese military fighting USA military. There were moments when the North advanced and moments when the South advanced. Yet, for the most part, a standstill developed in Korea. Neither the Communists nor the Democratic South could deliver a decisive victory. MacArthur wanted to unleash the most powerful force the USA could use. He wanted to drop nuclear bombs on China.

The struggle was against North and South Korea; yet, China was the main force behind North Korea and North Korea would never fall until China stopped helping them. President Truman refused to use nuclear weapons and MacArthur openly critiqued Truman for the decision. Truman fired MacArthur as a result. Neither side could achieve a decisive victory, so an armistice was signed by the two sides. Technically, this did not end the war, it simply meant cooperation would exist between the regions. In South Korea, Democracy could be established. Yet, North Korea remained under Communism. To this day, there is tension between the two areas.

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