



EVOLUTION OF COLD WAR RULES OF ENGAGEMENT:  
THE SOVIET COMBAT ROLE IN THE KOREAN WAR, 1950-53

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U. S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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B.A., California State University at Sacramento, 1977

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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
1993



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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (Reference to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## **ABSTRACT**

**EVOLUTION OF COLD WAR RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: THE SOVIET COMBAT ROLE IN THE KOREAN WAR, 1950-53 by Major Thomas A. Lineer, USA, 176 pages.**

This historical study develops the evolution of de facto Cold War rules of engagement (ROE) from 1945 to 1953 from predominately American sources. Clausewitzian coalition theory and a model of national power--diplomatic, informational, economic, and military--are used to develop and analyze the ROEs.

The traditional view holds that the Soviets' role was limited as a planner, adviser, and logistician for the communist forces. New American and Soviet sources, opened by the end of the Cold War, challenges the limited view of the Soviet role. This study develops a new view of the Soviet role from the contemporaneous US Government, revisionist historians, and new sources.

President Truman presumed that the commitment of American combat forces would prevent World War III, and that the Soviets would not commit combat forces. In November 1950, the Soviet 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps entered combat and fought to the end of the war in July 1953.

The study concludes that the Korean War expanded the military ROEs to allow covert and deniable combat between American and Soviet armed forces in limited wars.

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My inspiration for this project was our children-- this is a part of their heritage. To Dorothy: may you read and understand. To Laura and our unknown: though your lives were brief, you are not forgotten--you live in our hearts. Finally, this paper is dedicated to my wife, Hui Suk, whose love and support made possible this thesis.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                                        |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| CCA     | Communist Chinese Army                                 |
| CCAF    | Communist Chinese Air Force                            |
| CIA     | Central Intelligence Agency                            |
| COMECON | Council for Mutual Economic Assistance                 |
| DPRK    | Democratic People's Republic of Korea                  |
| DPRKPA  | Democratic People's Republic of Korea<br>People's Army |
| ECA     | Economic Cooperation Association                       |
| KMAG    | Korean Military Assistance Group                       |
| LOC     | Line of Communication                                  |
| NSC     | National Security Council                              |
| PAAF    | People's Army Air Force (DPRK)                         |
| PRC     | People's Republic of China                             |
| ROC     | Republic of China                                      |
| ROE     | Rules of Engagement                                    |
| ROK     | Republic of Korea                                      |
| ROKA    | Republic of Korea Army                                 |
| UK      | United Kingdom                                         |
| UN      | United Nations                                         |
| US      | United States                                          |

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

As the Allied noose tightened on Berlin in the Spring of 1945, Adolf Hitler was heartened from a false radio report that stated Soviet forces were fighting United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US) forces. After all, had he not predicted it was inevitable that the Allies would split into two warring groups--the western allies against the Soviets? The political systems of the Western democracies and the communist Soviet Union were incompatible and destined for conflict, as had occurred after World War I. It was a miracle. Nazi Germany was saved to fight with the western allies against the Soviet Union.

In reality, this was another of Hitler's desperate delusions.<sup>1</sup> The allies proceeded to destroy Hitler and his system that had precipitated unprecedented global conflagration and destruction. However, there was some validity in Hitler's analysis. The incompatibility of the allied political systems contained the seeds of the Cold War, which were germinated by rival visions of the structure of the post-World War II world.

### Clausewitz's Coalition Warfare Theory

Carl von Clausewitz wrote more than a century earlier that the results of war are never final. To develop his theory, he employed the Hegelian dialectic. His thesis was that the termination of hostilities produced a new equilibrium (balance of power) between nations. The antithesis was that the new equilibrium lasts until the inevitable next war. The peace between wars was occupied by building and/or reconstitution of national forces and will. As a result, the perceived and actual balance of power was changed, and is only resolved by a new war. The synthesis (result of the new war) produced a new equilibrium, which was the thesis that renewed the endless cycles of war.<sup>2</sup>

Clausewitz's war without end dialectic applies to nations engaged in coalition warfare. Each coalition nation has different balance of power calculations, goals and objectives. The coalition is brought together by a common enemy or threat. Once this enemy or threat is removed, the coalition will separate with each nation following its own separate interests. The result will be conflicts between former coalition partners.

### Elements of National Power and Coalition

These conflicts between former coalition partners are manifested through the employment of the following elements of national power:

1. Diplomatic (negotiations, alliances, relations).

2. Economic (trade, industrial and technological bases).
3. Informational (propaganda and ideological beliefs).
4. Military (strength, use or show of force).<sup>3</sup>

The conflict may be fought with one or any combination of these national instruments of power that include entire spectrum conflict.

During the Cold War, the US and Soviet Union employed multiple instruments of national power, which spanned the entire conflict spectrum. The traditional view holds that direct use of the military instrument of national power, combat between the US and Soviet Union, was not employed. All other forms and uses of national power were used. This included the employment of the military instrument short of actual combat, such as occurred during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. The direct use of either the US or Soviet Union's military force was restricted to limited wars, such as the Korean War (1950-53), the Second Indochina War (1961-75), Grenada (1983), and Afghanistan (1979-1987). Each side carefully avoided any publication of direct military combat against the other. Further employment of the military instrument of power was by the armed and trained "proxies" of the US and Soviet Union. These "proxies" conducted numerous small wars, such as in Greece (1946-1949).

### Thesis and Limits

This historical thesis develops the evolution of de facto Cold War rules of engagement (ROE) from 1945 to 1953. Clausewitzian coalition theory and the elements of national power are used to develop and analyze the ROEs. The thesis focuses on the Soviet role in the Korean War, and how that role changed the ROEs. The glasnost period, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the conclusion of the Cold War allowed the unclassified publication of Russian accounts of Korean War participation. These accounts combined with declassified American documents challenges the accepted view of a very limited Soviet role.

This thesis develops the Soviet role using a Hegelian dialectic. The thesis is the contemporaneous US National Security Council (NSC) view of Soviet participation. The antithesis is the revisionist historian views of a limited Soviet role. The synthesis combines recently published Russian articles and declassified US documents to form a new view of Soviet participation and its consequences for the ROEs. This thesis provides documentary evidence that US and Soviet forces did engage in direct combat during the Korean War (1950-53), and that both governments withheld this information. In conclusion, the thesis develops a theory to explain the mutual withholding of information on the Soviet combat intervention.

The development of this thesis uses primary and secondary sources that combine facts and opinions. This thesis is primarily based on US declassified documents and sources because of the limited availability of Soviet sources. Consequently, it cannot be considered a definitive work because of the predominance of US sources combined with a mixture of facts and opinions.

#### Development of the Thesis by Chapter

Chapter II is the historical setting of the 1945 to 1950 period of the Cold War leading to the outbreak of the Korean War. How did the NSC's views of the Soviet Union evolve before the Korean War? This chapter focuses on the NSC's view using declassified US documents and recollections of principles from this period. Chapter II develops the US view of the Cold War ROEs.

Over the next four decades, different historical interpretations developed to explain the right or wrong of the NSC's view of the Soviet threat. Because the root causes of these differences are philosophical, no attempt was made to construct a reconciled and definitive history for this period. Instead, these interpretations were compared and contrasted.

With the accepted pre-Korean War employment of national power rule, Chapter III uses the Hegelian dialectic to construct a history of the Soviet role in the Korean War. The thesis is the contemporaneous NCA view that the Soviet

Union was the real enemy. The Soviet Union was the mastermind behind the communist aggression and commanded and controlled her satellite states of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and People's Republic of China (PRC) as surrogate combatants. The US was unprepared for World War III against the Soviet Union and her satellites. Thus, the conflict must be limited to the Korean Peninsula until the US had rebuilt her military capabilities, which was estimated to take at least two years. Consequently, all efforts must be taken to prevent a Soviet decision to become engaged in Korea and thus avoid direct combat with Soviet forces, which was the trigger for World War III.

The antithesis was the revisionist view that the Korean War was a civil war, which was made into an international war by US intervention. They discredited the contemporaneous NSC view as conclusions reached by biased information reinforced with an irrational fear of communism, instead of conclusions based on facts and analysis. The Soviet Union and PRC response to the US intervention was based on their respective self-interests contrary to the NSC interpretation as evidence of a Soviet-led monolithic communist conspiracy to conquer the world. The communist response resulted in a loosely formed confederation that battled the much more cohesive US lead coalition. The Soviet role was strictly limited to diplomatic, informational, economic, and military logistics support for

the DPRK and the PRC. This support to the DPRK and PRC was inadequate and uncoordinated, which proved the NSC view of the communist monolith as fiction.

The synthesis compares and contrasts the contemporaneous and traditional views with declassified US documents and recently published Soviet and Russian military histories. These documents and histories provide documentary evidence that the Soviet Union was an active combat participant in the Korean War. Instead of the NSC or revisionist views, Soviet participation is better interpreted under the lens of coalition warfare. This chapter provides a fragmentary Soviet order of battle during the Korean War. The conclusion is how the Korean War changed and modified the Cold War ROEs that prohibited combat between US and Soviet forces.

Chapter IV considers the dilemma confronting the Truman Administration. In the last few days of June 1950, the Truman Administration employed a set of facts and assumptions to make a rapid decision to employ United States military power in Korea to prevent World War III. The question that this chapter seeks to answer is: what if one or more of the assumptions were wrong and/or the enemy (Soviet Union) goes outside of the previously accepted Cold War ROEs? From the recently declassified NSC documents, the thesis documents that the Truman Administration knew of direct Soviet combat involvement. In the informational



campaign against the communists, the Truman Administration accused the Soviet Union of every sin except for direct combat involvement. Why did the Truman Administration develop a policy that studiously avoided any acknowledgment of the Soviet combat role? This chapter concludes with theory to explain the "cooperation" between the Truman Administration and the Soviet Union to suppress any public knowledge of the Soviet combat role during the Korean War.

Dwight D. Eisenhower won the 1952 Presidential election partly because of his pledge to end the Korean War. Chapter V seeks to answer the following questions: Did the Eisenhower Administration change or continue the Truman Administration policy to suppress public information on the Soviet combat role? How did the Eisenhower Administration view and modify the Cold War ROEs, specifically direct US and Soviet combat?

Chapter VI draws conclusions and lessons from the revision of Cold War ROEs that allowed plausibly deniable direct combat between the United States and Soviet Union. Either coalition, democratic or communist, used combat forces to protect its vital strategic interests. Korea was such a strategic interest that neither side could afford to lose. Neither coalition computed or had adequate military strength to assure victory in a World War III. During the three mobile phases of the Korean War (DPRK invasion to Pusan, the United Nations counterattack and drive to Yalu,

and the Chinese intervention), each side was convinced it had the winning answer. However, the winning strategy proved to be elusive because neither side believed it could afford to lose. Consequently, the two coalitions contributed an adequate mixture of forces to avoid defeat and sparking World War III. The US "cooperated" with the Soviet Union to conceal Soviet combat actions to limit the scope of the war. In doing so, the Cold War ROEs were permanently changed. This change later manifested itself in the alleged 1950 to 1970 US reconnaissance overflights of the Soviet Union and a repeat performance of the Soviet Korean War role in the Second Indochina War.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>John Toland, Adolf Hitler (New York: Ballantine Books, 1976), 874-875.

<sup>2</sup>Carl von Clausewitz, On War (Reproduced by the United States Army Command and General Staff College C610 Introduction to Military Theory: 1992), 54-61.

<sup>3</sup>"Reading A: Fundamental Concepts Section A. National Security," Joint and Combined Environments (C510) (Fort Leavenworth: United States Command and General Staff College: 1992), 57-8.

## CHAPTER II

### THE COLD WAR 1945-50

The Cold War lasted from the conclusion of World War II (1945) to the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991). During and immediately after World War II, the Allies held a series of conferences, which concluded agreements to establish a lasting peace. These conferences and agreements included:

1. The Declaration of the United Nations (1 January 1942).
2. The Moscow Conference of Foreign Secretaries that resulted in the Declarations on General Security, Italy, on German Atrocities, and on Austria (30 October 1943).
3. The Cairo and Tehran Conferences (November 1943), which plotted war strategies and declared that the allies would cooperate in peace as in war.
4. The Yalta (February 1945) and Potsdam (July 1945) Conferences.
5. The Moscow Foreign Minister Conference (December 1945), which agreed to a Far Eastern Commission composed of 11 countries to formulate principles to govern Japan and to a joint Soviet-American Commission and a four-power trusteeship to rule and prepare Korea for independence.<sup>1</sup>

These conferences and agreements tried to break Clausewitz's dialectic of endless war. Unfortunately, Clausewitz's assumption that coalitions fracture upon the successful conclusion of war held true. Each of the four major allied powers entered World War II with discordant purposes and objectives. These differences resulted in conflicting formal and informal understandings of the spirit of the conferences and agreements. Subsequent interpretative disagreements and outright violations between the allies from 1945 to 1950 created informal Cold War rules of engagement between the ex-allies.

#### Allies with Different Purposes and Objectives

The big four Allies of World War II were the Republic of China (ROC), the UK, the Soviet Union, and the US. Each nation entered the Allied coalition because of their common Axis enemies of Germany and Japan. Their different backgrounds and circumstances resulted in conflicting war aims and associated post-war visions.

The ROC was first to be engaged by the Axis powers. In the fall of 1931, Japan exploited the Nationalist and Communist Civil War<sup>2,3</sup> and seized Manchuria.<sup>4</sup> After several years of relative peace, the Japanese attack on 7 July 1937 at Lukouchia initiated the general war with China.<sup>5</sup> In September 1937, the ROC and communist insurgents agreed to halt their Civil War and to form a united front against the Japanese enemy "through parallel statements, not a single

declaration."<sup>6</sup> The collective Chinese war aim was "for our freedom to survive and develop as a nation."<sup>7</sup> This included the restoration of all Chinese territories and properties seized by foreign powers "since the first Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95."<sup>8</sup> China's war objectives led to conflicts with China's allies, first with the Soviet Union and subsequently with the US and the UK. The ROC and Communist military ceasefire generally held during the 1937-45 Sino-Japanese War.<sup>9</sup> However, both sides continued to use diplomatic and informational elements of power.<sup>10</sup> From 1924 to 1940, the Soviet Union was the ROC's major international source of military aid.<sup>11</sup> However, the Soviet Union changed from supporting the ROC to outright support of the communists by 1945. In exchange for entering the Pacific War, the Yalta agreement of 1945 gave the Soviet Union a special position in Manchuria. "China was left with little option but to confirm this; but when doing so by treaty of August 14, 1945, received in exchange Russia's promise to 'render to China moral support and aid,' which was 'to be entirely given to the National Government.'"<sup>12</sup> The Soviet Union promptly disregarded that part of the Yalta agreement. This was evidenced by the Soviet Union's "vital aid to the Chinese communists, turning over to them vast stores of surrendered Japanese arms and permitting them to move at will into areas under their control."<sup>13</sup> The ROC retreated to Taiwan in 1949. At the onset of the Korean War, the US

Navy blockaded the Taiwan Straits at the onset of the Korean War in July 1950. This blockade brought the US into direct conflict with the new PRC Government.

The UK declared war against Germany on 3 September 1939 in response to the 1 September 1939 invasion of Poland. The UK went to war against Germany to honor its pledge to defend Poland. Interestingly, the UK (and France) did not declare war on the Soviet Union when Soviet forces invaded Poland on 17 September 1939 and partitioned Poland with Germany. One interpretation for the UK and France's failure to declare war on the Soviet Union was that they could not contend with the combined military weight of Germany and Russia. The UK war objective was to reduce the power of Germany, and to hold the Soviet Union as far east as possible.<sup>14</sup> To this end, Churchill made bilateral agreements with Stalin dividing Europe into spheres of influence. President Roosevelt was excluded<sup>15</sup> and would not have approved.<sup>16</sup> The UK's fundamental view of post-war arrangements reflected the vicissitudes of European international politics. "The ally of today might become the enemy of tomorrow and, as tradition required, this principle was applied also to the Soviet Union in World War II."<sup>17</sup>

The Soviet Union's self-interests and ambitions dominated her relations with the Allied Western Powers and the Axis Powers. In 1938, the Soviet Union was diplomatically isolated and ignored by the major European

powers of Germany, Italy, France, and Great Britain.<sup>18</sup> After the 1938 Czechoslovakia crisis, the Soviets found themselves sought after as a possible ally by Nazi Germany and the Western powers. Stalin concluded that the UK and France failed to resist Hitler because of their desire to foment a war between Germany and Russia.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, he completed the famous Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact on 23 August 1939. This provided Hitler the necessary security to invade Poland on 1 September 1939 and start the European phase of World War II. The secret provision of this pact partitioned Poland and divided the rest of Eastern Europe into spheres of influence for eventual control or occupation. On 17 September 1939, the Soviet Union moved to occupy its portion of Poland. In September and October 1939, the Soviet Union forced the three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to sign mutual assistance pacts and in July 1940 absorbed them. Finland resisted Soviet pressure and was invaded by the Red Army on 29 November 1939. The UK and France supported Finland and decided to send combat troops a few days before the conclusion of the Soviet-Finnish Peace Treaty in March 1940. As a result of their actions, the Soviet Union was expelled from the League of Nations in 1939.<sup>20</sup> However, Stalin had accomplished his basic war aim to extend his western boundaries to about the same position as the Russian frontier of 1795 and added eastern Galicia.



The 22 June 1941 German invasion forced the Soviet Union into the Allied coalition. Soviet war aims did not change: push Soviet hegemony as far west in Europe as possible.<sup>21</sup> At Yalta, the Soviets added a new war aim: recover the lost influence and territory from the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War.<sup>22</sup>

The US unofficially entered the war with the Lend-Lease Act of 1940 and embargoes on raw materials to Japan. While officially a neutral nation, the US provided significant diplomatic, informational, economic and military assistance (Lend Lease) to the UK and waged diplomatic, informational, and economic war with Japan to force an end to Japanese aggression in China. With the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the US officially entered the war. The US objective was to replace the failed League of Nations with an effective United Nations (UN), where the allied powers would be "the Four Policemen."<sup>23</sup> Roosevelt's plan was to blend two hostile ideologies "into a harmonious spirit inspiring the future United Nations to open a new era in which strife among nations would give way to cooperation."<sup>24</sup> Further, "the United States and Great Britain could not fight the Soviet Union. The Europeans would simply have to endure the Russian domination, in the hope that their master would improve after a decade or two of hardships."<sup>25</sup> "Collective security, then, became the final and positive American war aim with the understanding

that the cooperation of the Soviet Union had to be secured."<sup>26</sup>

President Roosevelt's death on 12 April 1945 opened a struggle for the direction of US foreign policy.

Initially, President Truman continued Roosevelt's policy of concessions to the Soviets in return for cooperation.<sup>27</sup> The new American Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes wrote,

I had assumed that at the end of hostilities an era of peace would be so deeply desired by those nations that had fought the war in unity that the inevitable differences of opinion could be resolved without serious difficulty.<sup>28</sup>

Truman's and Stalin's views produced conflict at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. President Truman's experience at the Potsdam Conference combined with Soviet post-World War II intransigence changed his mind and the direction of American foreign policy. He later commented,

It had taken him a little time to grasp the truth as to Russian bad faith, but that he had since thoroughly learned it.<sup>29</sup>

In March 1946 in Fulton, Missouri, Winston Churchill prodded President Truman with his famous speech that stated: "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent."<sup>30</sup> As Clausewitz predicted, the Allied Coalition had separated.

#### The American View of the Soviet Union: 1946

President Roosevelt's hoped-for cooperation with the Soviet Union faded by 1946 with irreconcilable differences between the US and Soviet Union. President Truman directed

his Special Counsel, Clark M. Clifford, "to prepare a report summary of American relations with the Soviet Union."<sup>31</sup> The Clifford Report stated that there was a remarkable agreement among the senior National Security advisers to the President on "estimates of current and future Soviet policies," and "on recent Soviet activities affecting the security of the United States, and recommendations concerning American Policy with respect the Soviet Union."<sup>32</sup> The report started by stating:

The gravest problem facing the United States today is that of American relations with the Soviet Union. The solution of that problem may determine whether or not there will be a third World War. Soviet leaders appear to be conducting their nation on a course of aggrandizement designed to lead to eventual world domination by the U.S.S.R. Their goal, and their policies designed to reach it, are in direct conflict with American ideals, and the United States has not yet been able to persuade Stalin and his associates that world peace and prosperity lie not in the direction which the Soviet Union is moving but in the opposite direction of international cooperation and friendship.<sup>33</sup>

The report stated that Soviet foreign policy is based on the fundamental tenet of communist philosophy that peaceful coexistence of communist and capitalist nations was impossible<sup>34</sup> and on centuries-old Russian nationalism and expansionism concealed under the guise of international communism.<sup>35</sup> The Soviet strategy was to build up its own strength, to undermine capitalist nations, and to postpone the inevitable conflict for many years until the Soviet Union was stronger. "Soviet leaders will continue to

collaborate whenever it seems expedient, for time is needed to build up Soviet strength and weaken the opposition."<sup>36</sup>

In Europe, the Soviet Union considered that all land east from Stettin to Trieste was essential for its security. The Soviet opposition to US-UK peace settlements supported its efforts to control eastern Europe by allowing Red Army troops to remain legally in enemy countries.<sup>37</sup> The longer range Soviet goal was to dominate the eastern Mediterranean and near East.

[The] Soviet Union is interested in obtaining the withdrawal of British troops from Greece and the establishment of a "friendly" government there. It hopes to make Turkey a puppet state that could serve as a springboard for domination of the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>38</sup>

In Asia, the Soviet strategy employed the divide-and-conquer method to pave the path for Moscow-lead communist domination.

[The] basic Soviet objective in China, Korea, and Japan is to ensure that these countries remain internally divided and weak until such time as the U.S.S.R is in a position to exert greater influence there than any other country. The Chinese Communist Party is supported by the U.S.S.R. In Korea the Soviets have shown that they will consent to the unification of the country only if assured of a "friendly" government.<sup>39</sup>

The Clifford Report stated that "the Soviet Union joined the United Nations as a matter of expedience and not because of any devotion to abstract principles of peace."<sup>40</sup> The causes, disagreements, and mistrust between the two countries were a direct result of Soviet violations of the series of conferences and written agreements arranged by

President Roosevelt from January 1942 to February 1945. Soviet bad faith was poignantly demonstrated by Stalin. A few days before his death, President Roosevelt was denounced by Stalin in bitter and vitriolic tones because of a false report that the US had attempted to make a separate peace with Germany.<sup>41</sup> The US Government was convinced that the Soviet Union violated these agreements to the detriment of American security and interests in Germany, Austria, Eastern Europe (particularly flagrant in Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Poland), Iran, and Korea.<sup>42</sup>

In Korea, the Soviet refusal to consult with democratic parties in the US zone violated the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers December 1945 agreement that required a joint commission to consult with Korean democratic parties.<sup>43</sup> In contrast, the US viewed their conduct in Korea as constructive and to the letter and spirit of the Moscow Conference.

Clearly the Soviet Union was to blame for increasing international tensions and for the threat posed by their military forces. "The most obvious Soviet threat to American security is the growing ability of the U.S.S.R. to wage an offensive war against the United States."<sup>44</sup> This threat was stated by Stalin by "his intention of sparing no effort to build up the military strength of the Soviet Union."<sup>45</sup> It was backed up by intelligence reports of Soviet violations of the Berlin Protocol to destroy captured

German shipyards and submarines and by Soviet forces outnumbering US forces in Germany, Austria, and Korea "in overwhelming strength, thus placing our forces literally at the mercy of the Soviet Government."<sup>46</sup>

The report concluded that the primary objective of US foreign policy toward the Soviet Union was:

to convince Soviet leaders that it is in their interest to participate in a system of world cooperation, that there are no fundamental causes for war between our two nations, and that security and prosperity of the Soviet Union, and that of the rest of the world as well, is being jeopardized by aggressive militaristic imperialism such as that in which the Soviet Union is now engaged.<sup>47</sup>

The American message to Soviet leaders was that cooperation produces benefits, and non-cooperation produces costs. It was hoped that this message could be maintained firmly and long enough for its logic to permeate into the Soviet system.<sup>48</sup>

If US foreign policy objectives toward the Soviet Union could not be achieved through diplomatic and informational uses of national power, the US should join with the UK and other Western countries in using economic instruments of power to isolate the Soviet Union and satellite countries. The economic isolation of the Soviet block was conceived to be a "peaceful divorce," in which the West would:

build up a world of our own which will pursue its own objectives and will recognize the Soviet orbit as a distinct entity with which conflict is not predestined but with which we cannot pursue common aims.<sup>49</sup>

The US would have to be the center of this economic western alliance through generous American financial aid to ensure economic opportunities, personal freedom, and social equality.<sup>50</sup>

US foreign policies must be global in response to the overall Soviet objectives.<sup>51</sup> In addition to diplomatic, informational, and economic elements of national power,

the United States should maintain military forces powerful enough to restrain the Soviet Union and to confine Soviet influence to its present area.<sup>52</sup>

This is the start of American doctrine of containment.

The NSC blamed Soviet expansionism and hegemony as the reason for the fracture of the World War II Allied coalition. The Clifford Report provided a dual track US strategy to respond to the global Soviet challenge: the olive branch of peaceful coexistence and the sword and shield of containment.

The first track was an olive branch that principally relied on the use of diplomatic and informational elements of national power.

Our best chances of influencing Soviet leaders consist in making it unmistakably clear that action contrary to our conception of a decent world order will rebound to the disadvantage of the Soviet regime whereas friendly and cooperative action will pay dividends.<sup>53</sup>

This strategy was rooted in President Roosevelt's post-war vision of cooperation. However, in the year since the conclusion of World War II, it had lost credibility within the NSC.

The second strategy was the sword and shield employing all elements of national power short of direct military combat with the Soviet Union. This strategy relied more on the economic and military instruments of power than the diplomatic and informational for success. The Clifford Report (24 September 1946) laid the foundation for the Truman Doctrine (12 March 1947) of providing military assistance to defeat Soviet sponsored or inspired aggression, for the Marshall Plan (8 May 1947) of economic aid to immunize allies from the siren calls of communism, and for the diplomatic and informational effort to contain the Soviet Union's control and influence.

#### Enunciation and Debate of America's Cold War Policy

The Clifford Report provided a factual and intellectual foundation to change American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union from cooperation, based on western concessions, to confrontation, based on the US creating and leading western alliances. This change was implemented from late 1946 through the spring of 1947 before the onset of the public debate in the summer of 1947.

On 12 March 1947, President Truman addressed a Joint Session of Congress and enunciated the "Truman Doctrine." President Truman seized the communist insurgency in Greece with Soviet threats to Turkey as continued proof of hostile Soviet actions that required an American counter-action. The Truman Doctrine stated that the US would provide Greece



and Turkey (and in general all non-communist countries) economic and military assistance in defeating direct and indirect Soviet communist insurgencies. The military aid was limited to military hardware and advisers.

To persuade Congress and the American public, President Truman argued that the World War II sacrifices would be in vain if the American postwar vision collapsed because of failure to resist Soviet hegemony. President Truman stated,

We shall not realize our objectives, however, unless we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes.<sup>54</sup>

The US objective was the implementation of the principles of the UN Charter. Further, he articulated a domino theory, and stated that Soviet hegemony in Greece and Turkey

would be disastrous not only for them but for the world. Discouragement and possibly failure would quickly be the lot of neighboring peoples striving to maintain their freedom and independence.<sup>55</sup>

President Truman asked for and received immediate Congressional support and action to implement this shift in American policy.

The harsh European winter of 1946-47 combined with the Soviet threat was instrumental in the formulation of the Marshall Plan. During this winter, Western Europe suffered chronic housing and food shortages. Former President Herbert Hoover's report to President Truman on 27 February 1947 painted a desperate situation in Germany, and generally

unstable conditions throughout Western Europe. After suffering great economic destruction and dislocation during the war, the countries of Western Europe did not have the financial resources for reconstruction. Former President Hoover's report concluded that the US would have to provide food and capital for European economic recovery or risk losing the peace.<sup>56</sup>

The Marshall Plan, as described by Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson on 8 May 1947, was promulgated in our national self-interest. The US objective was to provide for the economic stabilization of Europe, which included the Soviet Union and dominated states of Eastern Europe. Stabilization of Europe was essential.

Until the various countries of the world get on their feet and become self-supporting, there can be no political or economic stability in the world<sup>57</sup> and no lasting peace or prosperity for any of us.

This was the economic complement to the Truman Doctrine. The priority and eligibility for Marshall Plan economic aid was limited by the American containment policy.

Free peoples who are seeking to preserve their independence and democratic institutions and human needs against totalitarian pressures, either internal or external, will receive top priority for American reconstruction aid.<sup>58</sup>

Secretary of State George C. Marshall stated that Germany was the top priority for American reconstruction aid in his Chicago address of 18 November 1947.

The restoration of Europe involves the restoration of Germany. Without revival of Germany's economy there can be no revival of Europe's economy.<sup>59</sup>

Together, the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine mobilized and furnished American economic and military instruments of national power to implement of the doctrine of containment.

The Marshall Plan was offered to all countries of war-ravaged Europe. At first, the Soviet-controlled states of Poland and Czechoslovakia replied favorably, but then reversed their decisions under Stalin's pressure.<sup>60</sup> Stalin distrusted the United State's offer. Consequently, the Soviet Union rejected the Marshall Plan, and forced their satellites to do likewise.<sup>61</sup> As a counter to the Marshall Plan, the Soviet Union established the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) in January 1949.<sup>62</sup> Thus, Europe and the world were split into two economic as well as political camps.

US foreign policy toward the Soviet Union had changed for good before the public debate of summer and fall 1947 between George F. Kennan ("Mr. X") and Walter Lippman over its merits. George F. Kennan was a career Foreign Service Officer and very influential in analyzing Soviet foreign policy.<sup>63</sup> Walter Lippman was one of the most widely-read and influential American authors and journalist of this period.<sup>64</sup> Kennan and Lippman endorsed the Marshall Plan, and had contributed to its formulation. The debate centered on the Truman Doctrine's policy of containment. This debate was for American public opinion and support.

The public informational battle for the American public support was initiated by George F. Kennan's article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," published in Foreign Affairs, Volume XXV, July 1947. In this article, Kennan reiterated the Clifford Report's sense that the Soviet Union could not be trusted in the postwar world. "There can never be on Moscow's side any sincere assumption of a community of aims between the Soviet Union and power which are regarded as capitalism."<sup>65</sup> Consequently, it "means we are going to continue for a long time to find the Russians difficult to deal with."<sup>66</sup> On one hand, the Soviets were easier to deal with than Napoleon and Hitler because they are sensitive to and will withdraw in the face of superior forces. On the other hand, Soviet ideology discouraged and prevented a single decisive victory by its opponents.<sup>67</sup> Thus, the "Russians look forward to a duel of infinite duration, and they see that already they have scored great successes."<sup>68</sup> The solution Kennan proposed was containment until the internal and inherent weakness of the Soviet system forces a change in Soviet conduct.

Balanced against this are the facts that Russia, as opposed to the Western world in general, is still by far the weaker party, that Soviet policy is highly flexible, and that Soviet society may well contain deficiencies which will eventually weaken its own total potential. This would of itself warrant the United States entering with reasonable confidence upon a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world.<sup>69</sup>

Walter Lippman agreed with Kennan's thesis that "Soviet power will expand unless it is prevented from expanding because it is confronted with power, primarily American power, that it must respect."<sup>70</sup> However, Lippman contended that Kennan's analysis was flawed.

Lippman viewed Kennan's containment strategy as founded on the unsubstantiated belief that the Soviet system and threat would eventually collapse from internal decay, and failed to consider the historical inheritance of the communist Russians from the Czars. To contain future military adventures of the Soviet Union, Lippman reasoned that the US would have to construct, arm, and finance its own satellite alliances because the standing American military forces were insufficient to contend with all possible threats. These far-strung alliances conceded to the Soviet Union the international initiative by selecting the time and place for military confrontations. This structure of US-led alliances was proposed to be financed by manipulation of the world economy (sardonically stated as the planners in the State Department). Further, Soviet expansionism was more influenced by historical Russian insecurity than communist ideology. Lippman concluded that containment would result in the loss of US initiative, resources and prestige. Further, pursuit of containment would destroy the UN, which was the hope for a peaceful postwar world.<sup>71</sup>

As a counter to the Truman Doctrine, Lippman proposed a loose concept for European unity. This proposal was for a:

European system and a European economy. Not a German Unity but European unity, not German self-sufficiency but European self-sufficiency, not a Germany to contain Russia but a Germany neutralized as between Russia and the west, not the Truman Doctrine but the Marshall Plan, purged of the Truman Doctrine, should be the aims of our German policy.<sup>72</sup>

Instead of heavy military content contained in the Truman Doctrine, Lippman argued for diplomacy resulting from a balance of power.

Diplomacy deals with a world where rival powers organize a balance of power which deprives the rivals, however lacking in intimacy and however unresponsive to common appeals, of a good prospect of successful aggression. The balance of power<sup>73</sup> is such that they cannot afford to commit aggression.

This debate did not change the Truman Administration. Instead, the purpose of the debate was to prepare and mobilize the American public to support an expanded Cold War. The Clifford Report concluded that the US was already fighting Soviet expansionism by use of diplomatic and informational elements of national power. The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan announced that the US was willing to employ all elements of national power, including the military and economic elements, to stop Soviet hegemony.

The US and Soviet Union participated in a series of indirect confrontations from 1947 to 1950. This included conflicts in Greece, Berlin, Iran, China, Vietnam, and

Korea. Each conflict expanded and added to the de facto Cold War ROEs. The following are brief histories, and how each conflict expanded the de facto Cold War ROEs.

#### Greece: 1947-1949

The Greek Civil War enlarged the ROEs to include the limited use of the military element of national power. This war saw the Soviet Union and the West (UK and US) providing logistics, training, and advisers to opposing combatants.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the Greek Civil War was a limited military test of strength between the US and Soviet Union, whose proxies performed the actual combat.

The Truman administration viewed the Greek Civil War as Soviet-directed aggression to overthrow the legal government,<sup>75</sup> which was supported by a popular majority.<sup>76</sup> The Communist defeat in 1949 resulted from "US-UK military aid, the Greek military effort, and Tito's defection from the Cominform."<sup>77</sup> The US learned that military aid with advisers and economic support was a low risk, successful measure that stopped Soviet hegemony.

At the conclusion of the war, the de facto military ROEs allowed the US and Soviet Union to arm, train, and advise their proxies. However, combat between the US and Soviet Union armed forces was prohibited.

Ber     1948-1949

The next challenge to the Truman Doctrine was the Berlin Blockade in 1948-49. The Soviet Union tried to force the Western Power out of Berlin by imposing a blockade. It failed. Instead, it confirmed American and western fears of the Soviet Union. President Truman stated, "Russia's toughness and truculence in the Berlin matter has led many Europeans to realize the need for closer military assistance ties among the western nations, and this led to the discussions which eventually resulted in the establishment of NATO."<sup>78</sup> The Berlin Blockade hastened the establishment of the West German state<sup>79</sup> and its eventual rearmament and integration into NATO.<sup>80</sup>

The US concluded that the Soviet backdown on the Berlin Blockade acknowledged their political and economic weakness in Germany. Superior instruments of national power, diplomatic and economic, supported by a firm military resolve successfully avoided a direct military clash and achieved the political goals. Thus, the US de facto ROE was that Soviets would back down when confronted by superior instruments of national power.

The Council of Foreign Ministers was employed as a face-saving device to give the appearance of a quid pro quo. The Soviet Union would not try again in Europe, as they appeared to have adopted a similar containment policy. Rather, the Soviet Union turned east to the Middle East and



Asia, where the situation was more favorable for expanded influence and control.<sup>81</sup>

#### Iran: 1946-1950

During the World War II, Iran had been vital to the western allies for oil and to the Soviet Union as the major transit route for American Lend-Lease supplies. American and British troops were posted in Iran to control the supply route and oil. The Soviet Union moved troops into their common border area under the provisions of Article VI of the 1921 Irano-Soviet Treaty. The Soviet troops were withdrawn after the war.<sup>82</sup>

Iran's strategic geographical location and large proven oil reserves were the primary reasons for competition between Western Allies and the Soviet Union. Post-war Iran's variety of political, social, and economic weaknesses collided with the rivalry between Western powers and Soviet Union. These weaknesses combined with the perceived Soviet threat were successfully exploited by the US with military and economic aid.<sup>83</sup>

The Truman Administration's use of informational, economic, and military elements of national power successfully denied Soviet goals and brought Iran into the American sphere of influence. The competitive struggle for influence in Iran continued well beyond 1950. However, the US de facto ROEs were that Soviet global hegemonic goals could be defeated by an economy of force applications of

elements of national power. This later principle was further refined in the CIA inspired military coup of August 1953.<sup>84</sup>

#### China: 1945-1949

The ROC and communist ceasefire ended with the surrender of Japan in 1945. The World War II Allies choose different sides, and the Soviet Union flagrantly violated the Yalta Agreement in supporting the communists. The US pursued a dual track approach to the Chinese civil war. On one track, the US attempted to broker a peace settlement. On the other track, the US provided military logistic support for the ROC armies. The communists steadily gained the upper hand in the renewed civil war with massive Soviet support, internal divisions within the ROC Government, and rampant inflation.<sup>85</sup> In 1949, the communists forced the ROC to flee the mainland to Taiwan, and proceeded to consolidate their victory over the next few years.

The contemporary American view of the communist victory was that:

The USSR, in its drive for world domination, can be expected to continue its present attempts at expansion and consolidation in Eurasia by all means short of direct involvement of Soviet armed forces, in an attempt to attain eventual decisive military superiority over the US in intercontinental warfare. . . . Communist domination of China is significant primarily because it enhances USSR capabilities for obtaining Soviet strategic objectives in the Far East and, concomitantly, tends to insure the proSoviet political orientation of nearly half the population of that region with the consequent danger of eventual Soviet control over the remainder. Soviet ability to capitalize on the situa-

tion in China will depend on the degree of consolidation and control that the Chinese Communist can exert over all elements of Chinese society, and the control that the Kremlin can exert over Chinese Communist leaders. It must be assumed that the grasp of the USSR upon China and the Chinese Communist on the Chinese people will, for the foreseeable future, grow more firm.<sup>86</sup>

The popular US view was that China was lost to the communist monolith controlled by the Soviet Union. On 23 December 1949, the NSC reported bluntly to the President that the "extension of communist authority in China represents a grievous political defeat for us."<sup>87</sup> It was also a defeat for the US-led Western Alliance. However, members of coalitions have different objectives. The UK's objective in Asia was to protect Hong Kong, which was suddenly vulnerable to the PRC. Consequently, the UK along with several nations of the British Commonwealth established diplomatic relations with the new PRC Government within a year of their victory. Before the Korean War, the US had made similar calculations and preparations to recognize the PRC.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated, "The Communist were in complete control of China not primarily because the Nationalist suffered military defeat, but because the National government collapsed."<sup>88</sup> US intelligence reported on 19 October 1949 that:

Communist capabilities are such that only extended U.S. military occupation and control of Taiwan can prevent its eventual capture and subjugation by Chinese communist forces. Failing U.S. military occupation and control, a non-communist regime on Taiwan probably will succumb to the Chinese communist by the end of 1950.<sup>89</sup>

Secretary Acheson reasoned that the US had extricated itself from the Chinese civil war, and it was important not to be drawn into it again. Soon, the PRC would be generally recognized. China was now in the Soviet sphere of influence, but in the future there would be conflict between China and the Soviet Union. Continued military assistance to the ROC would only deflect Chinese fears from the Soviet Union to the US.<sup>90</sup> Thus, the Truman Administration waited for the inevitable collapse of the ROC regime before diplomatic recognition of the PRC.

Within the next year, Secretary Acheson State Department's calculation to recognize the PRC was scrambled by the Korean War and domestic politics of "who lost China?"<sup>91</sup> These fractured calculations added credence to American policy makers who viewed communism as a monolithic movement controlled by the Soviet Union, and discredited Acheson and others who saw potential cracks in the communist movements.

The Chinese Civil War added to the limited military ROE. The Soviet Union disregarded international agreements (diplomatic) to muted protests (informational) in supply and supporting (military) the communist victory. Thus, when one power (US) is unable to effectively employ its elements of national power and is unwilling to start a general war, the other power (Soviet Union) unilaterally determines the conflict ROEs.

### Indochina: 1946-1950

Japan seized the opportunity of the armistice between Germany and the pro-Axis Vichy French regime to occupy Indochina beginning on 22 September 1940. The local French colonial administration cooperated with the Japanese because they believed there was no other alternative course of action. This cooperation lasted until 9 March 1945, when the Japanese expelled all French colonial forces and administration. After the Japanese surrender in September 1945, the French returned to reestablish their colonial administration. Their administration was opposed by the communist Viet Minh, who had fought the Japanese occupation. Attempts at a peaceful settlement failed, and the war started on 19 December 1946 with communist attacks on French garrisons in Haiphong.<sup>92</sup>

The US initially viewed the Indochina conflict as a French colonial war. In principle, the US supported the post-World War II trend of decolonization. However, it could not support the leading role of the communist Viet Minh to expel the French. US intelligence wrote:

So long as the war against the French forces continues, neither the Communist nor the non-Communist group within the resistance is in a position to carry on an extensive and persistent propaganda against the other without splitting the ranks of the resistance. Both groups are agreed that elimination of all French controls is the primary objective. However, with their long experience in the techniques of persuasion and coercion and with their control of many of the important governmental positions, the communists are playing a winning game.<sup>93</sup>

For the anti-communist western governments, effective counter-measures against the Viet Minh communist threat were marginal:

There is almost no effective manner in which Western governments unilaterally through the French can oppose the trend favoring the Communists so long as the indigenous, potentially anti-communist forces accept predominantly Communist leadership in order to eliminate French control.<sup>94</sup>

In the first half of 1950, US intelligence believed that most immediate avenue for communist expansion was against the French in Indochina.<sup>95</sup> Despite this view, the US was reluctant to provide economic and military support for the French colonial effort. The US strategy to stop communism in Asia was:

to use its influence looking toward resolving the colonial nationalist conflict in such a way as to satisfy the fundamental demands of the nationalist-colonial conflict, lay the basis for political stability and resistance to communism, and avoid weakening the colonial powers who are our western allies.<sup>96</sup>

Further US intelligence analysis stated that if "Indochina fell into Communist hands, the way would be paved for communist control over Thailand and Burma."<sup>97</sup> This was the beginning of the US domino theory for Southeast Asia. The domino theory, a sense of urgency to stop the spread of communism in Asia, and the Korean War convinced the US to began providing economic and military logistical support for the French in July 1950. The Cold War ROE that evolved in US foreign policy was that the ideal in the stated policy principles and methods were secondary to a pragmatic

response to support many flavors of anti-communists in the world wide effort to contain Soviet-inspired and led communist expansionism.

### Korea: Conflicting Allied War Aims

The big four Allied powers of World War II had conflicting visions for post-war Korea. These visions were founded on their respective history and politics in Korea. Each vision was based on national self-interest.

Historically, the UK favored Chinese or Japanese hegemony over Korea. The UK had never favored Korean independence until the Cairo Declaration. At the end of World War II, the UK was too beset by economic problems and the dissolution of the empire to have a major interest or role in the future of Korea. Instead, the UK vision was embodied in the Allied declarations: a united and independent Korea. To implement this vision, the UK was willing to support and follow US policies.

China had a vital interest in the future of Korea, which was discounted with disastrous results by the US in 1950. The Korean Peninsula was a historic invasion route into China, and Manchuria contained a significant Korean minority. For either the ROC or PRC Governments, the issue of who ruled or dominated Korea was a major security concern. The Chinese vision was a united, independent, and pro-Chinese Korea, which would serve as a bulwark against China's historic rivals of Japan and Russia.

Russia and Japan divided Korea at about the 38th parallel into sphere of influence in 1896. Later, Japan used Korea as a base to defeat Russia in the 1904-5 War. The subsequent 1910 Japanese annexation witnessed thousands of Korean emigrating to Siberia, who would later provide a pool of trained communist cadre for Soviet domination. Consequently, the ruler of Korea was of vital importance to Soviet far east security. Thus, the Soviet Union's vision was a united, independent, and pro-Soviet Korea, which would serve both as a bulwark against the USSR's historic rivals of Japan and China and as base for the expansion of communism.<sup>98</sup>

Historically, the US had neither the ambition or power to exert any influence in Korea.<sup>99</sup> The result of World War II injected the US into the future of Korea. The US vision was a united, independent, pro-western Korea, which would serve as a buffer state between the historic rivals of Japan, China, and Russia.

Each Allied power had a common end state: an independent and unified Korea. However, national self-interests reflected the fundamental conflict over Korea: who would dominate Korea. "A shrimp is crushed in the battle of the whales"<sup>100</sup> is an Ancient Korean lament. This was Korea's past and future.



### Korea: The Approaching War - 1943-50

US policy toward Korea had three distinct periods. The first period was from the Cairo Conference of November 1943, where the Allies declared "that in due course Korea shall become free and independent,"<sup>101</sup> to September 1947, when the US moved the Korean independence question from the Soviet-American Joint Commission to the second regular session of the UN General Assembly on 17 September 1947. The second period was the UN sponsored transition for Korean independence from 14 November 1947 to 12 December 1948, when the third regular session of the UN General Assembly declared that,

There has been established a lawful government (the Government of the Republic of Korea) having effective control and jurisdiction over the part of Korea where the Temporary Commission was able to observe and consult.<sup>102</sup> and that this is the only such Government in Korea.

The third period was from January 1949 to the outbreak of the Korean War on 25 June 1950. This period was characterized by the development of diplomatic, economic, and military relationships between the US and Republic of Korea (ROK), and by the hostility between the ROK and DPRK.

Korean aspirations for independence were guaranteed by the Allies through international agreements reached at Cairo, Yalta, Potsdam, and Moscow. Following the Japanese surrender in 1945, Korea was split into two occupation zones. South of the 38th parallel was the US zone, and the Soviet zone was north. The Moscow Agreement of December

1945 created a US and Soviet Union Joint Commission. This Commission was charged to make recommendations on the formation of a provisional united Korean Government, and on the negotiation of a four power (US, Soviet Union, UK, ROC) trusteeship agreement to guide Korea toward full independence. It held fifteen formal sessions from 16 January 1946 to 5 February 1946, when negotiations were suspended. The negotiations were resumed in on 20 March 1946 and were suspended again on 6 May 1946. This pattern of protracted negotiations continued until the referral of the Korean question to the UN on 17 September 1947.<sup>103</sup> As a result, the joint US-Soviet Union occupation became a clearcut failure of Allied post-war cooperation because of irreconcilable strategic goals.

Korea was important to Soviet far eastern security because it intersected Soviet lines of communications between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. Furthermore, Korea represented a far eastern buffer state similar to Soviet controlled Eastern Europe. For the US, Korea's strategic importance was to deny Soviet control over the peninsula. If the Soviet Union achieved control over the Korean peninsula, US diplomatic, informational, and economic goals for China and Japan would be jeopardized, and general US security throughout the Pacific would be threatened.<sup>104</sup>

The inability of the US-Soviet Union Joint Commission to resolve these irreconcilable strategic goals

resulted in the US referring the Korean issue to the UN. After two months of debate, the UN General Assembly adopted on 14 November 1947 a US-proposed resolution for a nine-nation UN Temporary Commission on Korea. This Commission was empowered to facilitate national elections leading to the establishment of a National Korean Government and to the withdrawal of US and Soviet occupation forces. The Commission was denied access to Soviet-occupied North Korea. This denial resulted in a further UN General Assembly resolution on 26 February 1948 that stated:

the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea should proceed with the observance of elections in all Korea or, if that were impossible, in as much of Korea as was accessible to it.<sup>105</sup>

Subsequent to the resolution, elections were held in the US-occupied South Korea on 10 May 1948. The fairness of this election was questionable. The US occupation had favored the conservative political elements and had driven north the leftist and communists. Major moderate political figures, such as Kim Ku and Kim Kyu-sik, and leftist political parties did not participate. Many voters were uneducated and viewed the election as a referendum to end US occupation. They voted for the remaining ballot choices consisting mostly of conservatives. On 7 May 1948, North Korea completed the polarization of South Korean politics by renewing the threat to cut off electricity to the South.<sup>106</sup> With some misgivings, the elections were certified as valid by the UN Temporary Commission on 25 June 1948. The third

session of the UN General Assembly on 12 December 1948 confirmed the validity of the South Korean election and proclaimed that government as the legitimate government of Korea.<sup>107</sup>

The US use of the UN to establish the ROK achieved its strategic goal to deny Soviet control over the Korean Peninsula. The Soviet Union countered by holding elections in North Korea on 25 August 1948, which led the establishment of the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" on 9 September 1948. Both Korean Governments claimed jurisdiction over the entire Korean peninsula, which led to a guerrilla war in the south and frequent boarder clashes along the 38th parallel.<sup>108</sup>

The final period of US policy before the Korean War included the withdrawal of American forces and the provision of economic and military assistance to the ROK. As the US was pursing a political solution to the Korean problem, the Joint Chiefs of Staff stated on 26 September 1947,

from the standpoint of military security, the United States has little strategic interest in maintaining the present troops and bases in Korea. . . . In the light of the present severe shortage of military manpower, the corps of two divisions, totaling some 45,000 men, now maintained in South Korea, could well be used elsewhere, the withdrawal of these forces from Korea would not impair the military position of the Far East Command unless, in consequence, the Soviets establish military strength in south Korea capable of mounting an assault in Japan.<sup>109</sup>

As the political situation stabilized, US military forces began a gradual withdrawal starting in September 1948 and finishing on 29 June 1949.<sup>110</sup>

Concurrent with the US withdrawal was the establishment of the 500-man US Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG). KMAG worked with the US Ambassador to administer military aid. In the year before the outbreak of war, there were many internal American debates over the size and equipment to be supplied for the ROK armed forces. For example, the ROK requested the F-51 fighter/bomber. There was a debate over the wisdom and the ability of the ROK to maintain this aircraft. Additionally, the request was too late to be included in FY50 and FY51 budgets. Thus, the planes could not be supplied until 1952 at the earliest. Consequently, at the time of the DPRK invasion on 25 June 1950, "the program of American military aid to the Republic of Korea was barely getting under way."<sup>111</sup>

Throughout the period from 1945 to 1950, the US provided essential economic assistance to the ROK. The ROK economy was not self-sufficient. This was further aggravated by the separation of ROK's economy from North Korea and Japan. At first (1945-1948), the economic assistance provided through the US Army Military Government in Korea was to prevent disease and unrest that could threaten US occupation forces. The emphasis was on relief and rehabilitation for the civilian population consisting of

food, fertilizer, and agricultural supplies. The goal was to provide a satisfactory standard of living as measured by pre-war Japanese and potential North Korean living standards. The program held no prospect of financial return and no prospect of making the ROK self-sufficient economically. Rather, the assistance of \$356 million<sup>112</sup> was intended to enable the ROK to subsist at pre-war standards with a minimum of relief,<sup>113</sup> which "was justified only by political and strategic considerations of the highest order."<sup>114</sup> The economic program was shifted from the Department of the Army to the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) with the formation of the ROK in 1948. However, the priorities of the civilian administered ECA did not change to nation building from subsistence, and the ROK continued as an economic ward of the US.

Despite the ROK's economic and military shortcomings, President Rhee had an optimistic view of his capabilities. With a little American military assistance, "he was ready to go north and fight."<sup>115</sup> He realized that as long as American forces were in Korea, he could not undertake his war of unification. However, if the Americans furnished him with military assistance and then withdrew, "he would be ready to go with 150,000 Koreans who had fought either with the Japanese or Chinese."<sup>116</sup> However, the "Prime Minister and Minister of War, who was not on very good terms with President Rhee, wanted us to stay in Korea

to create an army and navy and to increase the Korean army to 150,000."<sup>117</sup> The 1949-50 reality was that the ROK did not have the forces President Rhee claimed, and that the ROK military was defensively equipped. The ROK military did not have and the US was not providing offensive capability (artillery, armor, combat aircraft) to launch a successful northern invasion.

The differences at highest levels of the ROK Government assessment of capabilities and objectives contributed to the following American intelligence assessment of 25 July 1949:

The predominant trend in Korea is toward complete Communist control of both northern and southern Korea. This trend is expected to continue until the Korean Republic falls victim to the presently less numerous but probably better trained and disciplined forces of the northern Communist regime, augmented when necessary by Chinese Communist forces from Manchuria. This trend may be accelerated by the inefficiency and shortsighted authoritarianism which characterize the Republic's efforts to restrain Communism in its territory, inducing by these oppressive measures a public reaction favoring Communism.

Barring the possible eventuality that the Republic will invite Communist domination earlier than planned by the USSR by impetuously openly hostilities with the northern regime, the time for invasion of the Republic must depend upon Soviet estimates of the area's vulnerability to an attack by the northern regime which does not involve assistance of USSR forces, as well as upon the USSR's planning schedule for extending its direct control in the Far East. Until that time arrives, Soviet short-term objectives may be adequately served by allowing the Republic to continue as an economic liability, draining US resources, while the USSR directs continuation of psychological warfare, harassing border incidents and guerrilla operations throughout the Republic.

There are factors, however, which tend to decelerate the trend toward Communist control of Korea. These are (1) the ability of the Republic's armed forces to absorb US training and equipment, (2) the effectiveness of US economic assistance in preventing distress and, ideally, in stimulating limited self-sufficiency, (3) the development of traditional Korean attitudes and standards that are incompatible with Communism and, (4) counteraction of the effects of Communist psychological attacks. Nevertheless, it is not expected that these factors can prevent ultimate Communist control of the whole of Korea.<sup>118</sup>

The report concluded that in case of Soviet attack, "the life expectancy of South Korea would be, at best, only a few days."<sup>119</sup>

If Khrushchev's recollections were correct, the Soviet Union had similar problems in restraining their surrogate, Kim Il-sung, from launching an attack on South Korea.<sup>120</sup> A recent Master of Military Arts and Science thesis concluded that the "evidence suggests that the Soviet Union was not responsible for proposing the concept or actively encouraging Kim Il Sung to attack the South."<sup>121</sup> Instead, Stalin did his best to restrain Kim Il Sung and agreed to the eventual invasion because of ideological solidarity.<sup>122</sup>

The Truman Administration did not see this supposed Soviet restraint and caution. Instead, it saw the Soviet Union as actively pursuing the complete communist domination of the Korean peninsula. The lesson that the US derived from its Korean experience was expressed by Secretary of State Dean Acheson in his speech to the National Press Club on 20 January 1950. Korea was outside of the American



defensive perimeter in the Pacific, within which the US would unilaterally employ military forces. However, Acheson warned that any communist move against the ROK was grounds for invoking "the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations."<sup>123</sup> The American policy, approved by President Truman in NSC 8/2 on 23 March 1949, was to consolidate the stability of the Government of the ROK by continued diplomatic, economic, and military support. The policy objective was to:

strengthen that Government to the point where it can (1) successfully contain the threat of expanding Communist influence and control arising out of the existence in north Korea of an aggressive Soviet-dominated regime, and (2) serve as a nucleus for the eventual peaceful unification of the entire country on a democratic basis.<sup>124</sup>

To implement this policy, the US adopted an economy of force strategy to deny Soviet control over the entire Korean Peninsula. This economy of force strategy relied on limited US economic and military assistance combined with UN diplomatic and US informational pressures to deter a communist attack and deny Soviet control over South Korea.

#### American Cold-War Understandings Prior to the Korean War

The series of Cold-War conflicts in Greece, Berlin, Iran, China, Indochina, and Korea confirmed the 1946 Clifford Report's assessment of the hostile nature of the Soviet Union, and the wisdom of George F. Kennan's containment strategy, implemented by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. By January 1950, it was clear to

President Truman and his NSC that the US was engaged in a bi-polar world struggle for survival with the Soviet Union. In this struggle, the US had used all elements of national power in varying levels to contain Soviet and communist expansionism.

The US viewed Asia as one of several fronts of direct and indirect conflict with the Soviet Union. The US viewed the Soviet Union as a first-class Asiatic power and the major threat to US and western interests and security in Asia and the Pacific, expressed in NSC 48/1 on 23 December 1949:

Now and for the foreseeable future it is the USSR which threatens to dominate Asia through the complementary instruments of communist conspiracy and diplomatic pressure supported by military strength. For the foreseeable future, therefore, our immediate objective must be to contain and where feasible to reduce the power and influence of the USSR in Asia to such a degree that the Soviet Union is not capable of threatening the security of the United States from that area and that the Soviet Union would encounter serious obstacles should it attempt to threaten the peace, national independence or stability of the Asiatic nations.<sup>125</sup>

The US did not intend to or was not capable of fighting a major land war on the Asian continent. Instead, the US military strategy relied on the atomic bomb to deter Soviet expansionism. Thus, the Soviet explosion of a nuclear device in August 1949 came as a great shock to the Truman Administration. No longer could the US "rely primarily on the threat of nuclear retaliation to deter or, if necessary, to stop a Soviet invasion."<sup>126</sup> Subsequently, President Truman ordered the NSC on 31 January 1950 to:

undertake a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans, in the light of the probable fission bomb capability and possible thermonuclear bomb capability of the Soviet Union.<sup>127</sup>

This review resulted in NSC 68, which was the first of "a series of basic national security policy papers produced each year through the Truman and Eisenhower administrations."<sup>128</sup> The premise of NSC 68 was that:

the Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world. Conflict has, therefore, become endemic and is waged, on the part of the Soviet Union, by violent or non-violent methods in accordance with the dictates of expediency. With the development of increasingly terrifying weapons of mass destruction, every individual faces the ever-present possibility of annihilation should the conflict enter the phase of total war.<sup>129</sup>

At the root of the US-Soviet conflict were the irreconcilable differences between freedom under a government of laws and "slavery under the grim oligarchy of the Kremlin."<sup>130</sup> The world-wide Soviet assault had polarized the world into two camps, and "a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere."<sup>131</sup> This analysis painted a black-and-white world situation.

The US had world leadership thrust upon it because it was the only power capable of stopping the Soviet quest for world domination.<sup>132</sup> However, the US was unprepared for a military confrontation with the Soviet Union.

The fact remains, however, that so long as the Soviet Union is virtually mobilized, and the United States has scarcely begun to summon up its forces, the greater capabilities of the U.S. are to that extent inoperative

in the struggle for power. Moreover, as the Soviet attainment of an atomic capability has demonstrated, the totalitarian state, at least in time of peace, can focus its efforts on any given project more readily than the democratic state.<sup>133</sup>

If war with the Soviet Union had broken out in 1950 or in the next few years, the US and western allies could only have waged a strategic defense with a couple of powerful atomic blows and hoped to hold on long enough for a World War II type mobilization and counterattack to victory.<sup>134</sup>

NSC 68 stated that the military component of containment had failed. US military strength had been allowed to decline because of sole possession of atomic weapons. Soviet military strength had continued to increase and had broken the US monopoly on atomic weapons.<sup>135</sup> The Soviet's military advantage placed the US at a disadvantage for any negotiations. Thus, it was imperative for the US to rebuild military strength before the commencement of successful negotiations. Further, the failure to rebuild the US military strength equal to or greater than the Soviet would result in the eventual collapse of containment.

The NSC viewed the Soviet threat to bring the free world under its control by subversion, infiltration, and intimidation backed up by overwhelming military force. The US was the glue in the center of the western coalition. For this coalition to work, it was essential that the:

allies and potential allies do not as a result of a sense of frustration or of Soviet intimidation drift into a course of neutrality eventually leading to Soviet domination. If this were to happen in Germany the

effect upon Western Europe and eventually upon us might be catastrophic.<sup>136</sup>

NSC 68 considered four options: Status quo, isolation, war, and a peacetime political, economic, and military build-up. Each option except the last was dismissed because it would lead to eventual Soviet domination. NSC 68's recommendation, which was accepted by the President called for:

a more rapid build-up of political, economic, and military strength and thereby of confidence in the free world than is now contemplated is the only course which is consistent with progress toward achieving our fundamental purpose. The frustration of the Kremlin design requires the free world to develop a successfully functioning political and economic system and a vigorous political offensive against the Soviet Union. These, in turn, require an adequate military shield under which they can develop. It is necessary to have the military power to deter, if possible, Soviet expansion, and to defeat, if necessary aggressive Soviet or Soviet-directed actions of a limited or total character.<sup>137</sup>

NSC 68 was a reaffirmation of approved American policy in NSC 20/4, which had been approved by President Truman on 24 November 1948. The only significant difference was the immediacy of the Soviet threat, which required a rapid build-up of US capabilities to counter significantly increased Soviet capabilities. This rapid build-up was the only chance of seizing the initiative from the Soviet Union and the only means short of war to force the Kremlin to negotiate acceptable agreements.<sup>138</sup>

NSC 68 incorporated the lessons the US Government drew from the Cold War from 1945 to 1950 and proposed an action plan to counter Soviet and communist advances. It

abandoned any distinction between national and global security. International and national securities were synonymous. This radically changed the US defense budgetary process. Instead of subordinating security needs in a reducing fixed budget, the perceived and expanded US security requirements justified large increases in succeeding defense budgets. As a result, the defense budget became the dominate element of the US national budget at the expense of the domestic budget.<sup>139</sup>

Korea was placed outside of the American security network because of US military weakness and a consensus desire among the NSC to avoid a land war on the Asian mainland.<sup>140</sup> Thus, the US adopted an economy of force strategy to deter an outright communist attack. When this failed and the North Korean invasion occurred on 25 June 1950, the assumptions, analysis, and conclusions of NSC 68 predicted the American response. The US reaction was not a reversal of American foreign policy, as has been suggested. Rather, it was the application of NSC 68 that any communist victory threatened the security of the US which would use all elements of its national power to prevent such a communist triumph. Thus, NSC 68, written in April 1950, laid the foundation for a rapid decision to employ US armed forces to resist the June 1950 North Korean invasion. Beyond the philosophical foundation to resist communism

everywhere, there was no direct linkage between NSC 68 and the outbreak of the Korean War.

During the Presidential Election of 1952, the Republicans' right wing accused Secretary of State Dean Acheson of inviting the DPRK invasion.<sup>141</sup> Later revisionist historians saw a conspiracy, which linked NSC 68 to the DPRK invasion and subsequent American remilitarization and a permanent war economy.<sup>142</sup>

These divergent views form the bases for Chapter III's analyses of the Soviet role in the Korean War. There are three parts to this analysis: the contemporaneous NSC view, the accepted historical view with its divergences, and the revised view based on recently declassified documents and articles.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Clark M. Clifford, American Relations with the Soviet Union: A Report to the President by the Special Counsel to the President, 24 September 1946. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 267, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 27-50.

<sup>2</sup>Lawrence K. Rosinger, China's Wartimes Politics 1937-1944 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945), 25.

<sup>3</sup>Sun Fo, China Looks Forward (United States Government: 1944), 34. Sun Fo is the son of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, founder of the modern Chinese Republic and an important leader of the Kuomintang (Nationalists). He writes, "From 1911 to 1927 we had not even attained the internal unity which to start building a progressive, powerful modern state. Just when this was about accomplished, foreign invasion struck our land to break up this unity by force, and continue the imperialist policy of "divide and rule" a weakened China."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 33.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Rosinger, 26-27. "The Communist on September 22, 1937 announced from their capital at Yen-an that they had on the basis of peace and national unity and joint resistance against foreign aggression, reached an understanding with the Kuomintang." Page 99: Chiang Kai-Shek Nationalist response was published on 23 September 1937. It stated that the Chinese Communist Party statement agreed with the spirit of the Third Plenary Session of the Kuomintang, and surrendered its prejudices for national unity.

<sup>7</sup>Fo, 33.

<sup>8</sup>Fo, 180. "China should recover such territories as Taiwan (Formosa) and Penghu Islands (Pescadores), which Japan took from us as a result of the first Sino-Japanese War, Talien (Dairen), Lushun (Port Arthur), and the South Manchuria Railway, which the enemy seized and possessed at the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the four Northeastern Provinces of Manchuria and Jehol, and all the territories held by the enemy since July 7, 1937."

<sup>9</sup>Rosinger, 38-39. There were several military battles between Kuomintang and Communist forces between 1938 to 1941. Major clashes occurred between the Communist Eighth Route Army and Kuomintang Central forces in Honan in 1938, and between the Communist New Fourth Army and



Kuomintang Central forces in Hopei, Shantung, northern Kiangsu and Anhui in 1940 followed by a Kuomintang attack in 1941 to destroy the New Fourth Army. In the middle of 1941, the Kuomintang and Communist possible civil war was averted, and the outbreak of renewed hostilities delayed until 1945.

<sup>10</sup>Hollington K. Tong, dateline: China - The Beginning of China's Press Relations with the World (New York: Rockport Press, Inc, 1950), 146-157. Hollington K. Tong was the wartime Vice-Minister of Information of the Republic of China. Further comments are found on page 250. Chang Kia-Shek "realized that Japan was China's Enemy No. 1, but he also recognized that one day the Chinese Communist would be China's Enemy No. 1. Although he earnestly hoped that he could win the cooperation of the Communist in fighting Japan, he never lost sight of the fact that the Communist would use their armed resistance to Japan as cover for the expansion of their won military might with the ultimate objective of seizing future political power in China, which would affect the world security."

<sup>11</sup>Rosinger, 25-26.

<sup>12</sup>Arthur N. Young, China and the Helping Hand 1937-1945 (Hong Kong: Rainbow Bridge Book Co, 1963), 421.

<sup>13</sup>Donald W. Treadgold, Twentieth Century Russia (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988), 423.

<sup>14</sup>Arpad F. Kovacs, "The Roots of the Cold War: The End of the Balance of Power and the New American Policy of collective Security, 1943-45," in Studies In Modern History, edited by Gaetano L. Vincitorio (New York: St John's University Press, 1968), 92.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid, 106.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid, 104.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, 91.

<sup>18</sup>Treadgold, 334.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, 335. Stalin's conclusion is found in his report to the XVIII Party Congress on 10 March 1939.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid, 337-338.

<sup>21</sup>Kovacs, 130. "There was no way of righting the wrongs done to Allied interest wherever the Russian army ruled supreme."

<sup>22</sup>Jerrold L. Schecter with Vyacheslav V. Luchkov, Khrushchev Remember: The Glasnost Tapes (Boston: Little, Brown and Company), 81. Further, Stalin did not trust the United States and United Kingdom. "Stalin had his doubts about whether the Americans would keep their word. He worried that they might take advantage of a condition in the [Yalta] agreement: the territories that Japan had seized from Russia had been promised to us- but only if we participated in the war against Japan. What if we didn't participate? What if Japan capitulated before we entered the war? The Americans might say, We don't owe you anything."

<sup>23</sup>Kovacs, 92.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid, 133.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid, 93.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid, 137. "This seems to be the core of the problem as to why Roosevelt went to the length of making concession after concession and maintaining an attitude akin to a courtship of Stalin, when the odds were overwhelmingly against the likelihood of Russia's genuine cooperation for unity in a peaceful world." On page 141, Ambassador Robert Murphy quotes that President Roosevelt "urged me to bear in mind that our primary postwar objective was Soviet-American cooperation - without which world peace would be impossible - and that Germany would be the proving ground for cooperation." Further, Admiral Leahy quoted President Roosevelt believed that Soviet participation in the Far Eastern operation would insure Russia's sincere cooperation in his dream of a united, peaceful world."

<sup>27</sup>Ibid, 122. Churchill wanted to seize "as much additional German and Czech territory as possible to be occupied by the allies irrespective of the zonal borders ratified by the Yalta Conference. His intention was to hold these areas as a guarantee for Stalin's observance of other provisions of the Yalta agreement." Further, Churchill was ready to fight the Soviets if necessary. "On November 23, 1954, he said that he had sent instructions to Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, Commander of the British forces in Germany, to stack the arms of the surrendering German troops carefully so that they could be reissued easily to them again." General Eisenhower was concerned that this may participate a conflict between Western and Soviet forces, and that "American forces are going to be badly embarrassed." President Truman hesitated. He sent a mission to Stalin, who made only paper concessions. Eventually, he ordered the unilateral evacuation of the large slice of the

Soviet zone occupied by American forces, much to the displeasure of Churchill and the British.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid, 129.

<sup>29</sup>"Minutes of the 104th Meeting of the National Security Council," 11 October 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 4. President Truman further commented "that the Soviets respected nothing but force, and would talk and negotiate only in the face of force."

<sup>30</sup>Treadgold, 410 and Ann and John Tusa, The Berlin Airlift (New York: Theneum, 1988), 68.

<sup>31</sup>Clifford, cover letter to the President for American Relations with the Soviet Union: A Report to the President by the Special Counsel, dated 24 September 1946, Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 267, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Clark Clifford, American Relations with the Soviet Union: A Report to the President by the Special Counsel, 1.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid, 3.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid, 7.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid, 8.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid, 9-10.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid, 12.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid, 12-13.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid, 13.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid, 15.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid, 27-48.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid, 48-49.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid, 59.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid, 60.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid, 61-62.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid, 71.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid, 77.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid, 72.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid, 75.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid, 78.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid, 79.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid, 77.

<sup>54</sup>Harry S. Truman, 12 March 1947 Address to a Joint Session of Congress, America in the Cold War, published in Twenty Years of Revolutions and Response, 1947-1967, edited by Walter LaFeber (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1968), 52. Truman further stated that

"The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forces upon them against their protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria."

<sup>55</sup>Ibid, 53-54.

<sup>56</sup>Tusa, 68.

<sup>57</sup>Dean G. Acheson, "The Marshall Plan; Relief and Reconstruction Are Chiefly Matters of American Self-Interest," in America in the Cold War: Twenty Years of Revolutions and Response, 1947-1967, edited by Walter LaFeber (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1968), 57.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid, 59-60.

<sup>59</sup>Avi Shlaim, The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948-49 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 30.

<sup>60</sup>Treadgold, 413.

<sup>61</sup>D. George Kousoulas, Revolution and Defeat: The Story of the Greek Communist Party (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 246.

<sup>62</sup>Treadgold, 413.

<sup>63</sup>Walter LaFeber, editor, America in the Cold War: Twenty Years of Revolutions and Response, 1947-1967 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1968), 35.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid, 60.

<sup>65</sup>George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," in America in the Cold War: Twenty Years of Revolutions and Response, 1947-1967, edited by Walter LaFeber (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1968), 40.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid, 41-43. Kennan continues to argue that the Soviets are under no time table for conquest. He uses an analogy with Christianity - that the communist Russians are "like the Church, it is dealing in ideological concepts which are of long-term validity, and it can afford to be patient." (Page 43.)

<sup>67</sup>Ibid, 44.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid, 48.

<sup>70</sup>Walter Lippman: "Mr. "X" Policy is Misconceived and Must Result in a Misuse of American Power," in America in the Cold War: Twenty Years of Revolutions and Response, 1947-1967, edited by Walter LaFeber (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1968), 61.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid, 61-66, 68.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid, 67.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid, 68.

<sup>74</sup>Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), ORE 4-50, "Current Situation in Greece," Published 28 February 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1-3.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid, 1.

<sup>76</sup>CIA, ORE 24-48, Current Situation in Greece," Published 22 October 1948. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 257, iii. This report concluded that:

"most Greeks are democratic, anti-Soviet, and pro Anglo-American. Given assurance of hope and stability through continuing US aid, they should eventually be able to reaffirm their democratic principles; given continued

fear and hopelessness, they will succumb, however, unwillingly, to the persistent pressure of the determined, militant Communist."

<sup>77</sup>CIA, ORE 4-50, page 3. The US intelligence analysis was:

"The Greek Communist leadership, admitting defeat in the critical operations of 1949 and professing "peaceful" intentions for the time being, has shifted to a new program which stresses exploitation of economic and political weaknesses rather than military activity in Greece, thus relieving the USSR of its responsibility of providing material support to the rebels. . . . Soviet strategist will probably not attempt to revive large-scale Greek guerrilla operations within the next year or more but will continue the struggle for Communist supremacy by other means."

<sup>78</sup>Shlaim, 370.

<sup>79</sup>"Minutes of the 40th Meeting of the National Security Council," 18 May 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 3. Secretary Acheson stated:

"the Western Powers decided to work together to establish a provisional government for Western German. Great progress had been made over the past year, he said, in the economic field, including currency reform, and in the political field towards a Western German government. [This was contrary to the Allies intention at Potsdam in 1945 of] the economic unity of Germany, the establishment of a provisional government, and the drafting of a peace treaty, all of which would lead to the eventual return of sovereignty to a (united) German state."

<sup>80</sup>Dean Acheson, Memorandum For the President, Subject: Rearmament of Germany, dated 30 June 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, National Security Council Meetings, Box 208, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1. Secretary Acheson argued against NSC 71, the question of rearmament of Western Germany. His reasons were economic -- West Germany was spending 22% of its budget to support Western forces stationed in Germany-- and political--"Restoration of a German army, however small, would greatly discourage the democratic elements in Germany." Instead, he argued for a larger German police force. With the Korean War, this argument disappeared as West Germany rearmed and was admitted to NATO in 1955.

<sup>81</sup>"Minutes of the 41st Meeting of the National Security Council," 2 June 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's file, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 4-5. The comments are a condensation of Mr. Kennan's analysis of Soviet activities and intentions at the Council of Foreign Ministers.

<sup>82</sup>CIA, ORE 90-49, "The Current Situation in Iran," Published 9 November 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1-4.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid, 5. The United States had convinced the Shah and General Razmara "that a large-scale Soviet invasion will inevitably take place." Further, the "Shah has made it clear that he looks to the US for substantial material help in implementing" plans to expand his military to meet the Soviet threat without diverting money from his essential economic development program. This aid was forthcoming in the US Mutual Defense Assistance Program, and the extension of the US military mission's services in Iran.

<sup>84</sup>Paul H. Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 129-137. The CIA sponsored military coup resulted from an oil dispute between Iran (Mossadegh), the United Kingdom, and the international oil community. With the return of the Shah, Herbert Hoover, Jr, deputy secretary of state worked out an oil settlement in 1954 (similar to the almost deal of January 1953). The eventual economic and social consequences were beyond anything contemplated at the time, and the Soviet Union's interest was undiminished.

<sup>85</sup>Young, 420-422.

<sup>86</sup>CIA, Intelligence Memorandum No. 197, dated 25 July 1949, Subject: "Implications for US Security of Developments in Asia." Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council, Central Intelligence Agency File, Box 2, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 2-4.

<sup>87</sup>NSC 48/1, "The Position of the United States with Respect to Asia, 23 December 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 13.

<sup>88</sup>Minutes of the 50th Meeting of the National Security Council, 30 December 1949, Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61,

Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, page 2.

<sup>89</sup>NSC 48/1, 10.

<sup>90</sup>Minutes of the 50th NSC Meeting, 2.

<sup>91</sup>David Rees, Korea: The Limited War (New York: St Martin's Press, 1964), 64-65.

<sup>92</sup>Bernard B. Fall, "Indochina 1946-1954" (Reprinted by the Command and General Staff College for C520) from the report, "Challenge Response in Internal Conflict," by D. M. Condit, et al. The Experience in Asia, Vol 1, (Washington: Center for Research in Social Systems, The American University, February 1968), 112-114.

<sup>93</sup>CIA, Intelligence Memorandum No 200, Subject: "Vulnerabilities of Communist Movements in the Far East," dated: 20 September 1949, 23.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid, 27.

<sup>95</sup>CIA, CIA 2-50, "Review of the World Situation," published 15 February 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 3-4. The report states:

"Soviet recognition of Ho Chi Minh in Indochina has lent the weight of Moscow's international influence toward furthering Communist domination. Support from Moscow, added to that of Peiping, will stiffen the spirit of Hoc Chi Minh's follower, particularly the Communist leaders. Moreover, open Soviet endorsement of Ho means that Ho probably will receive significant quantities of military supplies from the nearby Chinese Communist armies. Large-scale military aid of this kind probably could succeed in forcing the French, as long as they do not receive aid from other Western Powers, to withdraw from Indochina in less than two years."

<sup>96</sup>NSC 48/1, 13-14.

<sup>97</sup>CIA, CIA 2-50, 4.

<sup>98</sup>E. Grant Meade, American Military Government in Korea (New York: King's Crown Press, 1951), 41-43.

<sup>99</sup>Joseph C. Goulden, Korea: The Untold Story of the War (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1982), 4.



<sup>100</sup>Ibid, 1.

<sup>101</sup>Bruce Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 106.

<sup>102</sup>Department of State, "United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III: December 1945 - June 1950," published December 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Selected Records Relating to the Korean War, U.S. Policy re Korea, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 18.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid, 19.

<sup>104</sup>Central Intelligence Group, "Korea," Special Report 2, January 1947. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's Files, Intelligence Files, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, IV-1 to IV-2.

<sup>105</sup>Department of State, "United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III: December 1945 - June 1950," 17.

<sup>106</sup>John Merrill, Korea: The Peninsular Origins of the War (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989), 70-82. North Korea's renewed threat to cut off electric supplies was directed at undercutting Southern moderates, especially Kim Ku and Kim Kyu-sik. They had returned on 5 May 1948 from the 19-23 April 1948 Pyongyang Conference. Kim and Kim announced that the DPRK had agreed to all of their condition for attendance and to hold nationwide election after the withdrawal of all foreign troop and not to cut election power supplies. One explanation for the DPRK action was in agreement with the US CIA assessment that:

"a Rhee government, if left to its own devices, would play directly into Soviet hands. Soviet propaganda would be provided with a substantial basis in fact for charging the regime with being corrupt, reactionary, and oppressive. By discrediting itself with the South Korean population, such a regime would facilitate the task of the [Korean People's Army] in 'liberating' South Korea following the withdrawal of US forces."

Thus, it is plausible that the DPRK and US were looking for the same result for different reasons.

<sup>107</sup>Department of State, "United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III: December 1945 - June 1950," 19.

<sup>108</sup>United States Department of State, "The Conflict in Korea," July 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Department of State, U.S. Policy re Korea File, Selected Records Relating to the Korean War, Box 2, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 17-19.

<sup>109</sup>Department of State, "United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III: December 1945 - June 1950," 22.

<sup>110</sup>Department of State, "The Conflict in Korea," July 1951, 6.

<sup>111</sup>Department of State, "United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III: December 1945 - June 1950," 31-40, 48 (text quote is from page 48).

<sup>112</sup>Department of State, "The Conflict in Korea," July 1951, 6.

<sup>113</sup>Department of State, "United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III: December 1945 - June 1950," 41-42.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid, 42.

<sup>115</sup>"Minutes of the 34th meeting of the National Security Council," dated 18 February 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 3.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid.

<sup>118</sup>CIA, Intelligence Memorandum No. 197, 19-20.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid, 5.

<sup>120</sup>Talbot Strobe, Khrushchev Remembers (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 368.

<sup>121</sup>Anthony R. Garrett, CPT(P), USA, "Was The Soviet Union Responsible for the Outbreak of the Korean War?" (MMAS Thesis, Command and General Staff College, 1992), 80.

<sup>122</sup>Strobe, 368.

<sup>123</sup>Rosemary Foot, The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 58.

<sup>124</sup>NSC 48/1, 7-8.

<sup>125</sup>NSC 48/1, 2-3.

<sup>126</sup>Nitze, 94.

<sup>127</sup>NSC 68, "United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," 14 April 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, President's Secretary File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 3.

<sup>128</sup>Nitze, 98.

<sup>129</sup>NSC 68, 4.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid, 7.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid, 8.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid, 13-14.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid, 17.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid, 17-20.

<sup>135</sup>Ibid, 22.

<sup>136</sup>Ibid, 25-26.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid, 54.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid, 64-64.

<sup>139</sup>Cabell Phillips, The Truman Presidency (New York: Macmillian Company, 1966), 306-308.

<sup>140</sup>Merle Miller, Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman (New York: Berkeley Publishing Corporation, 1973), 267-268. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and General MacArthur agreed that Korea was outside of American capabilities and strategic interests. Furthermore, General MacArthur "said that anyone who advocated a land war on the Asian continent had clearly gone bonkers."

<sup>141</sup>Ibid, 268. President Truman specifically points to the Republican right, the China Lobby, and the superhawks as creating this theory. Since then, these accusations have become theory and have been repeated and enlarged by conspiratorial historians.

<sup>142</sup>John Quigley, The Ruses for War: American Interventionism Since World War II (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1992), 52-53.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SOVIET KOREAN WAR ROLE

##### The Road to War: Thesis of the NCA

Korea had been a united country throughout its 5,000 year history. As such, the Korean people's common aspiration was for an independent and united country. The division of the country at the 38th parallel was for one purpose: to determine which power, either Soviet or American, would receive the Japanese surrender in Korea. It was not supposed to be a boundary or zone of occupation.<sup>1</sup> However, the 38th parallel became the boundary for American and Soviet zones of occupation. In August and September of 1948, the 38th parallel became the international boundary dividing the hostile, antithetical states of the ROK and the DPRK. The US Government viewed this development resulting "from the persistent refusal of the U.S.S.R. to agree to the establishment of a unified and independent Korea upon any basis other than that of complete Communist domination of the entire state."<sup>2</sup>

The fundamental political objective of the two Korean nations conflicted: to eliminate the other government and reunite Korea under their government. This

irreconcilable fundamental conflict created the political conditions for guerrilla warfare and boarder clashes.

The contemporaneous US Government viewed the failed police revolt in Cholla Province in October 1948 as a catalyst for the communist guerrilla campaign to weaken and overthrow the ROK. May 1949 to June 1950 saw a series of continual border fights along the 38th parallel and guerrilla attacks in South Korea. The most significant border fights occurred on the Ongjin Peninsula and at Kaesong. The DPRK launched two separate campaigns to seize the Ongjin Peninsula from June through August 1949. These campaigns were defeated following heavy, prolonged fighting. On 25 July 1949, DPRK infantry backed by artillery attacked Kaesong but were driven back to the 38th parallel by ROK forces. This attack was followed by a similar attack on 29 May 1950 that ended with the same results. On 9 September 1949, DPRK guerrillas began a general campaign south of the 38th parallel. The DPRK guerilla campaign attacked ROK military, police and other elements of government support including civilians.<sup>3</sup> From May 1949 to June 1950, DPRK troops conducted hundreds of probing attacks. This provided them with "offensive experience and a detailed knowledge of South Korean dispositions."<sup>4</sup> The Americans believed these attacks were rehearsals for the DPRK invasion.

Bruce Cumings was one of the later Korean historians who presented an opposing view and interpretation of events.

His interpretation was founded on the conclusion that the contemporary US conclusions were biased and wrong. It was the US Army of Occupation under General John R. Hodge, not the Soviet Union, that had prevented a unified Korea. General Hodge's military government methodically exploited societal class divisions to suppress leftist political movements, which embodied the true Korean nationalists. The US policy objective was to establish a unified, pro-American, anti-communist state in as much of Korea as possible. This objective was achieved by the establishment of the ROK August 1948. The DPRK was established as a response to the US sponsored UN division of Korea in September 1948.

Cummings asserted that it was the ROK that initiated most of the fighting during the summer of 1949.<sup>5</sup> The alleged DPRK attacks to seize the Ongjin Peninsula made no strategic sense. The Ongjin Peninsula deadened on the sea, which did not give an invading DPRK army direct land access to Seoul. In contrast, a ROK northern thrust led directly to Pyongyang, capital of the DPRK. Thus, strategic logic leads to the conclusion that the ROK initiated these battles.<sup>6</sup> By April 1950, the 38th parallel was a war zone with routine battles involving brigade-size units on both sides. The tempo of these battles increased during May and June 1950, and was characterized as continuous probing by both sides.<sup>7</sup>

The ROK was most likely the aggressor in most of the military clashes. John Quigley, another revisionist historian, wrote that there was no hard evidence of direct Soviet command and control over North Korean forces. Soviet support was limited to logistics and advisers, who were withdrawn before the outbreak of hostilities on 25 June 1950. Therefore, the Korean War should be viewed as a civil war instead of the official US Government view of an international war caused by Soviet expansionism. The Korean civil war became an international war as a result of illegal US military intervention.<sup>8</sup> The revisionists interpretations are similiar to the DPRK and Soviet contemporary and post-war position.

The different interpretations for the fighting from the spring of 1949 to June 1950 were based on the time and agenda (philosophical sympathies) of the writer. What was undisputable were the frequent and large-scale border clashes between battalion and brigade-size units, and the guerrilla offensive massing groups numbering in the hundreds to attack targets in South Korea.<sup>9</sup> One measure of the level of violence during this period was the admitted casualties. On 17 June 1950, President Rhee reported that the "Republic of Korea forces had suffered 3,000 casualties - 1,000 of them deaths - in repulsing communist attacks along the 38th parallel."<sup>10</sup> In one insurgent area of operation, the ROK guerrilla suppression campaign on Cheju-do Island, off the

southwestern coast of Korea, claimed 30,000 lives by January 1950.<sup>11</sup> These casualty figures are incomplete, but indicate the high level of violence along the border and in South Korea. The ROK guerrilla suppression campaign achieved success during the winter of 1949-50, and the insurgency was defeated by early spring 1950.

The defeat of the guerrilla insurgency offers another explanation for the DPRK invasion as postulated by John Merrill. As the main guerrilla concentrations were eliminated during the winter of 1949-50, the DPRK sought and received Soviet assistance to expand its armed forces, which accelerated its military buildup and planning for war. This preparation included the work of Soviet advisers, who at least advised and perhaps wrote the DPRK war plans. The DPRK decision to go to war was cemented by its failure in the spring of 1950 to revive the southern guerrilla insurgency.<sup>12</sup>

The DPRK attack was premature according to its known war plans. DPRK army forces had not been built up to the invasion-plan force levels. One theory holds that the timing of the DPRK invasion surprised their Soviet backers.<sup>13</sup> Yet, logic may deduce that the DPRK may have been forced to speed up its invasion timetable because of the guerrilla defeat, the consolidation of the Rhee regime, and the impending inflow of US military hardware. Thus, the DPRK calculation may have been that it was better to go



earlier and face a weaker opponent than when fully prepared against a much stronger enemy.

The ROK and the DPRK engaged in informational and diplomatic campaigns to further their political objective. For example, on 6 May 1950 President Rhee made a radio broadcast to North Korea. He appealed for all Koreans to join him in unifying the nation, "and promised forgiveness and 'appropriate positions' to all North Korean leaders if they will come over to the Republic."<sup>14</sup> The DPRK response was the formation of their North Korean Democratic Front for the Attainment of Unification of the Fatherland (NKDFAUF). The NKDFAUF proposed on 7 and 20 June 1950 a general all-Korea election for 5 August 1950 that would result in a Supreme Korean Assembly by 15 August 1950. To plan for the all-Korea election, a preliminary Joint North-South Conference would be held in July 1950. However, the UN Commission on Korea, President Rhee, and any other prominent South Korean political figures were excluded from attending the Joint North-South Conference.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, the two Koreas were talking past each other in preparation for war as were their willing or unwilling sponsors, the US and Soviet Union.

#### The Contemporary American View of the DPRK Invasion

The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) published a "Top Secret" report on 19 June 1950 entitled, "Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime." This report

was most likely read by President Truman and all other key NSC officials before the DPRK invasion of 25 June 1950.<sup>16</sup> US intelligence accurately reported the speed and progress of the DPRK military buildup and predicted the capability to successfully launch a limited invasion by the spring of 1950. However, the unknown intelligence was the purpose (intention), which resulted in conflicting intelligence interpretations for the intent of the buildup. The buildup could be interpreted as defensive reaction to the previous year's border clashes. However, it was noted that the buildup had a lethal offensive mixture of armor, heavy artillery, and combat aircraft. If the intent was to attack, "it was impossible to predict if and when the North would strike."<sup>17</sup>

This report stated that the DPRK was a firmly controlled Soviet Satellite that exercised no independent initiative and depended on the Soviet Union for its existence.<sup>18</sup> It concluded that the DPRK was capable to continue and increase its support of the "present program of propaganda, infiltration, sabotage, subversion, and guerrilla operations against" the ROK.<sup>19</sup> However, this increased level of communist subversion was not sufficient to overthrow the ROK "so long as US economic and military aid was not substantially reduced or seriously dissipated."<sup>20</sup> The NSC had a detailed analysis of the

DPRK's political, economic, and military elements of national power.

The Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang was headquarters for a four to five thousand-man Soviet mission, which had infiltrated advisers throughout the government, political organizations, economy, and military to ensure North Korean subservience. Further, the DPRK Government was dominated by Koreans of Soviet origin and/or training, whose sole qualification for high office was loyalty and subservience to the Soviet Union.<sup>21</sup>

The North Korean economy had improved from the immediate post-World War II below-subsistence to a subsistence living standard by strict rationing of all foods and basic necessities. However, the economy was very weak with an unfavorable balance of payments caused by Soviet economic exploitation, which inhibited further economic progress and a rise in the standard of living.<sup>22</sup>

The Soviet Union had provided the DPRK with military superiority over the ROK in armor, heavy artillery, and aircraft, which provided the capability to seize limited objectives including the capture of Seoul. For long term military operations, the DPRK required increased logistical support from the Soviet Union. The strength of the DPRK People's Army (DPRKPA) was estimated to be close to 90,000 men with an additional 60,000 to 70,000 Koreans who had served in the Communist Chinese Army (CCA) available if

needed. The DPRK People's Army Air Force (PAAF) consisted of an air regiment of 1,500 men, including 150 pilots, equipped with 35 YAK-9 and/or IL-10 fighters and 40 other aircraft. The DPRK Navy performed mainly coast guard functions with 5,100 sailors and 5,400 marines. The Soviet Union had at least 2,000 military advisers to the DPRKPA, 70 to the PAAF, and 33 to the DPRK Navy. An additional 2,000 Soviet naval personnel were stationed in North Korean ports "to service Soviet naval units and to control port facilities."<sup>23</sup>

The total of all classes of Soviet personnel in Korea most likely exceeded 10,000. They supported a standing DPRK military of over 100,000 with rapid access to 60,000 to 70,000 ethnic Korean reinforcements with combat experience from China. The Soviets supplied weapon systems and the strength of the DPRK military provided local superiority over the ROK armed forces, which completely lacked armor, heavy artillery, and combat aircraft. The NSC conclusion was that the Soviet Union provided DPRK an offensive capability beyond its defense requirements. The intent of this capability was revealed by the DPRK's 25 June 1950 invasion. In contrast, the US provided the ROK with only defensive capabilities.

The accepted logic of NSC 68: any communist victory was a defeat for the US, combined with this recent

intelligence assessment lead President Truman to link the DPRK invasion to pre-World War II Axis aggressions.

I thought over the fact that what the Communists, the North Koreans, were doing was nothing new at all. I've told you. The only thing new in the world is the history you don't know. And it was always the same, always had the same results. Hitler and Mussolini and the Japanese were doing exactly the same thing in the 1930's. And the League of Nations had let them get away with it. Nobody had stood up to them. And that is what led to the Second World War. The strong got away from attacking the weak, and I wasn't going to let this attack on the Republic of Korea, which had been set up by the United Nations, go forward. Because if it wasn't stopped, it would lead to a third world war, and I wasn't going to let that happen. Not while I was President.<sup>24</sup>

Other senior national security advisers, such as Dean Acheson and Paul Nitze, reached similar historical analogies that likened the DPRK invasion to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>25</sup> The only difference between the Axis and the DPRK was that North Korean was a surrogate for the real enemy, the Soviet Union. The NSC was seduced by this analogy that the 1930s was being replayed in Korea. In this time and environment (NSC 68), this seduction blinded the NSC to other interpretations of events and course of actions. This NSC "blindness" formed the basis for later criticisms of closed-minded thinking, demagoguery, and an international conspiracy to start the war.

NSC 68 had stated that the US was unprepared for a general war with the Soviet Union. Further, it would take at least two years of an intensive military build up to overcome the Soviet military advantage. The question for

the President and his advisers was how to prevent a loss in Korea and associated ramifications without provoking World War III with the Soviet Union. Their answer was a strategy of limited war. This employed limited elements of national power (diplomatic, informational, economic, and military) in sufficient strength to stop the communist aggression without a direct combat confrontation with the Soviet Union that might start World War III.

#### American Diplomacy to Quarantine the Aggressor

The Truman Administration took three rapid diplomatic steps to resist the Soviet-directed DPRK invasion. The first was unilateral: a statement of support for the ROK backed up by direct military assistance. The second was to form an international coalition through the UN Security Council. The third was a bilateral direct appeal to the Soviet Union to call off the DPRK invasion.

On 26 June 1950, General MacArthur announced over South Korean radio continued American support and forthcoming military equipment<sup>26</sup> to strengthen their resistance to the North Korean invasion. The announcement was made in Korean and without notification to the Western media. This was done to provide immediate reassurance to the South Koreans. It also avoided upsetting President Truman's ongoing congressional consultations, and his subsequent 27 June 1950 announcement of US support and unilateral economic and military responses.<sup>27</sup>

Upon learning of the DPRK invasion, the Truman Administration immediately brought the issue to the UN Security Council on 25 June 1950. On this day, the Soviet Union was in the sixth month of its Security Council boycott over the issue of seating Communist China in the UN.<sup>28</sup> Because of their absence, the Soviets could not cast a veto. As a result, the UN Security Council passed the US sponsored resolution that all but named the DPRK as the aggressor and called for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of all DPRK forces.

The UN Security Council resolutions of 27 June and 7 July 1950 named the DPRK as the aggressor, authorized member nations to use force "to restore international peace and security in the area" and established a unified UN command to fight the DPRK invasion and to restore the international boundary.

Why did the Soviets not return to veto these resolutions? According to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, the Soviet system was not capable of making instantaneous decisions on major policy issues, such as their boycott. Thus, the Americans were able to push these resolutions past the Security Council before the Soviet system could react.<sup>29</sup> A contrary explanation holds that the DPRK invasion surprised the Soviet Union,<sup>30</sup> and that the continued Soviet boycott demonstrated that they had not orchestrated the North Korean attack.<sup>31</sup> The most plausible reason for the

continued Soviet absence was provided by Andrei Gromyko. The Soviet Union was capable of quick decisions and could have returned. Because of the hostile US letter to the UN, Stalin was "guided for once by emotion."<sup>32</sup> He rejected Gromyko's counsel to attend the Security Council and ordered a continued boycott. As Gromyko warned Stalin, the Americans achieved a diplomatic victory because of the Soviet boycott.

On 27 June 1950, the Truman Administration sent a bilateral request to the Soviet Government "asking them to use their good offices with the North Korean government to bring this aggression to an end."<sup>33</sup> The Soviet responded two days later that the real aggressor was the ROK, and that the US should use its good offices to stop the South Korean aggression.<sup>34</sup> This was viewed by the NSC as very cynical and reinforced their conviction that the DPRK invasion was an open manifestation of Soviet expansionism.

Following the opening burst of diplomatic activities, the Truman Administration's diplomatic efforts concentrated on a campaign to convince and mobilize international opinion against the real enemy: the Moscow-directed international communist conspiracy. However, this campaign had to be limited to prevent an escalation on either side that would spark World War III.



### Diplomacy and Coalitions

Diplomatically, the Truman Administration's efforts focused on holding together the UN alliance and gaining international support legitimacy by the portrayal of the Korean War as a struggle of good against evil. Using Clauswitzian theory, coalitions develop from common threat that coalesces with individual member's self-interest. Coalitions hold together as long as the threat exists and/or the respective self-interests coincide. The UN coalition represented diverse interests that required Truman administration to use all elements of national power to hold it together.

The major problem that confronted the US, as the coalition leader, was to forge a coalition agreement on the political goals and the implementing military strategy. The UN coalition agreed on the global political goal that Korea should be independent and unified according to the Allied declarations at Cairo, Yalta, Potsdam, and Moscow. In 1947, they supported the UN Temporary Commission to establish a unified Korea. However, the Commission's efforts had resulted in a divided Korea. The outbreak of the war created an intermediate political goal, the UN resolution to repel the DPRK aggression and restore the inter-Korean border at the 38th parallel. At the time of the UN resolutions, the intermediate political goal was the global political goal.

The successful September 1950 UN counterattack, the Inchon Invasion and Pusan perimeter breakout accomplished the intermediate political goal in early October 1950. Furthermore, it provided a military opportunity to achieve the global political goal of a united Korea. However, this military opportunity caused conflict within the UN coalition, most notably between the US and UK.

The US and UK national self-interests for participation in the UN coalition were different. The military chance to unify Korea accentuated the difference in national interests between the US and UK. The US viewed Korea as a communist dagger pointed at Japan, which was defined as a vital strategic and long-term economic interest.<sup>35</sup> In addition, the US viewed Korea with a simple strategic concept embodied in NSC 68 -- any communist victory cannot be tolerated. Thus, all communist advances had to be resisted including Taiwan as President Truman stated on 27 June 1950. In contrast, the UK did not fully agree with NSC 68's containment philosophy, and specifically disagreed over linking Taiwan to the Korean War.<sup>36</sup> This view was based on the UK's self-interest in Hong Kong. Since World War II, the UK had suffered a succession of financial troubles.<sup>37</sup> Hong Kong was one of the few exceptions and provided vital income to the UK's treasury. However, Hong Kong was vulnerable to any military attack by the communist Chinese.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, the UK feared that a

UN attack beyond the 38th parallel might provoke a wider war with the Communist Chinese and/or the Soviet Union and result in the loss of Hong Kong. Throughout this period, the UK leadership "felt they were not consulted with sufficient consistency or frankness over the nature and purpose of UN operations in Korea."<sup>39</sup>

Although the UK agreed with reservations to UN forces crossing the 38th parallel, they proposed to the US on 13 November 1950 a "buffer zone plan." This buffer zone would limit the advance of the UN forces to the "neck" of Korea stretching 60 to 120 miles south of the Chinese border (the Yalu River). Its concept was to assure the Chinese of the non-hostile nature of the UN forces, and thus prevent the Chinese from entering the war. However, the US did not accept British logic that China had an interest in Korea. Thus, the Americans rejected the British buffer zone plan<sup>40</sup> and MacArthur ordered the ill-fated UN advance to the Yalu. After the Chinese intervention, the US proposed a naval blockade of the Chinese coast. The concept was that the blockade would cut the communist lines of communications (logistics resupply) with the side benefits of weakening the Chinese economy and communist government. This course of action was vetoed by the British,<sup>41</sup> who would have suffered great financial losses with the effective closing of Hong Kong. These events further served to strain US and UK

relations.<sup>42</sup> The UK perception was reinforced that the US was not listening.<sup>43</sup>

The post-war contention until recently was that the British plan was initiated six weeks too late to stop the fighting and subsequent Chinese intervention.<sup>44</sup> In contrast, the post-war US contention was that on 12 August 1950 the Soviets sent Lt. General Kuzma Derevyanko to direct the Chinese to intervene decisively on behalf of the stalemated DPRK forces around Pusan. This Soviet directive was approved by the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee on 14 August 1950, and the CCA started moving into North Korea in late August 1950. The US position was that the Chinese were going to intervene regardless of what the UN forces actions were.<sup>45</sup> This contention has not been considered creditable with later historians.

Recent Chinese documents state that on 2 October 1950 Mao decided to intervene and to completely drive the UN forces out of Korea. However, it was not until 7 October 1950 that UN forces crossed the 38th parallel. Accordingly, the 38th parallel was not the decision point for Chinese intervention as suggested.<sup>46</sup> Rather, the decision point for Chinese intervention was more likely the success of the Pusan perimeter defense and/or the UN counterattack during September. With this logic, the British suggestion that halting of UN forces at the "neck" of Korea would have prevented the Chinese intervention does not hold. Mao's

telegrams were very clear: the Chinese had decided to intervene. However, a UN halt at the "neck" would have thwarted Mao's tactical strategy of drawing in and overextending UN forces. Had the UN halted and consolidated their positions, the Chinese counter-attack may have been contained at the "neck" and/or prevented the ensuing rout of UN forces.

The controversy over crossing the 38th parallel caused controversy with other members of the UN coalition. Lester Pearson, Canadian Ambassador to the UN, stated his government's position that the UN "should be very cautious in extending its mandate to include a march into northern territory."<sup>47</sup> Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent urged the US that, "The North Koreans be given the opportunity of entering into a ceasefire."<sup>48</sup> Prime Minister R. G. Menzies of Australia expressed support for entry into North Korea for tactical purposes and qualified his support with "so long as nobody else intervenes."<sup>49</sup> However, his qualified support for crossing the 38th parallel caused a rupture in the Australian political consensus for participation in the Korean War. The Labor Party stressed their opposition to the restoration of power of corrupt governments, such as those of Syngman Rhee and Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>50</sup> Thus, the understandings and changes in the coalition political objective(s) and implementing military strategy was also responsive to a domestic

constituency, as was demonstrated in the 1952 US presidential elections.

The next diplomatic crisis for the US-led UN coalition was the establishment of the UN General Assembly Ceasefire Group consisting of UN General Assembly President Nasrollah Entezam of Iran, Sir Benegal Rau of India and Lester Pearson of Canada on 14 December 1950. Thirteen Arab and Asian nations that had asked the PRC to halt at the 38th parallel proposed the Ceasefire Group, whose subsequent attempts to stop the war was endorsed by the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers. These diplomatic moves by other coalition members, most importantly the UK, challenged US leadership and direction. The US privately opposed the Cease-fire Group because it was viewed as peace negotiations from weakness. However, the US publicly supported it because of Secretary of State Acheson's calculation that the PRC would reject any UN ceasefire proposals. Despite the deep private difference amongst the UN allies, the contemporaneous public side reflected unity. The PRC fulfilled the US calculation on 17 January 1951 by rejecting the 13 January 1951 UN General Assembly approved offer of an unconditional ceasefire. Subsequently, the UN General Assembly voted on 1 February 1951 to identify the PRC as an aggressor on the Korean Peninsula.<sup>51</sup> The significance of this action was that the UN Charter, which was international law, authorized member countries the right to take necessary

military action to repel an aggressor. Thus, the US ironically achieved success through the PRC intransigence despite significant differences within the UN coalition.

The Truman Administration's diplomatic problems over crossing the 38th parallel and subsequent events demonstrated the difficult and complex nature of organizing and operating within a coalition. However, the NSC evidently did not consider that the communists faced similar complexities and political problems inherent in coalition warfare. Instead, the NSC viewed the communist forces in Korea as a monolithic military command directed by the Soviet Union. With this view, the NSC developed and employed an informational campaign against the Soviet Union as the master of the surrogate armies of the DPRK and PRC.

The Truman Administration's information campaign was designed to gain international support and legitimacy for the UN effort but not to arouse US domestic passions for World War III. President Truman may or may not have read Clausewitz. As Clausewitz had written a hundred years before, domestic support was essential for the war effort but must be controlled or else it could force a larger, unwanted war. This was a difficult line to hold in many ways - logic, public opinion, military strategy.

The informational campaign had two components: international and domestic. To gain international support and legitimacy, the Soviet Union was portrayed as the evil

hand behind communist aggression in Korea. An example of this informational campaign was the 2 and 31 May 1951 US reports to the UN, which provided captured communist invasion plans and statements of captured North Korean officers. This provided documentary evidence and an immediate rebuttal to the communist denial of 28 May 1951 that the DPRK initiated the war under Soviet orders. Some of the invasion documents were written in Russian as were some of the verbal attack orders.<sup>52</sup> The PRC was a UN identified aggressor and a surrogate for the Soviet Union.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the Korean War was an open manifestation of the Soviet-directed monolithic communist attempt to take over the world.

The domestic component of the informational campaign carefully drew a distinction between the enemy combatants and the enemy mastermind. Because the US was operating under UN control, the war was limited to Korea and its surrounding waters. This was a limited war with limited objectives. Consequently, the US was not permitted to make a military strike at the political heart of the mastermind: the Soviet Union, or at the communist ability to wage war: the logistics sanctuary in Manchuria. Rather, the US and UN military effort was confined to fighting Soviet surrogates, DPRK and PRC on the Korean peninsula and adjoining waters. As President Truman stated,

That's what a lot of people never understood, including the general we had over there at the time. This was a



police action, a limited war, whatever you want to call it to stop aggression and to prevent a big war. And that's all it ever was. I don't know why some people could never get that through their heads.<sup>54</sup>

General MacArthur disagreed with the limited war restrictions, which resulted in his dismissal by President Truman. This caused an uproar of criticism over the Truman Administration's limited war policy. General MacArthur advocated a competing war policy: victory. Victory was the use of all necessary military means to force the enemy to capitulate according to the original UN coalition political objective: an independent and unified (and MacArthur added non-communist) Korea. This challenge died down after the MacArthur Hearings. Subsequently, no significant domestic challenges to the limited war policy were made.

The Truman Administration's informational campaign was successful. It disconnected the logic embodied in the international campaign ("the Soviet Union was the enemy mastermind") from the domestic campaign (limited war restricted the combat to only the DPRK and PRC surrogates). However, the Truman Administration's black and white approach and logical disconnections held within the seeds that revisionist historians would attack. At the time, revisionist historians were not President Truman's concern. His real concern was preventing an immediate outbreak of hostilities with the Soviet Union.

### Prevention of World War III

From the onset of the Korean War, President Truman's overriding concern was to avoid a direct shooting war with the Soviet Union. The US and Soviet Union recognized that open and direct combat between their forces might trigger World War III. However, combat between one power and the surrogate of the other, such as the DPRK and US, had de facto acceptance under the Cold War ROEs, which prevented triggering World War III. The Korean War had three distinct crisis phases that heightened the prospect of open and direct combat between US and Soviet forces.

The first crisis phase encompassed the DPRK drive to Pusan. During this phase, the NSC struggled to determine Soviet intentions. The US and western allies were unprepared, while the Soviets were prepared for war. The past five years of Cold War experience with previous Soviet challenges formed the basis for multiple studies to answer the question of Soviet intentions. The 16 August 1950 CIA analysis stated:

The USSR is proceeding methodically to capitalize upon the advantages won through its tactical departure in Korea of initiating limited, local war by non-Soviet Communist forces. The Soviet return to the UN has enable the USSR to use this forum for a political-warfare offensive as well as to hamper US action in the UN.

The USSR has diplomatic freedom of action because it has maintained the thin fiction of having no responsibility for the actions of the Soviet-advised, Soviet-equipped Communist forces in Korea. Meanwhile the unparalleled public information facilities of the UN are being

exploited fully to charge the US with "aggression" and illegal intervention in the "civil war" in Korea.

Behind this political warfare facade, the Soviet-controlled North Koreans are driving down the Korean Peninsula, drawing into action the greater part of the combat-ready armed forces of the US. At the same time, the USSR is building up threats of aggression at many points around the border of the Soviet sphere of influence.

These threats of Soviet-sponsored aggression are forcing the Western Powers to begin to mobilize military forces sufficient to deter the USSR either from mounting new local military aggressions or from exploiting its won steadily increasing capability of openly attacking the US and its allies.<sup>35</sup>

The US clearly feared that the invasion was a diversionary attack from the main theater of Europe. This attack brought out the worst fears of NSC 68: the actual war may have already started with the US and western allies still unprepared. Thus, the goal was to limit the war until the West could buildup all the elements of power within an anti-Soviet coalition. During the summer of 1950, the military situation was desperate. US/UN forces could be easily swept from the Korean Peninsula by the commitment of only a few of the available Soviet forces. However, the NSC calculated that this was unlikely because the DPRK was winning and direct Soviet intervention would start World War III.

Tensions between the US and Soviet Union increased as a result from the US Navy shooting down a Soviet bomber/reconnaissance aircraft on 4 September 1950. The Soviet plane had just passed over the screening escort ships

and was heading toward the center of a US naval task force operating off the west coast of Korea at approximately the 38th parallel. The US account stated that the Soviet bomber opened fire, and the return fire brought it down.<sup>56</sup> The Soviets denied the US account. Instead, they accused the US of shooting down a clearly marked Soviet airplane on a training mission. Because each side was interested in defusing the incident, the matter was resolved at the UN in early October 1950. This was the first, but not the last, open clash between US and Soviet forces in the Korean Theater and set the precedent for resolutions.

As the North Korean offensive reached its culminating point at the Pusan perimeter, the US achieved its short-term goal of not being pushed into the sea. The second crisis phase started with MacArthur's successful invasion at Inchon and his subsequent march into North Korea. Before his invasion and the breakout at Pusan, NSC 81/1 stated:

It is unlikely that the Soviet Union will passively accept the emergence of a situation in which all or most of Korea would pass from its control, unless it believes that it can take action which would prevent this and which would not involve a substantial risk of a general war or unless it is now prepared to accept such risk.

It is possible, but politically improbable, that no action will be taken by the Soviet Union or by the Chinese communist to reoccupy Northern Korea or to indicate in any other way an intention to prevent the occupation of Northern Korea by United Nations forces before the latter have reached the 38th parallel.<sup>57</sup>

A UN advance into North Korea causing the imminent collapse of the DPRK was predicted to cause a reaction by the Soviets and/or the PRC. However, by 12 October 1950, the US prediction of likely Soviet reaction had changed:

[The] Soviet leaders will not consider that their prospective losses in Korea warrant direct military intervention and a consequent grave risk of war. They will intervene in the Korean hostilities only if they have decided, not on the basis of the Korean situation alone, but on the basis of over-all considerations, that it is to their interest to precipitate a global war at this time.<sup>58</sup>

Again, mixed opinions and analysis were offered for the intention of the PRC. NSC 73/4, dated 25 August 1950, stated that the use of PRC forces in Korea and Southeast Asia was a strong possibility.

Chinese communist, in addition to an attack on Formosa, have the military capability to enter directly the Korean war and to initiate military action against Indochina or Burma or Tibet. Any or all of these actions are possible. A move against Tibet may be expected.<sup>59</sup>

By 12 October 1950, PRC intervention in Korea had been strongly discounted:

While full-scale Chinese Communist intervention in Korea must be regarded as a continuing possibility, a consideration of all known factors leads to the conclusion that barring a Soviet decision for global war, such action is not probable in 1950. During this period, intervention will probably be confined to continued covert assistance to the North Koreans.<sup>60</sup>

During the second phase, US fighter-bombers attacked a Soviet Air Force base nearby Sukhya Rechka within Soviet territory on 8 October 1950, one day after US forces crossed the 38th parallel. On 19 October 1950, the US publicly

apologized, and offered the Soviets compensation.<sup>61</sup> The Soviet restraint over this incident and non-reaction to American reconnaissance flights near Siberia convinced the US that the Soviets would not intervene.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps this event with other intelligence sources shaped the NSC conclusion that the Soviet and/or the PRC would not intervene. History demonstrated that the Soviet Union and its "surrogate" PRC were unwilling to accept the loss of North Korea and reacted contrary to US expectations.

The third crisis phase started with the PRC intervention and ended with the stabilization of lines along the 38th parallel. The Chinese rout of the UN forces caused a crisis of confidence in the NSC. NSC 100, dated 11 January 1951, exemplified the NSC crisis of confidence:

The United States and its allies of the free world are fighting a war for survival against the aggression of Soviet Russia.

The United States and its allies are losing the war, on both the political and military fronts.

The free nations cannot hope to survive this war against Soviet aggression if it is continued on the basis of defensive containment.

The hour is late. The odds may be stacked against the free nations; but it is still possible<sup>63</sup> to take the offensive in this fight for survival.

On the same day as NSC 100, a CIA estimate analyzed and contrasted the merits of staying in Korea or conducting a withdrawal. The inescapable conclusion of this report was that maintaining a beachhead provided many more international benefits than a withdrawal.<sup>64</sup> The

stabilization of the military situation south of the 38th parallel during the first half of 1951 forestalled the desperate recommendations of NSC 100 to evacuate the Korean peninsula.

The NSC conducted reviews of the Soviet role and intentions in Korea as the crisis atmosphere in Washington abated during the Spring of 1951. On 6 April 1951, the CIA assessment of Soviet activities concluded:

The current increase in Soviet activities in the Far East does not in itself provide any firm indication of a Soviet intent to launch an early offensive in that area. We believe, however, that these activities indicate the serious possibility of increased Soviet participation, especially with air forces, in the Korean fighting.<sup>65</sup>

The communists were dependent on Soviet logistics, which enabled their major offensives in April and May 1951. These offensives were defeated and PRC and DPRK forces were driven back across the 38th parallel with heavy losses. This defeat contributed to the 23 June 1951 Soviet proposal for a cease-fire and armistice along the 38th parallel.<sup>66</sup> During this time, the Secretary of State Dean Acheson publicly stated US policy was to hold truce talks and obtain a cease-fire.<sup>67</sup> It was not until 2 July 1951 that the DPRK and PRC accepted General Ridgeway's offer for cease-fire negotiations.<sup>68</sup> The negotiations were composed of the two opposing military commands and started on 10 July 1951.<sup>69</sup> It took two years to negotiate a cease-fire.

The opening of the truce negotiations ended the third crisis phase of potentially open combat between US and

Soviet forces. By early August 1951, NSC estimates of Soviet intentions concluded that Moscow would continue to supply communist forces in Korea, that Moscow would intervene to prevent a communist defeat, and that Moscow would likely settle for a cease fire along the 38th parallel.<sup>70</sup> At this time, the NSC recognized that Soviet assistance to Communist forces in Korea had:

consisted of advisory, technical, and logistical support and limited participation of antiaircraft personnel and possibly other specialized Soviet combat troops. Virtually all heavy combat equipment for the North Korean Army has been furnished by the USSR. In addition, most of the electronic and antiaircraft equipment for both North Koreans and Chinese Communist, POL supplies, and some vehicles and ammunition, have been supplied by the USSR.<sup>71</sup>

Any US acknowledgment of the Soviet role beyond quartermaster to the Communist forces would have caused a fourth crisis and perhaps triggered World War III. Top Secret intelligent reports (declassified from 1979 to 1983) over the next two years detailed Soviet combat involvement. The CIA reported on 7 December 1951 that:

The full extent of Soviet Air Force participation is not known, but the use of Soviet technical advisers and the organizational pattern strongly indicate a dominating Soviet influence throughout the CCAF [Communist Chinese Air Force]. It is probable that Soviet Air Force personnel are operating aircraft accredited to the CCAF.<sup>72</sup>

The CIA National Intelligence Estimate of 30 July 1952 detailed the Soviet combat role in protecting the communist logistics lines of communication:

There are indications that Soviet participation in enemy air operations is so extensive that a de facto air war



exists over North Korea between the UN and the USSR. The USSR almost certainly believes that additional commitments of Soviet air power could, under methods presently employed, be made in North Korea and Manchuria without serious risk of expanded hostilities. However, it is unlikely that the Kremlin believes that Soviet-manned aircraft could be committed over UN-held territory without a grave risk of global war.<sup>73</sup>

With Soviet assistance, and possibly direct participation, the Chinese Communists have established a visual observer and radar air warning net which gives almost complete coverage from Hainan Island northward along the coast, through Manchuria to the Soviet frontier as well as some coverage in the interior. In addition, there are Soviet trained, and possibly Soviet-operated anti-aircraft defense units along the coasts for protection of industrial areas, harbor facilities, airfields, and communications and supply network.<sup>74</sup>

The NSC concluded that the Soviet Union did not want to trigger World War III and desired a continued stalemate eventually leading to a cease-fire in Korea. These Soviet objectives were similar to the US goal. Thus, US policy was to politically paint the Soviet Union as the monolithic master and quartermaster of the communist aggressors in Korea, but to avoid any public comment on direct Soviet combat involvement.

#### Conclusion: A Monolithic Communist Military Conspiracy

The NSC concluded that the Soviet Union controlled a monolithic communist military conspiracy. The DPRK was the surrogate, who was counted on to win without outside military help.<sup>75</sup> The PRC provided the strategic reserve.<sup>76</sup> This reserve was committed in November 1950 to prevent a UN victory, and to drive the UN completely out of Korea.<sup>77</sup> The Soviet Union was the quartermaster for the rapid North

Korean military buildup. They sent military advisers who had planned and directed the North Korean invasion. The Soviet contribution of critical, but deniable, combat forces in late 1950 helped to prevent a communist defeat.

The NSC analysis of this monolithic communist military machine concluded that its strength was in the synergistic unity of purpose. In contrast, the US/UN had all the problems associated with coalition warfare. The NSC discounted the documented and predicted cracks in the communist monolith, such as the historic Russian-Chinese border disputes. If these cracks were validated, the NSC's operating assumption of a monolithic communist military machine would be discredited, which would mean that the enemy was conducting similar coalition warfare. Revisionists used these and later documented cracks among the communists to discredit the NSC thesis of a monolithic communist conspiracy during the Korean War.

#### The Antithesis: The Revisionist View of the Soviet Role

The NSC's view of a monolithic communist military directed by the Soviet Union was simple and narrow and did not reflect the diversity and problems of the communist coalition. Consequently, the NSC information and diplomatic campaigns against the Soviet Union were discredited as American propaganda. However, the revisionist historians did not embrace the view that the communists in Korea practiced coalition warfare. Instead, they held that the

Soviet Union and Communist China responded as a confederation to the unwarranted US intervention in the Korean civil war. Further, the communist confederation was hardly the model of efficient coordination, planning, and execution. The confederation was rife with hidden politics, disjointed planning and logistics, and broken promises, such as Stalin's failure to provide air cover for the Chinese intervention.

The revisionists agree with Khrushchev's accounts of the meetings between Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, and Kim Il-Sung in late 1949 and early 1950. It was Kim who presented and pushed for the invasion of South Korea. Kim was sure that it could be won swiftly before the US could intervene. Stalin, after consulting with Mao, gave his blessings to Kim's invasion plans. However, Stalin withdrew all Soviet advisers and told Khrushchev, "It's too dangerous to keep our advisers there. They might be taken prisoner. We don't want there to be evidence for accusing us of taking part in this business. It's Kim Il-sung's affair."<sup>78</sup>

However, John Quigley disagreed with Khrushchev and adopted a similar explanation as the official DPRK version. He suggested that the ROK initiated the war. In response, the DPRKPA contained and counterattacked the ROK army.<sup>79</sup> The strategy of the ROK attack and subsequent retreat was a conspiracy between President Rhee and General MacArthur "to make their situation appear desperate, so that President

Truman would commit enough troops not only to halt the northern advance (Truman's stated objective) but also to bring down the northern administration."<sup>80</sup> Thus, it was the US that turned a civil war into a global confrontation and forced the PRC and Soviet Union to join the DPRK in a communist confederation.

The military coordination for this communist confederation was strained at best. Stalin reneged on promised air cover and supplies for the Chinese intervention in October/November 1950.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the Chinese army attacked without air cover and suffered heavy casualties. Mao's greatest fear for Chinese intervention was a military stalemate.<sup>82</sup> However, the Soviet Union's global concerns resulted in an insufficient level of support necessary to break the ensuing stalemate.<sup>83</sup> There was communist joint headquarters at Chang Chun, Manchuria. In early December 1950, the joint headquarters was commanded by Soviet Lt. General Kuzma Derevyanko. Robert Simmons concluded that the failure of Soviet combat air and logistics support caused the Chinese to feel "that she was fighting for Russian territorial integrity without an adequate supply of Soviet equipment."<sup>84</sup> Quigley pushes the revisionist view further in his assertion that there was "no hint of a Soviet role." Despite this fact, the US saw the Soviet Union directing the PRC's November 1950 intervention as well as subsequent communist war efforts.<sup>85</sup>

The Soviet Union decided from the beginning not to become militarily involved in Korea. Rosemary Foot commented that the Soviet Union would not stand beside their comrade-in-arms on the Korean peninsula.<sup>86</sup> Simmons stated that this was the most consistent aspect of Soviet Korean War policy: no Soviet forces on the Korean peninsula, thus no Soviet-American armed combat.<sup>87</sup> Thus, Quigley concluded that the powerful Soviet military machine remained firmly on the sidelines.<sup>88</sup>

The revisionists document some accounts of Soviet forces being defensively employed in rear areas. Foot concluded that the Soviet Union participated in the air defense of Manchuria (not a part of the Korean theater of operations) and may have been involved in the air war over North Korea.<sup>89</sup> Max Hastings stated that the "Soviets sent a 'volunteer' air corps to fly some aircraft over North Korea."<sup>90</sup> Simmons quoted US intelligence estimates that regular Soviet forces, such as Air Defense Divisions, were deployed and engaged in combat within Korea. However, he discounted this intelligence report and concluded that the Soviet Union "held back from active participation in the war."<sup>91</sup> Thus, a general revisionist conclusion was there may have been some combat involvement by Soviet "volunteers," but not regular Soviet units in Korea.

Instead, the Soviet Union accepted the role of quartermaster. In this limited role, the Soviet Union

provided inadequate supplies to Chinese and North Korean forces. Simmons concludes that the Chinese depended on preKorean War arms and American arms captured on Asian battlefields, rather than arms from the Soviet Union. In an action that further strained relations, the Soviets did not supply arms gratis<sup>92</sup> but charged and demanded cash payments for them.<sup>93</sup> Hasting concluded that:

There is strong evidence of Moscow's lack of enthusiasm for the Korean War lies in the sluggishness with which Stalin supplied material to Mao. Only in the Autumn of 1951 did Soviet military supplies begin to move in quantity to China. And, to the bitter resentment of the Chinese every ton had to be paid for. Korea precipitated the deep mutual mistrust between Soviet and Chinese Communist, which has been evident ever since.<sup>94</sup>

The revisionists agree that the Soviets contributed to the communist war effort. However, there was no monolithic communist military command or conspiracy to start and fight the Korean War. Had there been a monolithic communist conspiracy, the communists would have won the war in August 1950. Quigley argues that the PRC demonstrated its peaceful intentions by not sending CCF at the critical juncture when the DPRKPA could have pushed MacArthur's Eighth Army into the sea at Pusan. Thus, the Chinese were going to sit on the sidelines, and the Soviets before the conflict had withdrawn their advisers. Hardly the unified acts of monolithic communist conspiracy. Instead, the Soviet Union and the PRC reacted independently to the unjustified American intervention in a small civil war.<sup>95</sup>

### The Synthesis: A Revised View of the Soviet Role

Some American soldiers felt or saw Soviet military forces in Korea. Sergeant Major (Retired) Clayton Capers fought in Korea as a platoon sergeant in C Battery, 76 AAA Battalion supporting the 1st Marine Division. "It was strange. I knew the Russians were there - you could smell them. But you never saw them - dead or alive. It was like fighting a ghost. After the battle, we would only find Koreans and Chinese."<sup>96</sup> Captain (Retired) Jack Gifford was an American POW. "On the way to the POW camps I passed near a rest and recreation area for Soviet air defense soldiers. I met these Russians, in their Russian uniforms and riding in their Russian vehicles."<sup>97</sup> These two soldiers were among many Americans that came home with the conviction and knowledge that American forces had fought directly with Soviet forces. However, this information was withheld from the general public. It was classified. Recent declassified documents reveal that the NSC had detailed knowledge of an active Soviet combat role integrated into the North Korean and Communist Chinese war effort.

The NSC estimated that 20,000 Soviet combat troops were deployed in North Korea by the summer of 1951, and that this figure declined to 10,000 at the end of May 1953.<sup>98</sup> The Soviets deployed armor, artillery, and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) units in addition to advisers and technical experts to North Korea. The armor and artillery units were

not employed in actual combat. Instead, they were used as training units for DPRKPA and CCF units. They moved their equipment into North Korea, trained their respective counterparts, turned over the equipment, and returned to Manchuria or the USSR. The AAA units did take part in combat. At the end of May 1953, the Soviets had three AAA divisions (6,000 soldiers) in the Sinuiju-Antung area, another AAA division (2,000) protecting river bridges in the Sinanju-Pakchen area, and an AAA regiment (400 soldiers) in the Pyongyang area protecting the Soviet Embassy, Advisory Headquarters, and other Soviet installations.<sup>99</sup> It was likely that these Soviet combat formations took and inflicted casualties. However, the deployment of Soviet ground forces was clearly designed to minimize the risk of capture by UN forces while providing critical defense for communist lines of communication.

By the Spring of 1951, the US had confirmed intelligence that Soviet advisers controlled the day-to-day communist air activities over North Korea from Antung, Manchuria, and that Soviet pilots were engaging US planes in combat. The lead communist pilots were nicknamed "Honchos" by US pilots. Their skill level was much better than the followers (trainees). US pilots believed the Honchos to be Russian from seeing distinctly Caucasian faces and features in MIG cockpits and when they bailed out.<sup>100</sup> By 1 November 1952, the NSC concluded that "Chinese and Soviet-piloted



MIG-15 jets bear the brunt of the Communist effort in northwestern Korea."<sup>101</sup> In one documented incident, unmarked MIG-15s attacked Task Force 77 from a Soviet airbase around Vladivostok on 18 November 1952. The Navy fighters from the USS Oriskany engaged the MIGs and shot one down. However, there was no public disclosure of the US Navy clash with Soviet fighters.<sup>102</sup> The MIG-15s encountered by US pilots in the early months of 1953 had the plain red star of the Soviet Union. After May 1953, most of the MIG-15s had the Communist Chinese and North Korean insignias, and their pilot quality was inferior.<sup>103</sup> Thus, the air war involved combat between American and Soviet pilots, which on occasion spilled beyond the skies over North Korea to Manchuria and Russia.

In early January 1953, the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) requested clearance to expand the defection program aimed at communist forces in Korea to include Russian language broadcasts and leaflet drops.<sup>104</sup> Why would the PSB request this expanded program if the enemy consisted of personnel who only read and spoke either Korean or Chinese? The only logical conclusion was that the NSC knew of the Soviet combat and combat support roles. This expansion of the defection program was disapproved because it could be inferred that American forces were in combat with the Soviets.

Returning American POWs in the Spring of 1953 brought home eyewitness accounts of Soviet combat involvement. Their POW camp locations gave them a unique view of Soviet combat participation. The communists often located POW camps next to vital installations, such as the North Korean Army Headquarters next to POW Camp 5, which contained 5,000 UN POWs. On 12 May 1953, Dr. H. S. Craig wrote the following based on his interviews of returned American POWs:

All the prisoners, except those who are communists, stated that they have seen Soviets in uniform flying MIGs. One prisoner lived for a while in POW barracks that were only two or three hundred yards from an airfield containing a wing of MIGs. This POW stated that he saw Soviet flyers taking off for air combat daily from the field. He described these individuals as being Slavic in appearance and speech (some visited the barracks), and described with a great deal of exactitude insignia of rank and other characteristics of the Russian uniform.<sup>105</sup>

The national policy was to ensure that "no unfavorable publicity concerning Soviet participation"<sup>106</sup> leaked out. This required "extremely careful handling to stay within national policy line. It is undesirable to encourage uncoordinated local coverage of this subject."<sup>107</sup> Thus, the POWs information on Soviet combat involvement was classified.

The inescapable conclusion was that the contemporaneous NSC had detailed knowledge of the Soviet order of battle and combat activities during the Korean War. However, it was one thing to know but another to have hard

evidence. In the unclassified world, little existed to document Soviet combat activities beyond the assertions of declassified US documents. Perhaps the NSC had documentary evidence, such as photos, that had not been declassified. However, the public documentary evidence that confirmed the Soviet combat role appeared in the late 1980s in Soviet publications. President Gorbachev's policy of glasnost fostered and allowed the publication of Korean War accounts from Soviet military historians and veterans.

On 25 June 1989, Lieutenant Colonel A. Dokuchayev published the article, "The Time Has Come To Tell the Story: It Was in Korea," in Krasnaya zvezda. This article responded to a reader's question: Was it true that Soviet troops had helped the people of Korea to repulse the American aggression in 1950-1953? Yes. "In the skies of Korea the very best combat pilots came into contact face to face for the first time - Soviets and Americans."<sup>108</sup>

The Soviet Union deployed MIG fighter squadrons from districts near Moscow in November 1950 to Tungfeng, Manchuria. Dokuchayev implied that Soviet MIG fighters went into combat around December 1950, as "MacArthur had to report to the Chief of Staff that for the first time in Korea their pilots had encountered combat aircraft superior to the Americans."<sup>109</sup> The great air battles in April and May 1951 were fought by Soviet pilots, who flew from CCAF Manchurian airfields at Antung and Myau-Gou. Soviet pilots

fought outnumbered and were more than equal to their US counterparts. The losses inflicted by the Soviet pilots forced the Americans to abandon daylight bombing by October 1951. Yet those successes were bittersweet:

For us, Korea was both a love and an anguish," related Yevgeniy Georgiyevich Pepelyayev, former commander of an air regiment and Hero of the Soviet Union. "Back in the fifties we were defending North Korea, and we learned to care for the people of that ancient and eternally young country. We also felt love for the Chinese people, on whose land our regiments were stationed. But I lost friends there. Soviet pilots lie in the Russian cemetery at Port Arthur. I still remember those sorrowful moments when they buried my fellow servicemen, excellent pilots, my wingman Sasha Rozhkov, Fedya Shebanov ... .<sup>110</sup>

Hero of the Soviet Union Lieutenant-General

(Retired) G. Lobov detailed Soviet combat ground and air roles in a series of articles in Aviatsiya i kosmonavtika starting in October 1990. In the fall of 1950, the CCAF had just converted to jets and was not combat operational. The PRC requested air defense cover. The Soviets responded by deployments of air and AAA divisions. The advance air and AAA units entered combat in November 1950. These Soviet divisions formed the 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps. By 1952, this corps consisted of three air (MIG-15s) and two AAA divisions (85-mm cannon, 57-mm automatic AAA, and radar stations for tracking and controlling AAA fire), one aviation technical division, three detached regiments (night fighters), one naval fighter regiment, one spotlight regiment, two hospitals, and multiple combat service support

regiments. The corps strength was 26,000 men, and it was maintained at this level to the end of the war.

The Soviet air regiments flew combat air patrols from the Chinese border to the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, an area that was known to the Americans as "MIG Alley." Lieutenant-General (Retired) Lobov stated that Soviet pilots fought at a tactical disadvantage. US planes outnumbered the Soviets ten to one. The US were the attackers and thus had the initiative. Radar did not always provide early warning because of the mountainous terrain. Consequently, Soviet pilots waited for hours in their cockpits for US planes to be detected. Soviet pilots were prohibited from pursuing enemy aircraft south of the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, which the Americans used to their tactical advantage. Finally, Soviet pilots (later Chinese and North Korean) were under constant threat of actual attacks during takeoffs and landings in Manchuria despite the UN ban on crossing the border.

The Soviet personnel replacement system provides an explanation as to the fluctuation of the communist pilots skills noted by American pilots.

The replenishment of the corps was accomplished via the complete replacement of recovered divisions. Our military and political leaders evidently felt that this procedure for 'freshening' would significantly raise the combat capabilities of the 64th. This led, however, to the fact that newly arrived units and formations abounded in personnel who had not experienced battle. The replacements also had a vague understanding of operational tactics and the practice of combat flights in Korea. Everything concerning the participation of

the Soviet Air Force in this war was moreover secret. The experience of the 64th has thus not only not been studied or assimilated among the troops, but even has remained under the strictest prohibition.<sup>111</sup>

Despite these tactical and personal disadvantages, the 64th Detached Fighter Corps made a significant contribution to the communist war effort. Lobov provides the Soviet view of the spring 1951 air battles and the 30 October 1951 USAF "Black Tuesday" raid. The "Black Tuesday" fight was fought strictly between Soviets and Americans. Despite contrary American claims, Lobov stated that Soviet fighters forced the American B-29s to abort their raid on Namsi Airfield at a loss of 12 B-29s and four F-84s to only one MIG-15 which was shot down in combat over Manchuria. He concluded that:

Soviet pilots had inflicted a severe defeat on U.S. bomber aviation and forced it to give up daylight operations, which sharply reduced combat effectiveness and operational capabilities of their employment in the Korean War.<sup>112</sup>

Lobov's conclusions of the Soviet role in the Korean air war were that Soviet pilots:

substantially reduced the combat capabilities of the aggressor's aviation and inflicted enormous losses on him.

shot down many well-known pilots of the U. S. Air Force in battles with the F-86.

showed themselves worthy successors to the heroes of the Great Patriotic War and true masters of aerial battle in fulfilling their missions. N. Sutyagin and Ye. Pepelyayev shot down over 20 enemy aircraft apiece ... Some 22 pilots were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for courage and high skill.<sup>113</sup>

The communist forces in Korea fought as a coalition force -- similar to the UN coalition. The North Koreans provided personnel across all components of the DPRK armed forces. They were reinforced by the return of battle tested ethnic Korean soldiers from the CCF. The CCF was the strategic army reserve, committed to preventing a complete defeat in October 1950. The Soviets were the quartermasters, provided rear area security, and furnished and employed vital combat technology that diminished the US technological advantage.

The Soviet combat role was to defend and secure the communist lines of communications (LOC). The American air strategy was to cut the communist LOCs and thus open the way for ground forces to overrun undersupplied enemy forces. In November 1950, only the Soviet Union among the communist coalition had the technology and soldiers to challenge the US/UN air campaign. The fall of the DPRK was unacceptable. Thus, the Soviets committed air and AAA division to defend communist LOCs. It must be concluded that this defense was a critical success because the communist forces were adequately supplied throughout the war.<sup>114</sup>

The position of Soviet troops and the restriction of Soviet fighter operations to north of the Pyongyang-Wonsan line limited the chances that dead or live Soviet soldiers would be found on the battlefield by UN forces. Thus, the Soviets were able to maintain internationally their

neutrality while providing critical military combat forces to defend the communists LOCs.

Soviet and American forces engaged in direct combat in Korea from about November 1950 to the truce on 27 July 1953. The NSC knew (and according to Lobov's figures underestimated) the Soviet combat role. However, the US did not produce irrefutable evidence or even evidence of a Soviet combat role. Thus, the Soviet combat role was plausibly denied. The revisionist historians fell into the plausible deniability trap. Their analysis and conclusions minimized Soviet participation because of philosophical orientations supported by the lack of direct and corroborating evidence. US-Soviet combat in Korea happened, but not in the public's or the historian's minds.

#### Changes in the Cold War ROEs Resulting from the Korean War

The Cold War ROEs before the Korean War permitted the use of all elements of national power except for the deployment of, and direct combat between, regular US and Soviet military units. The US intervention in June 1950 changed the de facto military ROE of not using regular US or Soviet military units. Subsequently, the covert Soviet combat intervention changed the de facto military ROE restricting direct combat between US and Soviet forces. However, this restriction on direct combat between US and Soviet forces was broken in such a way as to perpetuate the fiction that it was never broken.



The modified rule that emerged from the Korean War was that US and Soviet forces could engage in covert combat. However, open and public combat between US and Soviet forces could still trigger World War III. Thus, the Korean War modified the Cold War ROE to allow covert combat between the US and Soviet armed forces.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Merle Miller, Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1973), 267.

<sup>2</sup>Department of State, "The Conflict in Korea: Events Prior to the Attack of June 25, 1950," Published: June 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Executive Secretary's File, Department of State, U.S. Policy re Korea, Box 2, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 2-3.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, 19-24.

<sup>4</sup>Lawton Collins, War in Peacetime: The History and Lessons of Korea (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), 31.

<sup>5</sup>Bruce Cumings, The Roaring of the Cataract, 1945-1950: Volume 2 of the Origins of the Korean War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 383, 388-90, 570-71.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, 568-572, 584-585.

<sup>7</sup>John Quigley, The Ruses for War: American Interventionism Since World War II (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books), 39.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, 45. "The U.S. military government, by promoting the conservatives, interfered with Korea's political process and kept it from being unified under a single administration. The hostilities that began in 1950, irrespective of who started them, were internal and aimed at reuniting Korea. They were no more international than the shooting that began at Fort Sumter in 1861."

<sup>9</sup>John Merrill, Korea: The Peninsular Origins of the War (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989), 130.

<sup>10</sup>Robert T. Oliver, Syngman Rhee and American Involvement in Korea, 1942-1960 (Seoul: Panmun Book Company LTD, 1978), 274.

<sup>11</sup>Burton I. Kaufman, The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis, Credibility, and Command (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 21.

<sup>12</sup>Merrill, 177. "The decision to invade was preceded by a series of other choices that gradually narrowed down northern options to a conventional attack. Key turning points apparently came during Kim Il Sung's visit to Moscow, after the failure of the September offensive, during the

Mao-Stalin talks, and following the final collapse of the guerrilla movement early in the spring of 1950. It is difficult to pinpoint when the final decision was made. By all accounts, it was a closely guarded secret that was known only to the top Soviet and North Korean leadership. Even secret Central Committee documents that were seized by United Nations forces when they captured Pyongyang made 'absolutely no reference to the forthcoming invasion.' My side comment is that senior Communist Chinese leadership also had knowledge of North Korean invasion plans from the Mao-Stalin-Kim talks. On page 180, Merrill concludes, "The Soviet Union undoubtedly knew of North Korean plans and gave its go-ahead for the attack. Even if the exact timing could not have been predicted, the tension in Korea had been building up to an explosion for almost five years. The destruction of the southern guerrilla movement may have been the spark that finally set it off."

<sup>13</sup>Anthony R. Garrett, "Was The Soviet Union Responsible for the Outbreak of the Korean War?" (MMAS Thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1992), 86.

<sup>14</sup>Department of State, "The Conflict in Korea: Events Prior to the Attack of June 25, 1950," 23.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid, 23-24.

<sup>16</sup>Miller, 52-53. General of the Armies Omar Bradley stated, "President Truman was always reading things. I've been at his office when he was President at practically all hours, from six in the morning to as late as eleven o'clock at night, Saturdays, Sundays, weekdays, and I almost always found him at a desk with a bunch of papers in front of him, studying those papers." The CIA Report is stamped, "Copy No. 1 For the President of the United States." Thus, it is logical to conclude that President Truman, as well as his national security advisers, had recently read this intelligence report before the North Korean invasion.

<sup>17</sup>Merrill, 164-166.

<sup>18</sup>CIA, "Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime," ORE 18-50, published 19 June 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1. The report summarizes the strengths and weakness of the North Korean regime. "At the present time there is no serious internal threat to the regime's stability, and, barring an outbreak of general hostilities, the Communist will continue to make progress toward their ultimate domestic goals." Despite economic, political, and popular discontentment,

"the regime has, with Soviet assistance, clearly demonstrated an ability to continue its control and development of northern Korea along predetermined political, economic, and social lines."

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, 5-7.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid, 9-10.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid, 11-12.

<sup>24</sup>Miller, 273-74.

<sup>25</sup>Paul H. Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 101.

<sup>26</sup>Miller, 275. The military equipment was to be airdropped and included food, ammunition, weapons, and whatever else General MacArthur could send to assist South Korean forces short of U.S. troops. Further, General MacArthur was authorized to provide air cover for the American evacuation. This authorized the use of force against North Korean forces.

<sup>27</sup>Joseph C. Goulden, Korea: The Untold Story of the War (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1982), 84-85.

<sup>28</sup>CIA, "Review of the World Situation," published 14 June 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1, 7-8. This report's significance was that it was read by the NCA decision-makers just prior to the U.N. Security Council votes. It predicted that the Soviet Union would continue its boycott because "the legal issue of the Communists' right to represent the Chinese people in the UN has become overshadowed by considerations of national prestige in the context of the East-West power struggle." From this prediction, Dean Acheson may have made his calculations that the Soviets would not show up for the 27 June 1950 Security Council Meeting, which authorized UN members to use force against North Korea. The report concluded that the "USSR probably considers its membership in the world organization worth retaining and will resume its UN seat once Communist representatives have replace the Chinese Nationalists. In the long run, this latter development appears unavoidable."

<sup>29</sup>Miller, 276-280.

<sup>30</sup>Garrett, 77-78.

<sup>31</sup>Quigley, 52.

<sup>32</sup>Andrei Gromyko, Memoirs (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 102.

<sup>33</sup>Miller, 280-1. This was Dean Acheson's recommendation that was approved by President Truman.

<sup>34</sup>Miller, 281.

<sup>35</sup>NSC 48/1, "The Position of the United States with Respect to Asia," 23 December 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 18. "In the power potential of Asia, Japan plays the most important part by reason of its industrious, aggressive population, providing a large pool of trained manpower, its integrated internal communications system with a demonstrated potential for an efficient merchant marine, its already developed industrial base and its strategic position. Because of Japan's economic importance in Asia, of the extreme vulnerability of Japan to blockade, of the long period required under the best of circumstances for the development of significant strategic potential in Asia, and of the hazards involved in attempts to harness Chinese potential to Soviet ends, there exists no serious danger that the USSR will in the near future be able to undertake military aggression based on Asia's strategic potential." NSC 48/5, 17 May 1951, (page 31) continued to emphasize the economic and strategic importance of Japan to the United States and the Soviet indirect threat by subversion and infiltration: "Soviet policy toward Japan will likely be directed toward fostering and exploiting the political and military weaknesses of the country which could be expected to prevail following the end of occupation."

<sup>36</sup>Peter Lowe, "The Frustrations of Alliance: Britain, The United States, and the Korean War, 1950-51," in The Korean War in History, edited by James Cotton and Ian Neary, (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), 81.

<sup>37</sup>CIA, "Review of the World Situation," Published 15 February 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 6-7. Since World War II, the United Kingdom had run a continuous foreign reserve deficit (dollar) that drained gold reserves. This had lead to the non-covertibility of sterling to dollar and restricted

multilateral trade. In 1949, the situation had improved for the United Kingdom. However, the report predicted "the UK has little prospect of building up its dollar reserves by that time (1952) to a point of financial stability warranting a complete restoration of sterling-dollar convertibility and free multilateral trade."

<sup>38</sup>CIA, "The Possibility of Britain's Abandonment of Overseas Military Commitments," Published 23 December 1949. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1-13. On page 11, "Though the British economy has reached the stage where some reduction in defense spending has become necessary - for political as well as economic reasons - it has not reached a level so critical that early abandonment of overseas military obligations (that in Greece is an exception) need be expected." On page 1, "Assuming the situation were about as at present, the UK would initially reduce its forces in Austria and Trieste to token size and make a substantial cut in its forces in Germany; whittle down its forces at other stations, though probably not in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong." On page 3, "the British have 25,000 troops, including supporting air and naval elements, stationed in Hong Kong to cope with the Communist Chinese threat. This force could not prevent a determined Communist Chinese attack from seizing Hong Kong," and thus a significant loss to the British treasury.

CIA, "Communist Capabilities and Probable Courses of Action in Korea Through Mid-1952," Published 7 December 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 5. "Hong Kong. Regardless of the outcome of the cease-fire negotiations, the Chinese Communists will continue to have the capability of launching a successful attack on Hong Kong with few preparations and with little advance warning."

<sup>39</sup>Lowe, 96.

<sup>40</sup>Peter N. Farrar, "A Pause for Peace Negotiations: The British Buffer Zone Plan of November 1950," in The Korean War in History, edited by James Cotton and Ian Neary (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), 66-76.

<sup>41</sup>NSC 48/5, "The Position of the United States with Respect to Asia," 17 May 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 7 and 17. Paragraph 8f(1) suggests

"imposing a blockade of the China coast by naval and air forces, and paragraph 8f(2) suggests "military action against selected targets held by Communist China outside of Korea." Page 17: "United States policy in Asia is frequently handicapped through lack of unity among important friendly nations who are basically anti-communist but who differ with the United States and among themselves in their estimates of the strategy to be pursued because of conflicting interests. Divergencies have recently arisen on certain Far Eastern issues with , for example, the United Kingdom, Canada, and India. Regrettably these differences are not easily responsive to compromise since they represent divergencies national interest and public opinion difficult to remove. The national interest of the United Kingdom dictates a different attitude with respect to the relative importance of Europe and Asia. At the same time both the United Kingdom and India have acted toward China and Formosa on the basis of an interpretation of events in China and a strategic estimate of the situation differing from those of the United States."

<sup>42</sup>Robert O'Neill, Australia in the Korean War 1950-53, Volume 1 - Strategy and Diplomacy (Canberra 1981: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981), 162. Australian Ambassador to the United Nations, Sir Keith Officer, saw the divergence between the United Kingdom and United States as "the possibility of a major split amongst the allies, caused either by firm action against China, such as blockades and bombing, or by appeasement. He believed that, first, the allies should aim at a local settlement in Korea and then consider the admission of mainland China to the United Nations and the future of Taiwan. Officer thought it likely that once hostilities had been halted in Korea, the United States would agree to China's admission to the United Nations. Like Spender he believed that Taiwan was 'the chief problem.' He appreciated that the island had to be transferred to the mainland government, despite British and American military opinion. The present American policy, Officer reported, was to surrender nothing to the Chinese, even if an agreement in Korea was reached."

<sup>43</sup>Lowe, 87. President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee had a fundamental difference in their respective views of the communist threat. In their 4 December 1950 meeting, President Truman "vigorously stated his belief in the monolithic nature of communism." In contrast, Prime Minister Attlee argued that the Chinese were motivated by nationalism and their historical fears instead of being directed by Moscow. These fundamental assumptions of the threat only further served to cause fractures in the UN coalition.

<sup>44</sup>Farrar, 77.

<sup>45</sup>"Soviet Direction of Korean War and Prisoner of War Control," 14 April 1955. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, ACB 387.4 Korea (4-14-55), Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 3.

<sup>46</sup>Thomas J. Christensen, "Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams," Internal Security, (Summer 1992): 151. Mao's telegram to Stalin was dated 2 October 1950 and informed the Soviets of the Chinese decision to send troops to support the North Koreans. The later telegrams of 13 and 14 October to Zho Enlai reaffirmed the Communist Chinese decision to go to war. Christensen states that "Mao's decision to enter Korea in force was triggered by the American decision to send U.S. forces north of the 38th parallel." This did not occur for five days after Mao's decision. Christensen over interprets the evidence. At best, he could have stated Mao assumed the UN would cross the 38th parallel, and the decision to intervene was reaffirmed by the telegrams of 13-14 October 1950. Even if the Americans had stopped, the Chinese would still have intervened according to Mao's mission statement of 2 October 1950: The Chinese Army "must be prepared to destroy and expel, within Korea itself, the armies of the United States and other countries" and be prepared for a protracted war with the US as a result successful expulsion of UN forces.

<sup>47</sup>John Melady, Korea: Canada's Forgotten War (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1983), 60.

Oliver, 338. After the creation of the U.N. Ceasefire Committee (composed of Nazrollah Entezam of Iran, Sir Benegal Rau of India, and Lester Pearson of Canada) on 14 December 1950, Pearson proposed to the U.N. on 3 January 1951 "that a cease-fire be sought by promising the Communist that the Republic of Korea would be disbanded, that the U.N. would govern Korea during an interim period, and that Korea would then be unified through elections conducted in a way that would satisfy a four-power supervisory committee to be constituted by the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and Communist China."

<sup>48</sup>Ibid, 60-61.

<sup>49</sup>O'Neill, 122.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid, 123.



<sup>51</sup>Ibid, 160-183. The General Assembly final text that was adopted by a 44-7-8 vote on 1 February 1950 reads in part:

"that the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China has not accepted United Nations proposals to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Korea with a view to peaceful settlement, and that its armed forces continue their invasion of Korea and their large-scale attacks upon United Nations forces there,

1. Finds that the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China by giving direct aid and assistance to those who were already committing aggression in Korea and by engaging in hostilities against United Nations forces there, has itself engaged in aggression in Korea;
2. Calls upon the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China to cause its forces and nationals in Korea to cease hostilities against the United Nations forces and to withdraw from Korea;
3. Affirms the determination of the United Nations to continue its action in Korea to meet the aggression;
4. Calls upon all states and authorities to continue to lend every assistance to the United Nations action in Korea;
5. Calls upon all States and authorities to refrain from giving any assistance to the aggressors in Korea;"

<sup>52</sup>Department of State, "The Conflict in Korea: Events Prior to the Attack of June 25, 1950," 25-36.

<sup>53</sup>Rosemary Foot, The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 140. Assistant Secretary of State Dean Rusk, in his 28 May 1951 speech to the United Nations General Assembly, stated, "The Peiping regime may be a colonial Russian government - a Slavic Manchukuo on a large scale. It is not the Government of China. It does not pass the first test. It is not Chinese."

<sup>54</sup>Miller, 274.

<sup>55</sup>CIA, "Review of the World Situation," published 16 August 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, page 1.

<sup>56</sup>US Department of State, Press Release Number 897, dated 5 September 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Executive Secretary's File, Department of State, U.S. Policy re Korea, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1. It further stated that "A United Nations destroyer succeeded in picking up the body of one member of the bomber crew. Identification papers indicated that the body was that of Lieutenant Mishin Tennadii Vasilebiu, of the armed forces of the U.S.S.R., serial No. 25054."

<sup>57</sup>NSC 81/1, dated 9 September 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 267, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 2-5. The report concluded with strict guidance for the UN Commander.

"Since such operations (north of the 38th parallel) would involve a risk of major war with the Soviet Union and would directly involve the interests of other friendly governments, the U.N. Commander should, prior to putting any such plan into execution, obtain the approval of the President in order that he may give consideration at the time to the various elements involved. U. N. operations should not be permitted to extend across the Manchurian or USSR borders of Korea. The United Nations Commander should undertake no ground operations north of the 38th parallel in the event of the occupation of North Korea by Soviet or Chinese Communist forces, but should reoccupy Korea up to the 38th parallel. Air and naval operations north of the 38th parallel should not be discontinued merely because the presence of Soviet or Chinese Communist troops is detected in a target area." If they give notice in advance, then the matter should be referred immediately to the UN.

<sup>58</sup>CIA, "Critical Situations in the Far East," published 12 October 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 5.

<sup>59</sup>NSC 73/4, dated 25 August 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 267, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 12-13. The report further stated,

"Chinese communists have the military capability to capture Macao and Hong Kong. The capabilities of the Chinese communist outlined above contribute to the overall capabilities of the USSR since any major military success by these forces in the Far East, with the consequent political results, adds security to the Soviet eastern flank and lessens the probability that

the Soviet may have to fight on two fronts simultaneously."

<sup>60</sup>CIA, "Critical Situations in the Far East", 4.

<sup>61</sup>United States State Department, "Note dated 19 October 1950 from the Representative of the United States of America Addressed to the Secretary-General." Papers of Harry S. Truman, Department of State Topical File (number 15-2), Box 7, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library. The note further stated that "the commander of the air force group concerned has been relieved and appropriate steps have been taken with a view toward disciplinary action against the two pilots involved."

<sup>62</sup>Goulden, 530. "In a prescient statement - one with more foresight than that then possessed by the State Department - MacArthur saw Soviet fears 'of this new Frankenstein that is being gradually congealed and coalesced in China.' He doubted that the Soviets wanted the Chinese to become powerful enough to challenge the USSR; to the contrary, Moscow wished to keep China under control." One method proposed by other revisionist historians was to get China to commit forces to Korea and then undersupply them.

<sup>63</sup>NSC 100, dated 11 January 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's Files, Intelligence File, Box 267, Harry S. Truman Library, 2. The report further states that US strategy is wrong. "On the military fronts in Korea and Southeast Asia the free nations are on the defensive because they are fighting the war in the Far East on a basis which most favors the Soviets and least favors the free nations: We are attempting to match men for men and tanks for tanks, instead of fighting most effectively with those elements of military supremacy we now have in the Far East -- air power and naval power." On page 14, NSC 100 recommends "Evacuation of United Nations troops from Korea, thus releasing air and naval forces. These forces will support the blockade of Communist China by use of naval and air forces, plus economic sanction. An open and sustained attack upon lines of communication in China and Korea; and also upon aggression-supporting industries in Manchuria as considered militarily advisable. Extension of fullest possible support to all anti-communist elements in the Far East, including Southeast Asia, so they can re-new open war and increase guerrilla activities against the Chinese Communists in central and south China."

<sup>64</sup>CIA, "International Implications of Maintaining a Beachhead in South Korea," Special Estimate 1, published 11 January 1951. Records of the National Security Council, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Library, 1-4.

The only real unfavorable reaction would be from India because of their "hopes of reducing the possibility of a major war and became of a general inclination to sympathize with Asiatics as against Westerners." It was considered that "Soviet policy will be significantly modified by a UN decision to maintain a beachhead in Korea."

<sup>65</sup>CIA, "Current Soviet Activities with Particular Reference to the Far East," Special Intelligence Estimate (Sanitized Copy), published 6 April 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council, Intelligence File, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 2. On page 1, the report states that:

"2. In areas other than the Far East, Soviet and Satellite preparedness for war had reached such an advanced state before 1 January 1951, that large-scale operations could be initiated with little or no warning.

3. During the period under review, the USSR has placed special emphasis on the Soviet Far East; Soviet air activity there has increased sharply and strenuous efforts have been made to develop the area's economy, particularly for military purposes.

4. It is clear that the USSR is pursuing its long-range program to make the Soviet Far East logistically and militarily self-sustaining. Since the beginning of the Korean conflict, this program has apparently been pressed toward completion with more urgency, in order to prepare for any eventuality."

<sup>66</sup>CIA, "Possible Communist Objectives in Proposing a Cease Fire in Korea," Special Intelligence Estimate, published 6 July 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1.

<sup>67</sup>O'Neill, 236-7. Secretary of State Dean Acheson "emphasized these goals [truce talks and cease fire] publicly during the MacArthur hearing before the United States Senate on 1 and 2 June, confirming that the military purposes of the intervention in Korea would be accomplished by a cease-fire at or near the 38th parallel, with the ultimate prospect that United Nations Command and Chinese troops would be withdrawn from the peninsula."

<sup>68</sup>CIA, "Possible Communist Objectives in Proposing a Cease Fire in Korea," 3.

<sup>69</sup>O'Neill, 242. These negotiations were agreed to be held at a "neutral site" - Kaesong. "Chinese and North Korean forces had surrounded the town, depriving it of the appearance of being in 'no man's land.' They excluded

United Nations Command press representatives from the area and staged intimidating propaganda demonstrations."

<sup>70</sup>CIA, "Probable Soviet Courses of Action to Mid-1952, National Intelligence Estimate," published 2 August 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 4. The report's assessment of employment of Soviet forces against US forces in Korea was:

"If the Korean conflict continues or is renewed after a cease fire, the Kremlin will probably continue to aid the Communist in ways which the Kremlin estimates would not involve serious danger of a break between the USSR and US/UN. If, however, the communist forces in Korea were threatened with decisive defeat, the Kremlin would probably intensify its aid. This aid might well include the introduction of 'volunteer' forces. It might even include the employment of Soviet forces to such an extent that a de facto local war between the US/UN and the USSR would exist. At every stage the Kremlin will probably endeavor to keep open the possibility ending the Korean conflict by political negotiation if the global interests of the USSR would be served by disengagement in Korea."

<sup>71</sup>CIA, "Probable Immediate Developments in the Far East following a failure in the Cease-fire Negotiations in Korea," Special Estimate, published 6 August 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 9-10. The report, on page 10, provided this assessment of Soviet capability to decisively intervene in Korea:

"The strength of the Soviet Army in the Far East is estimated to be 35 divisions. Of this total, a force of 13 to 15 divisions probably could be made available and committed to combat in Korea within 30 to 60 days after a decision had been made to employ it. The commitment of such a force with presently available air support would give the combined Communist forces the capability of forcing a UN withdrawal from Korea."

<sup>72</sup>CIA, "Communist Capabilities and Probable Course of Action in Korea Through Mid-1952," National Intelligence Estimate, published 7 December 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 3. The report states that:

"The Chinese Communist and North Korean Air Forces are wholly dependent upon the USSR for aircraft spare parts and associated equipment and largely dependent upon

Soviet sources for POL. It is within the Soviet capability to augment greatly the Chinese Communist air strength at any time. These aircraft could come from the Soviet Far Eastern Air Forces, for Europe, or from Soviet production which is estimated to include 500 MIG-15's per month."

<sup>73</sup>CIA, "Communist Capabilities and Probable Course of Action in Korea," National Intelligence Estimate, published 30 July 1952. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-1961, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1-3. The report states that:

"The Communists now possess the capability of seriously challenging the UN air effort in Northwest Korea as far south as the Chongchon River and expanding their air operations southward into forward UN-held territory and adjacent waters. We believe that, during the period of this estimate, the Communists could not drive UN forces from Korea unless a major Soviet effort was applied. We do not believe the USSR will be willing to accept the grave risk of global war which such a commitment would entail."

On page 3, the assessment on the combat effectiveness of the Chinese Communist Air Force was impossible because of the "strong indications of extensive participation of Soviet personnel in actual combat flying."

<sup>74</sup>Ibid, 5.

<sup>75</sup>Hak-Joon Kim, "China's Non-Involvement in the Origins of the Korean War: A Critical Reassessment of the Traditionalist and Revisionist Literature," in The Korean War in History, Edited by James Cotton and Ian Neary (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), 27.

<sup>76</sup>Roy E. Appleman, Disaster in Korea, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 10-12. Appleman suggests that the movement Communist Chinese Forces (CCF) from south China to Manchuria was to act as a strategic reserve should the North Korean forces be unable to complete their conquest. The Fourth Field Army (the best in the in the CCF) moved in May/June 1950 from opposite Taiwan to Manchuria-Korean boarder. As the communist fortunes sagged in Korea during the summer 1950, the CCF Third Field Army moved from South China to Manchuria. This was to build up the strategic reserve so that its commitment would be decisive. Thus, the North Koreans, Soviets, and Chinese had a coordinated military strategy for victory.

<sup>77</sup>Christensen, 151. Mao's mission and analysis was: "to destroy and expel, within Korea itself, the armies of the United States and other countries; second, since Chinese troops will fight American troops in Korea (even though they will be using the title Volunteer Army), we must be prepared for the United States to declare and enter a state of war with China . . . "

"Of these two problems, the primary problem is whether or not the Chinese Army can destroy the American forces within Korea itself, and effectively resolve the Korean problem. So long as our forces can destroy the American forces within Korea itself, most importantly [as long as they can] destroy the American Eighth Army (an old army with combat effectiveness), while the seriousness of the second problem (America's declaring war on China) will still exist, the situation will already have turned in favor of the revolutionary camp and China."

<sup>78</sup>Edward Crankshaw, Khrushchev Remembers (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 368-370.

<sup>79</sup>Quigley, 36. "Although the facts behind the Korean fighting were unclear, and despite the indication that the invasion had been initiated by the south, official Washington immediately concluded that the north was responsible."

<sup>80</sup>Quigley, 42.

<sup>81</sup>Seth Faison Jr., "Mao's Cable Explains Drive Into Korea," The New York Times, 26 February 1992, page A8.

<sup>82</sup>Christensen, page 138. Mao tried to eliminate the possibility of a stalemate "by seeking the total destruction of American forces in Korea."

<sup>83</sup>Foot, page 234.

<sup>84</sup>Robert R. Simmons, The Strained Alliance: Peking, Pyongyang, Moscow and the Politics of the Korean Civil War (London: The Free Press, 1975), 193.

<sup>85</sup>Quigley, 61.

<sup>86</sup>Foot, 232.

<sup>87</sup>Simmons, 168.

<sup>88</sup>Quigley, 63.

<sup>89</sup>Foot, 235.

<sup>90</sup>Max Hastings, The Korean War (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 261.

<sup>91</sup>Simmons, 202-203. On 7 September 1951, the Chinese and North Koreans requested Soviet military intervention to respond to fierce US attacks on North Korea.

"The American Navy had interdicted the Korean coast and was mercilessly bombarding North Korean cities, while the Soviet Union, which was publicly proclaiming itself the head of the socialist camp and the defender to Chinese and Korean interests, held back from active participation in the war."

<sup>92</sup>Ibid, 181,191,201.

<sup>93</sup>Quigley, 63. This is Quigley's interpretation of Max Hastings, The Korean War, page 230, comment: "The economic cost of the war to China was proving crippling, with the Russians insisting upon payment for the arms and ammunition which they supplied to Marshal Peng's army."

<sup>94</sup>Hastings, 340.

<sup>95</sup>Quigley, 35-64.

<sup>96</sup>Clayton Capers, Sergeant Major (Ret) U. S. Army, telephone interview by author, Sacramento, CA and Fort Leavenworth, KS, 20 March 1992. SGM(Ret) Capers served thirteen months in Korea from 1951-52 with the 40th AAA Brigade. He retired in 1971 after over 21 years of military service.

<sup>97</sup>Captain (Ret) Jack Gifford, Ph.D., interview by author, 14 April 1992. Captain (Ret) Gifford was captured as PFC and spent 21 months in Chinese Communist POW camps. He is currently an instructor at the U. S. Army Command and General Staff College.

<sup>98</sup>Charles Norberg, "Comments on Atrocity Item Draft Speech," dated 20 November 1953. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Papers, 1953-61, OCB Central File Service, Box 121, OCB 383.6, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 2. This letter was written to LT Col Philip Corne and Dick Hirsch to coordinate the US position on the December 1953 UN POW Atrocity Hearings. Mr. Norberg's comment was:

"It is understood that you are holding back further Soviet participation by actual troops for rebuttal purposes. The agreed upon figures are during the summer of 1951 up to 20,000 Soviet troops were in Korea. At the end of May 1953 up to 10,000 still remained in Korea."



<sup>99</sup>"Soviet Direction of Korean War and Prisoner of War Control," 4.

<sup>100</sup>Robert F. Futrell, The United States Air Force in Korea 1950-53 (revised edition, Office of Air Force History, United States Air Force, Washington, D.C. 1983), 511-513 and 697-698.

<sup>101</sup>National Security Council, "Current Policies of the Government of the United States of America relating to the National Security: Volume 1, Part III: Far East and Communist China," published 1 November 1952. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council, Intelligence File, Box 258, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, III-C-2.

<sup>102</sup>Futrell, 608.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid, 653.

<sup>104</sup>Psychological Strategy Board, "PSB D-35 (1/5/5-3)," dated 9 January 1953. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Council Papers, 1953-61, PSB Central Files Services, Box 21, PSB 310.1, (File #1) (3), Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 6.

<sup>105</sup>H. S. Craig, "Memorandum For The Record, Subject: Returned POWs at Valley Forge General Hospital, dated 12 May 1953." Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Papers, 1953 to 1961, PSB Central Files Services, Box 18, A82-18, File: PSB 092. USSR(3), Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, 2-3.

<sup>106</sup>Operations Coordinating Board, "Meeting of POW Working Group Tuesday, 10 November 1953." Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, OLB Central File Series, Box 117, A82-18, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 3.

<sup>107</sup>Jesse MacKnight, "Government Memorandum, Subject: Department of the Army Fact Sheet 'Communist Mistreatment of United States Prisoners of War' - October 23, 1953," dated: 4 November 1953. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Papers, OCB Central File Series, Box 121, A82-19, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, 1.

<sup>108</sup>A. Dokuchayev, "The Time Has Come To Tell the Story: It Was in Korea," Krasnaya zvezda (25 Jun 89): 3, translated in JPRS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-89-019, (31 July 1989): 14.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid, 13.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid, 13-14.

<sup>111</sup>G. Lobov, "Blank Spots in History: In the Skies of North Korea," Aviatsiya i kosmonavtika 10 (Oct 90): 30-34, translated in JPRS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-91-003 (28 June 1991): 28-30. Lobov adds that a third CCAF airbase was became operational for the 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps in 1952 at Dapu, Manchuria.

<sup>112</sup>G. Lobov, "Gaps in History: In the Sky of North Korea," Aviatsiya i kosmonavtika 11 (Nov 90): 30-32, translated in JPRS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-91-004 (2 July 1991): 22-25.

<sup>113</sup>G. Lobov, "Gaps in History: In the Sky of North Korea," Aviatsiya i kosmonavtika 1 (Jan 91): 32-33, translated in JPRS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-91-006 (10 October 1991): 14.

G. Lobov, "Gaps in History: In the Sky of North Korea," Aviatsiya i kosmonavtika 5 (May 91): 16-17, translated in JPRS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-92-001 (21 January 1992): 2-3. On pages 2-3, Lobov lists the name of the 22 Soviet Pilots awarded "the Title of Hero of the Soviet Union for Internationalist Aid to the Korean People in the War of Patriotic Liberation of 1950-1953." Lobov lists the date of decree, military rank and position, number of combat sorties (ranging from unknown to 15 to 191), and number of kills for each pilot (ranging from unknown to 4 to 21) for each pilot.

In the two volume, Geroi Sovetskogo Soyuza: Kratkiyi biograficheskiy slovar, which is the biographical dictionary of all recipients of the Hero of the Soviet Union Award, George M. Mellinger (Editor of Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual) found and translated 9 of the 22 Soviet fliers cited by Lobov. The citation for Captain Stepan Antonovich Bakhayev specified that he "took active part in rendering international assistance to the people of the KPDR in opposing imperialist aggression." (Volume 1, 129-130.) Lobov lists Bakhayev as a major, deputy squadron commander, who flew 166 combat sorties shooting down 6 enemy planes. Mr. Mellinger's work provides a partial official Soviet corroboration of Lobov's Korean War list of Hero of the Soviet Union awards for achievement or heroism and thus confirms the Soviet combat role.

<sup>114</sup>David Rees, Korea: The Limited War (New York: St Martin's Press, 1964), 370-378.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION'S PARADOX

On the eve of the Korean War, the NSC's view of using the elements of national power according to the Cold War de facto ROEs would have been the following:

Diplomatic power was an accepted use of national power in all international forums. The US use of diplomatic power was constrained and tempered by consideration of potential alliance members views while building anti-Soviet coalitions. The Soviet constraints were less apparent, as they had greater ability and aptitude to forcefully (by military and economic means) coerce satellites. This contributed to the popular view of a monolithic communist force controlled by Moscow. However, the Soviet Union had constraints on their diplomatic power, as events in Yugoslavia and Berlin had demonstrated. The US and Soviet Union used their preeminent diplomatic power to create and further the goals of their separate alliances.

Informational power was used aggressively by the Soviet Union and reluctantly by the US. After World War II, the Soviet Union had continued its informational campaign by switching the target from Nazi Germany to the US and capitalist West. The Soviet informational campaign was

clearly propagandistic, constantly belittling and castigating of US-policies and became increasingly openly anti-American.<sup>1</sup> The US, on the other hand, was unprepared and generally unwilling to engage in such a struggle against the Soviets.<sup>2</sup> The US information policy was a non-aggressive, "true picture" approach through "Voice of America" broadcasts and other media outlets,<sup>3</sup> which were "jammed" or discredited by Soviet countermeasures.<sup>4</sup> The US informational policy did not change until 20 April 1950 (coinciding with NSC 68 approval), when President Truman announced his new "Campaign of Truth" against Soviet propaganda.<sup>5</sup> Thus, US and Soviet informational campaigns on the eve of the Korean War were actively engaged.

Use of the economic element of power was critical to the Cold War strategies of the US and Soviet Union. Economic sanctions and warfare have been frequently used in history to coerce an adversary into submission or moderation. The Clifford Report proposed the economic isolation of the Soviet Union and her satellites should diplomatic and informational elements of national power fail. George Kennan argued that containment, whose main weapon was economic isolation, would cause the Soviet system eventually to collapse from internal economic decay. Containment had been adopted as US policy. Consequently, the US and the Soviet Union and satellite states' trade declined from \$207.5 million in 1947 to \$26.1 million in

1950.<sup>6</sup> The Soviet response was the January 1949 establishment of COMECON - a reciprocal version of economic containment. Thus, the economic element of national power was engaged in a growing but still limited economic war at the onset of the Korean War.<sup>7</sup>

The use of the military element of national power was restricted to arming and advising client states or guerrillas. Combat was between the client state's armed forces and the insurgent forces. To date, a client state of one power had not openly attacked the client state of the other. It was an exception if either US or Soviet advisers engaged in direct combat. US and Soviet combat forces had not been committed in force since the conclusion of World War II. It was mutually assumed that direct combat between US and Soviet forces would trigger World War III. Consequently, the use of the military element of national power required the minimization of combat clashes between US and Soviets military personnel while they armed and advised opposing sides.

On the eve of the DPRK invasion, the de facto ROEs allowed the use of all elements of national power in varying degrees of intensity, except for direct combat between US or Soviet armed forces.

#### A Decision Based on Facts, Unknowns, and Assumptions

As President Truman convened his NSC at Blair House on the night of 25 June 1950, the DPRK invasion had broken

the existing ROE for use of the military element of national power: A Soviet client state had invaded a US client state. The President's decision process resulted in the commitment of US armed forces on 30 June 1950 based on facts, unknowns, and presumptions.

The facts were that the DPRK invasion had captured Seoul and forced the ROKA into a headlong retreat. Cold-war tensions were increasing in Europe with the emergence of two Germanys; in the Middle East from rival US and Soviet interests; and in Asia where Taiwan and French Indochina were seen as vulnerable to the PRC, who had just consolidated control of the mainland. The domestic fallout over the "loss of China" and upcoming mid-term congressional elections was not favorable to President Truman.

The unknown facts comprise a series of military, international, and domestic questions. What was the staying power of an unaided ROKA? What were Soviet intentions in other parts of the world? Would the Soviets sponsor other attacks in trouble spots, such as Indochina, Iran or Germany? How would the Soviets and the PRC react to a forceful US/UN action in Korea? What was the staying power of McCarthyism in the upcoming mid-term congressional elections?

The major NSC presumption was that the Soviet Union had instigated the DPRK invasion; that the DPRK possessed a Soviet supplied military superiority over the ROKA; and that

the Korean people preferred the ROK government to the communist DPRK. The NSC presumed that the Soviet Union would not deliberately start World War III because of the US advantage in nuclear weapons. If the US defended the ROK, most non-communist countries would provide diplomatic support and would make at least token contributions of money and troops. A decision not to defend the ROK would open the Truman Administration to renewed attacks from the Republican right-wing, if the ROK fell. In contrast, the decision to defend the ROK would be domestically popular in the short term.<sup>8</sup>

The Japanese, Italian, and German aggression that preceded World War II were historical analogues that President Truman used for his decision-making. His interpretive lesson was that inaction in response to aggression encourages further aggression, which would cause World War III. In his mind, the DPRK invasion was deliberately instigated by the Soviet Union, which deliberately challenged and changed the de facto military ROE. He made a leap of faith in presuming that the Soviets would not respond to US intervention because of the American nuclear advantage. Further, a decision to intervene had perceived positive domestic and international political consequences whereas a decision not to intervene was filled with negative consequences. Thus, President Truman reached a fateful conclusion: the commitment of US combat forces

would prevent World War III whereas the failure to respond militarily would accelerate the start of World War III.<sup>9</sup>

The commitment of US combat forces profoundly changed the de facto ROE for use of the military element of national power. For the first time in the Cold War, a principal power (US) had employed its military forces against the surrogate forces armed and supported by the other principle power (Soviet Union). Thus, the new military de facto ROE was that a client state attack on the other's client state's could expand to include a principle power. However, this de facto ROE assumed that the other principal power (Soviet Union) would not again change the de facto ROE and risk World War III by directly committing combat forces against the US. Thus, President Truman's critical assumption was that the Soviet Union would not use its military element of national power.

#### What Are the Soviets Up To?

Throughout the summer of 1950, the priority intelligence assessment was: What were the Soviet intentions? It was critical to US strategy to determine at the earliest time Soviet intentions. Was President Truman's critical assumption correct that the Soviets would not directly challenge the US, and thus the war would remain limited? If the answer was no, was this the start of World War III?



It is clear from Khrushchev that the Soviets and PRC expected the DPRK to win quickly before US intervention could become a factor.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, Soviet diplomatic and military signals throughout the summer of 1950 indicated a policy of military non-intervention and exploitation of diplomatic and informational advantages "won through its tactical departure in Korea of initiating limited, local war by non-Soviet Communist forces."<sup>11</sup>

As US/UN forces reversed the situation and advanced into North Korea, Khrushchev stated,

If we hadn't refused him [Kim Il-sung] aid in qualified personnel to assess the distribution of forces and to direct operations, there's no doubt that North Korea would have been victorious. I think if Kim had received just one tank corps, or two at the most, he could have accelerated his advance south and occupied Pusan on the march. The war would have ended then and there. Later, the American press said that if Pusan had been captured, the USA would have intervened with its armed forces.<sup>12</sup>

After US and Soviet air clashes on 4 September and 8 October 1950, US intelligence concluded the lack of apparent Soviet reaction as confirmation of President Truman's critical assumption -- the Soviets were sitting on the sidelines. The US intelligence briefing book, dated 12 October 1950, prepared for President Truman's participation at the Wake Island Conference viewed Soviet intentions:

to date [the Soviet Union] has given no indications that it intends to intervene directly in Korea. Since the beginning of hostilities the Soviet Union has sought in its official statements and in its propaganda to give the impression that it is not involved in the Korean situation. Moreover, the USSR has taken no political or military actions that constitute direct armed intervention in Korea. However, the Soviet Government

for some months has been increasingly improving its military capabilities in the Far East as well as in other strategic areas.<sup>13</sup>

This view of Soviet intentions led the predicted probable Soviet course of action:

It is believed that the Soviet leaders will not consider that their prospective losses in Korea warrant direct military intervention and a consequent grave risk of war. They will intervene in the Korean hostilities only if they have decided, not on the basis of the Korean situation alone, but on the basis of over-all considerations, that it is to their interest to precipitate a global war at this time.<sup>14</sup>

Khrushchev summarization of Stalin's attitude confirmed the US intelligence conclusion:

"So what? If Kim Il Sung fails, we are not going to participate with our troops. Let it be. Let the Americans now be our neighbors in the Far East." Such was his inner reconciliation. Stalin already believed that it was inevitable.<sup>15</sup>

However, both the contemporary US assessment and Khrushchev's recollections were wrong. What US intelligence did not foresee<sup>16</sup> were the Soviet deployments to Manchuria and North Korea of combat units that would form the 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps, which by mid-1951 would number 26,000 men. From the unclassified documents, US intelligence noted increased Soviet Far East strength but did not connect that to Soviet intervention in Korea. Khrushchev's error may be explained from his statement that his

memories of the Korean War are unavoidably sketchy. I didn't see any of the documents in which the question of military-technical aid to the North Koreans was discussed. But I basically understood our policies.<sup>17</sup>

An alternative explanation was that Khrushchev was continuing a de facto US and Soviet agreement to cover up Soviet combat participation in Korea.

### The Soviets have Committed Combat Forces - Now What?

The Soviet Union's strategic and national interest was to ensure the survival of the DPRK and to prevent a non-communist, hostile, and unified Korea. The successful Inchon Invasion and march into North Korea in September and October 1950 threatened vital Soviet Far East security interests. By October 1950, the NSC concluded that the Soviets would not commit combat forces to prevent the conquest of the DPRK. As developed and documented in Chapter III, the NSC was wrong. Ironically, the Soviets were deploying combat forces that entered combat in November 1950, while at the same time the NSC had reached the conclusion that the Soviets would not intervene.

Most likely, the NSC knew in late 1950 to early 1951 that the Soviets had committed combat forces in coordination with the PRC to prevent the demise of the DPRK. The exact time that the NSC had confirmation of Soviet deployment and engagement of combat forces was not discovered in this research. It may still be classified. However, the important point is not when but rather that the NSC knew of extensive Soviet combat participation against US forces during the Korean War.

Soviet combat participation destroyed President Truman's leap of faith assumption that the Soviet Union would not commit combat forces directly against US forces. The destruction of his fundamental assumption left him three alternative courses of action: public disclosure, do nothing, or conceal Soviet combat participation. The NSC might have analyzed these options as follows.

The first option of public disclosure would most likely have resulted in a reversal of the stated US policy objective to limit the war. First, the US may not have had irrefutable evidence of Soviet combat intervention because of their deployment. If the US did not have such evidence of Soviet combat participation, the inevitable Soviet denial would have weakened US credibility. Given that the US had irrefutable evidence, disclosures would have galvanized the US public behind the war effort. However, the US public reaction would have most likely gone to the extreme, as it did in 1898 when the Spanish-American War started. Public and political pressure would have most likely forced the President to seek a declaration of war with the Soviet Union, which would have started World War III. Thus, the consequence of public disclosure would have been to change US policy from limiting the war to starting a general war. Therefore, Option 1 would not have been acceptable unless the President reversed US policy to limit the war to the Korean Peninsula.

The second option would have been to do nothing. In this option, the US would not have disclosed nor actively concealed Soviet combat participation. The danger of this passive option would have been that uncontrolled events could have forced the US limited-war policy to change. If Soviet participation should have become public, the results would have been similar to Option 1. Thus, all the negative consequences of Option 1 would have applied to Option 2. The timing of a forced reversal of US policy would have been happenstance, but the result would have been the same - World War III. In Option 2, US policy would not have controlled events, but rather events would have controlled US policy. Thus, Option 2 would have been rejected as a weaker option than Option 1.

The third option would have been to actively conceal Soviet combat participation. The deployment and employment of Soviet combat forces would have made it difficult to obtain irrefutable evidence of their intervention. If such evidence should have been found as well other indicators such as intelligence sources and reports, it could have been classified and hidden from public view. Thus, the US active concealment of Soviet intervention could have been effective to support the US policy objective of limiting the war. The Soviets too would have had reasons to conceal their intervention. Disclosure would have destroyed all pretenses of neutrality in their diplomatic and informational

campaigns. Thus, Soviet disclosure would have been very unlikely. The result from Option 3 would have been a de facto US-Soviet non-disclosure agreement. Continuation of this de facto agreement with US active concealment of Soviet intervention would have provided the greatest chance to limit the war and prevent World War III. Thus, Option 3 was recommended as being most consistent with the US policy objective to limit the war.

#### The US Policy: Concealment

The documents imply and state that the Truman Administration selected Option 3: active concealment of the Soviet combat participation. The Department of State formulated and coordinated this policy with other government departments and agencies. The US policy ensured that no unfavorable publicity concerning Soviet combat participation was released from the US government.<sup>18</sup>

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Edward P. Lilly, "The Psychological Strategy Board and Its Predecessors: Foreign Policy Coordination 1938-1953," in Studies in Modern History, edited by Gaetano L. Vincitorio (New York: St. John's University Press, 1968), 355-60.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, 355. There was a debate over the propriety of an informational campaign from the close of World War II to the onset of the Korean War. If an informational campaign was to be conducted, who should control it was hotly debated. In 1947, the US Department of State (DoS) "was then not prepared and more importantly, unwilling to launch a propaganda battle against the Soviets." The DoS position was opposed by the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD proposed "that America redevelop its international broadcasting capability and counter the Soviet propaganda effort, which was belittling and castigating U.S. policy." DoD further argued that "wartime military strategy controlled civilian activities and so psychological policy had to be coordinated and approved by the JCS." A special group representing DoS and DoD was organized to resolve the differences in 1947. It continued to meet until 1949 but "was unable to arrive at an agreed position."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, 358-61. The NSC in late 1947 established an Interdepartmental Coordinating Staff (ICS) to coordinate the US information campaign against the vigorous Soviet "propaganda campaign in Western Europe against America's declared purpose of restoring the European economy. The existing State Department information effort, with its emphasis on strictly 'straight news', 'the full and fair picture' concept, had no psychological value for combatting the Russian effort." However, it was not until September 1948 that the ICS approved its first directive to coordinate "all agencies having information activities, both civilian and military. The directive did not set forth any aggressive program of information activity aimed at the Soviets." However, the State Department did implement a strong offensive line against the Soviet Union in fulfillment of containment with the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan which followed the communist coup in Czechoslovakia and culminated with NATO. However, this was a continuation of the non-aggressive, "true picture" approach. US information policy did not change until 20 April 1950, when President Truman announced the Department of State's new "Campaign of Truth." This change coincided with Presidential approval of NSC 68. President Truman emphasized the blatant and erroneous Soviet propaganda, its implicit threats, its confusion of European people, in order to foster Communist objectives, and urged the media "to expose such lies and deceits with honest,

factual statements, and to present the unvarnished truth." The outbreak of war in Korea changed the pace, the temper and the attitude of the State Department towards informational activities directed against the Soviet Union.

<sup>4</sup>CIA, "Historical Developments in the Jamming of the VOA by the USSR," OSI-1-50, Published 20 January 1950, (Declassified with deletions 17 Oct 89). Papers of Harry S. Truman, President Secretary's Files, Intelligence file, Box 257, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 6-10. "Between 1946 and the beginning of 1948 there was no intentional jamming of BBC or American broadcasts in any language, although quite a number of cases of jamming noise occurred on BBC frequencies and on one Munich channel." (deleted passage) "The earliest date of deliberate jamming of our transmitters was apparently 3 February 1948," and FCC and BBC investigations indicated "that the sources of interfering signals were located at points scattered over a wide area of Western and Eastern USSR." The US protested to the Soviet Government in March and April 1948. "The Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs denied to the US Ambassador that the frequencies in question had been used for any Soviet transmissions. This jamming was early recognized as a clear violation of the Madrid and Atlantic City Telecommunications Conventions and the Cairo and Atlantic City Radio Regulations, to which both the US and the USSR are parties." The reports conclusion was "There is now little doubt that the Soviet jamming operations constitute just a segment of a comprehensive, long-range program of developing general countermeasures techniques."

<sup>5</sup>Lilly, 360.

<sup>6</sup>Department of State Office of Intelligence Research, "Vulnerability of the Soviet Bloc to Existing and Tightened Western Economic Controls," OIR Report No. 5447R, dated 26 January 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Records of the National Security Council 1948-61, President's Secretary's Files, Department of State, Box 19, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 2.

<sup>7</sup>Economic Cooperation Administration, "Trade of the Free World with the Soviet Block," dated February 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Executive Secretary's File, Department of State, U.S. Policy re Korea, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1. This report is an assessment of the economic instrument of national power six months into the Korean War. The major conclusion was one short of all-out war -- "Economic warfare cannot be a decisive weapon in dealing either with the Soviet Bloc in Europe or with China. Controls can be made more effective than they are today.



There is no way to prevent trade with the Soviet Bloc from contributing to the military potential of the area short of an all-out economic warfare."

<sup>8</sup>Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 39-40.

<sup>9</sup>Merle Miller, Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman (New York: Berkely Publishing Corporation, 1973), 273-285. Secretary of State Acheson was asked: Mr. Truman has said that the Korean decision was his most important decision. Do you agree with that?

Yes. In this I think he is wholly right. It was a critically important decision, and I think it was important for this reason. This was an occasion upon which a perfectly clear alternative was presented to the United States, an alternative between withdrawing, retreating in front of Russian pressure brought through a satellite, or standing up and fighting and taking the consequences, and Mr. Truman did not shrink from that decision. The United States, under his leadership, decided to fight and did fight. And I think that this has changed the whole history of events since then. . . . when the Russians, to their great surprise, found that they had started something which the United States met absolutely squarely and hit with the utmost vigor, I think they stopped, looked and listened. . . . We have not had to fight a third world war, which, as Mr. Truman has often said, would destroy us all.

(Pages 284-5)

<sup>10</sup>Strobe Talbott, Khrushchev Remembers (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 368.

<sup>11</sup>CIA, "Review of the World Situation," CIA 8-50, Published 16 August 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, White House National Security Staff Papers 1948-61, Executive Secretary's File, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1.

<sup>12</sup>Talbott, 370.

<sup>13</sup>CIA, "Threat of Soviet Intervention in Korea," dated 12 October 1950, included as Tab L to Background on Possible Items for Discussion on Wake Island, dated 14 October 1950 EST. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Executive Secretary's File, Intelligence File, Box 267, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, 1.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Jerrold L. Schecter and Vyacheslav V. Luchkov, Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1990), 146. After Stalin's resignation to a US victory, the PRC (Mao) suddenly proposed to save the situation by their intervention. Khrushchev stated:

"They offered to introduce this large army, some 500,000 troops, and provide help to North Korea. I do not know whether the Chinese tried to set any conditions for their participation in the war, but if so, Stalin didn't accept them. I heard Stalin say we would not take part in this war. Stalin backed Kim Il Sung and gave him help, but he lacked understanding of the situation. He showed cowardice. He was afraid of the United States. ... The Chinese saved the situation. This brought honor to Mao Zedong. The Chinese communist party made large sacrifices and put forward a large army. This army shed its blood in order to save North Korea. But ending the war was another matter, and we made our contribution to that when Stalin died."

<sup>16</sup>In current US declassified documents, US intelligence provided no indication of the formation and employment of the Soviet 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps in Manchuria and North Korea. In still classified US documents, US intelligence may have known and reported on the Soviet 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps. However, this study was limited to declassified documents and thus provides no insight into the exact knowledge of the NSC concerning Soviet use of military power.

<sup>17</sup>Talbott, 372.

<sup>18</sup>Operations Coordinating Board, "Meeting of POW Working Group Thursday, 12 November 1953." Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House National Security Staff Papers, 1948-61, OLB Central File Series, Box 117, A82-19, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 3.

## CHAPTER V

### THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION

The Presidential campaign of 1952 featured the Republicans attacking the Truman Administration's foreign policy record, specifically the Korean War. The Republican right wing, lead by Senator Richard Nixon, accused the Truman Administration of inviting the DPRK invasion<sup>1</sup> and losing 600 million to communism. The Republican theme was no more appeasement and to roll back communism. They dubbed the Democratic candidate, Governor Adlai Stevenson, as "Adlai the appeaser." Governor Stevenson was, in fact, a true believer and defender of Truman's containment policies and an ardent anti-communist. Both parties were anti-communist. The differences were in their approach toward communism. The Republicans argued for an offensive strategy. In contrast, the Democratic strategy was the defensive strategy of containment.

During the campaign, Eisenhower embraced the Republican offensive strategy. He repeated the Republican charges that the Truman Administration's mismanagement of foreign affairs was the proximate cause for the DPRK invasion. The trump card of the campaign was his 24 October 1952 pledge that if elected, he would go to Korea.

This was a statement without specifics, but the American public interpreted it as a pledge to end the war.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the campaign, Eisenhower said enough to satisfy his right wing while keeping his options open.<sup>3</sup>

The Republican campaign rhetoric and Eisenhower's seeming endorsement gave hope to President Rhee of an impending reversal of US policy from limiting to winning the war. President Rhee prepared a "position paper" supporting his thesis that driving the communists out of Korea served the interests of world peace. Eisenhower most likely never read this paper. His visits with President Rhee were limited to an initial courtesy call without a discussion and a forced 90-minute briefing by Rhee and his cabinet. Eisenhower did not provide Rhee with any indication of his intentions. Instead, Eisenhower's intentions were revealed on the return trip across the Pacific with a statement that he would continue Truman's policy to secure the earliest possible truce.<sup>4</sup>

On Eisenhower's succession to power, Nitze wrote:

Immediately after the inauguration ceremony Foster Dulles, the new secretary of state, called me into his office. He began by saying that he had no quarrel with Acheson's policies (a surprising statement, but one I had no reason to doubt), but he thought Acheson had mishandled the Congress. No Administration had gotten as much constructive foreign policy through the Congress as had the Truman administration, but Dulles thought he could do better. The new administration, he said, had come into office with a mandate for what he called a radically different foreign policy.<sup>5</sup>

How did this new "radically different foreign policy" differ from Eisenhower's previous statement of continuity? How would this change or not change the de facto Cold War ROEs?

### Eisenhower's Paradox

The Eisenhower Administration was not tied to the Truman Administration's de facto acceptance of ROEs changed by the Korean War. It is assumed that President Eisenhower was briefed on the Soviet combat intervention in Korea. This briefing must have included the US policy of concealing the true Soviet war role. President Eisenhower had to decide either to continue the concealment or to expose the actual Soviet war role. This decision was intertwined with his fundamental decision to change or leave unchanged the Truman Administration's policy. The first option was to change and to seek a victory. The second option was a continuation to seek a truce agreement.

If Eisenhower had selected the first option, he would have deployed adequate forces to "win," which meant an offensive and probable widening of the war. The US change to the de facto military ROE would have most likely included exposure of the Soviet combat intervention. Not only would have the American public reacted, but also the Soviets would have certainly countered the US escalation. In 1969, Soviet diplomat M. S. Kapitsa stated that the Soviets were prepared to send five divisions to North Korea

if it appeared likely to be overrun by the US/UN forces.<sup>6</sup> Given the truth of this statement, the option to "win" the war would have started World War III in 1953 with open combat between US and Soviet forces in Korea.

If President Eisenhower had selected the second option and continued President Truman's policy, he would have accepted the de facto military ROE. This selection would have represent a reversal of his campaign rhetoric, and would not have supported a new "radically different foreign policy." However, it would have been the option most likely to limit and terminate the war.

#### The Eisenhower Administration Policy

The Eisenhower Administration's debate over Korean War policy moved from the favored first option -- win the war -- to the second option -- accept a negotiated settlement and the de facto ROEs.

Secretary of State Dulles believed that it was possible to secure a more favorable settlement than a mere armistice at the 38th parallel. Secretary Dulles' opinion was that:

our current trading position is a great deal better, and he personally would like to be able to say to the communist that unless we could divide Korea at the waist rather than at the 38th parallel, we would call off the armistice.

Such a division would facilitate the Eisenhower Administration's ultimate political objective of a "unified democratic Korea."<sup>8</sup>

To impose a favorable settlement, the US had to mount an offensive to drive the communists back to the waist of Korea. The NSC considered six courses of actions (COAs), A to F, during the spring of 1953. COA A was a continuation of the stalemated lines. COAs B and C were limited offensives within the confines of Korea.

The trouble with it was, according to the President, that if our commanders succeeded in destroying a very great number of the enemy in military operations which moved up to the waist of Korea, it would not be long before the enemy would bring up replacements and we should find ourselves in the same posture and in the same stalemate that we were now in, excepting only that we should have advanced to the waist of Korea. This seemed a doubtful gain to the President, whose view of the matter was confirmed by General Hull.<sup>9</sup>

COAs D, E and F expanded the war beyond Korea. These COAs had the real danger of losing Allied support, which might return if there was quick success. However, these COAs would result in "a probable Soviet intervention and the real possibility of a general war."<sup>10</sup> If this occurred, Secretary Smith's opinion was that the US led western alliances would probably temporarily fall to pieces.

President Eisenhower agreed and stated:

the simple truth of the matter was that many people in the European countries believe that global war is much worse to contemplate than surrender to Communist imperialism. To many of them there was simply nothing worse than global war, for the reason that it would amount to the obliteration of European civilization. We desperately need, continued the President, to maintain these outposts of our national defense, and we do not wish our allies to desert us. We were already in considerable difficulties with these allies and, it seemed to the President, our relations with Great Britain had become worse in the last few weeks than at any time since the end of the war.<sup>11</sup>

COA A, the status quo, emerged as the "best" COA. This COA was enhanced by the threat to employ nuclear weapons should the truce negotiations fail.<sup>12</sup> The NSC discussion of the employment of nuclear weapons questioned the effectiveness of the atomic bombs in Korea.<sup>13</sup> Further, there is some doubt if this was a "real" threat or a tactic to force conclusion of the armistice.<sup>14</sup> Regardless, it expanded the de facto military ROE: the threat of "massive retaliation" by nuclear means was the predecessor of the later "mutually assured destruction" practice by the US and Soviets in the later Cold-War period.

At the end of the foregoing debate, President Eisenhower essentially selected the second option: continuation of the Truman Administration's policy and ROEs. The major change he made to the de facto military ROE was the threat of "massive retaliation." In the other ROEs, he retained the Truman Administration's adherence, which included the active concealment of Soviet combat involvement.

#### The Post-War UN General Assembly Plenary on Korean War POWS

In December 1953, the UN General Assembly held a debate over US allegations of communist atrocities against US/UN POWs. In preparing for UN debate, the Eisenhower Administration discussed the possible change to US policy of active concealment of Soviet combat involvement. The



Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) was the multi-agency group that developed the US position for the UN debate. The OCB prepared documentation of complete Soviet control of the communist war effort, which resulted in the POW atrocities. This paper expressed the US knowledge of the Soviet war role:

The Korean aggression, from which these atrocities flowed, was directly organized and triggered by some 1300 Soviet Russian military "advisers" who were with the North Korean and Chinese Communist forces both before and during the war. A ranking Russian officer, Lt. G. G. Vashirev or Vassilyev, not only played a dominant role in preparing the invasion from December 1949 on, but actually gave the order in Russian, at 4:45 in the morning on June 25, 1950, for the North Korean forces to cross the 38th Parallel. This order was heard by a North Korean major and interpreted to him on the spot by a Russian colonel who also heard it a telephone switchboard in Wonsam; and this major gave us the full story after his capture by UN forces.

Soviet Communist direction also was behind the Chinese Communist entry into the war, which was decided on in August 1950, before the Inchon landing. Elements of the first three Chinese armies appeared in North Korea in October 1950, at a time when no United Nations forces were within [blank] miles of China's Yalu River frontier. It is thus entirely clear that the Chinese Communist entered the war in accordance with a Soviet plan, approved by the leaders in Peiping, and aimed not at defending Communist China against a supposed military threat but at helping the faltering North Koreans to complete the conquest of Korea.

The control system for POW camps in North Korea shows the extent of involvement of Soviet "advisers". The Secretary General of the top secretariat was a Soviet officer named Takayaransky, Director General of the POW control bureau was a Colonel Andreyev, USSR; its Deputy Director, Lt. Col. Baksov, USSR, for the North Koreans, General Kim Il, North Korean Army (alias Pak Dok San, USSR) and General Tu Ping, Chinese. The chief of the Investigation Section (one of three component sections of the bureau) was a Colonel Faryayev, USSR.

As shown in the story of "BW confessions" and in other testimony from returned prisoners, Russians themselves took part in the efforts to exploit prisoners politically. The testimony on the hordes of Russian advisers in Pyongyang and elsewhere is overwhelming.<sup>15</sup>

A contemporaneous US newspaper reported that US Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. accused the Soviets of being responsible for the POW atrocities.

The chief American delegate charged before the General Assembly that Russian officers headed the command of prison camps in North Korea in which thousands of prisoners of war were slain by inhuman and atrocious means.

Most of the assembly delegates sat in shocked silence as Lodge opened the debate on the question of atrocities which the United States raised a month ago.<sup>16</sup>

Ambassador Lodge limited his comments to the POW issue. He did not address the wider issue of the extensive Soviet participation.

The UN POW debate degenerated into a diplomatic "name calling game" of conflicting statements of facts and diverted the debate's focus:

Mr. Lodge again taunted the Soviet Union today with having made a non-aggression agreement with Hitler before the outbreak of World War II. He declared that Andrei Y. Vishinsky, the Soviet representative, had reached "a new level in absurdity" with his reply that it was the United States that gave Hitler his start.

Mr. Vishinsky, who has been very touchy on the subject of the Nazi-Soviet pact, obtained the floor later and asserted that when they invaded the Soviet Union, Hitler's divisions were equipped "with American gold."<sup>17</sup>

On 3 December 1953, the UN General Assembly approved, by a vote of 42-5-9, a US-sponsored resolution

that expressed "grave concern" over the reported atrocities committed by the DPRK and the PRC forces, and contained a general condemnation of war atrocities by any government. The absence of any statement of Soviet participation was quite striking and represented the diplomatic editing necessary to win votes. The Soviet response was to declare the resolution as "false," "slanderous," and "completely unacceptable." In response, Ambassador Lodge stated that the vote had proved that "our charges of Communist atrocities in Korea are true."<sup>18</sup>

The debate and resolution proved nothing about the Soviet role and intervention in the Korean War. The Eisenhower Administration was forced to modified the policy of active concealment of Soviet intervention because of returned US POWs. The war was over. US evidence of Soviet intervention could remain classified except for the POW stories. Thus, the new policy was to limit US public knowledge to the inevitable disclosures from returned POWs.

#### Summary

The UN debate allowed the Eisenhower Administration to release the steam out of a potentially politically explosive situation, that of the returned POW stories of extensive Soviet combat involvement against Americans. Later calls from within the administration, such as US Ambassador to Korea Briggs, to expose the true Soviet role had little appeal. The US political passion over Korea was

gone, and baiting the Soviets did not serve a useful purpose.

Instead, the Eisenhower Administration employed the de facto military ROE that allowed for plausible deniability. One likely US application of the ROE was the thousands of spy flights that tested and scrutinized Soviet coastal defenses. In the 1950s, about 1,000 of these espionage flights flew over the Soviet Union, and that number tripled in the 1960s. According to the U. S. News and World Report and ABC News program "Primetime Live" at least 252 US fliers were shot down between 1950 and 1970. Of the downed fliers 24 were known to have died and 90 to have survived. The only US government public admission of these flights was the 1960 shooting down of Francis Gary Powers' U-2.<sup>19</sup>

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Merle Miller, Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1973), 268.

<sup>2</sup>Rosemary Foot, The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 189-194. The voters selected Eisenhower as the candidate best able to handle the Korean situation over Stevenson by a 67 to 9 percentage point margin.

<sup>3</sup>Callum A. MacDonald, Korea: The War Before Vietnam (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 175.

<sup>4</sup>Robert T. Oliver, Syngman Rhee and American Involvement in Korea, 1942-1960 (Seoul: Panmun Book Company, LTD, 1978), 404-407.

<sup>5</sup>Paul H. Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 142.

<sup>6</sup>Foot, 232.

<sup>7</sup>"Minutes of the 139th Meeting of the National Security Council," 8 April 1953. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ann Whitman File, NSC Series, Box 4, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 10.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

"Secretary Humphrey inquired about the nature of the ultimate settlement we desired in Korea."

"The President explained this as a unified democratic Korea, and then inquired of General Bradley how it had happened that the armistice agreement had been worded in such a way as to carry the implication of permanence."

"General Bradley was unable to answer, and the President then observed that the American negotiators should be instructed to state that in certain circumstances and on due notice the armistice could be ended."

<sup>9</sup>"Minutes of the 144th Meeting of the National Security Council," 13 May 1953. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ann Whitman File, NSC Series, Box 4, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 12.

"Allied reaction to Courses B and C, thought Secretary Smith, would be determined in large part by whether the

United States took the initiative in embracing these course, or whether the decision to enter into them were forced on us by the enemy. The reaction of our allies and the effect on neutrals would also depend on the achievement of success in a short period of time. Much would be forgiven us if we were quickly successful and ended the war. In summary, Secretary Smith stated that he was personally not very much worried about the reactions of our allies and of the neutral powers to these courses of action, which did not involve the lifting of current restrictions or expanding the war outside of Korea."

<sup>10</sup>Ibid, 12-13.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, 13.

<sup>12</sup>McDonald, 177-180.

<sup>13</sup>"Minutes of the 144th Meeting," 11.

"In the event that atomic weapons were used, General Hull also warned the Council [NSC] that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were convinced that they must be used in considerable numbers in order to be truly effective. [deleted] While there were no good strategic targets within the confines of Korea itself, the military were most anxious to make use of atomic weapons in any of the courses of action which involved operations outside of Korea. Their use would be highly advantageous from the strictly military point of view."

"The President seemed not wholly satisfied with the argument that atomic weapons could not be used effectively in dislodging the Chinese from their present positions in Korea."

"The President nevertheless thought it might be cheaper, dollar-wise, to use atomic weapons in Korea than to continue to use conventional weapons against the dugouts which honeycombed the hill along which the enemy forces were presently deployed."

<sup>14</sup>MacDonald, 178-183.

<sup>15</sup>Charles R. Norberg, Chairman POW Working Group, Memorandum for [deleted] and Central Intelligence Agency, Subject: "Department of State requirements with regard to Phase IV Interrogations," dated 12 November 1953. Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, White House NSC Staff Papers 1948-

1961, OCB Central File Series, Box 117, A82-18, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 5-7.

<sup>16</sup>AP Report, "U. S. Accuses Russians on Atrocities: 38,000 Solders, Korean Civilians Were Victims of Brutality, U. N. Told," Washington Post, 1 December 1953, 1.

<sup>17</sup>Special to New York Times, "Lodge Says in U. N. Debate," 3 December 1953, New York Times, 1.

<sup>18</sup>Thomas J. Hamilton, "U.N., 42 to 5, Scores Korean Atrocities Laid To Reds By U.S.," New York Times, 4 December 1953, 1.

<sup>19</sup>The Associated Press, "Soviets downed planes doing Cold War spying," The Kansas City Star, 7 March 1993, A 13.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Coalitions

As Clausewitz theorized, wars test and restructure the balance of power. Coalitions are formed from a convergence of mutual interests. When these interests change or cease to exist, the coalitions split apart. The limitations and restrictions imposed by coalition members decrease the efficiency of the coalition. Modern coalitions are characterized by joint headquarters. This does not denote efficiency. Instead, it facilitates the continued allegiance of the junior coalition members.

The contemporaneous US view of a communist monolithic military machine directed by the Soviet Union was wrong. Equally wrong was the revisionist view that the Soviets were merely inefficient quartermasters for the communist side, which operated as something similar to a loose confederation. The communist side was a coalition with a dominant (Soviet Union) and subordinate (PRDK and PRC) members. The communist joint headquarters at Antung, Manchuria planned and coordinated the communist war effort. The communist coalition members had different roles that logically fit into the larger coalition strategy. The PRDK



and PRC supplied the forward combat forces (infantry, artillery, armor), while the Soviets protected the rear communist lines of communication. Further, the Soviet combat role facilitated the diplomatic and informational fiction that the Soviets were neutral.

The UN and communist coalitions fractured after the war. Today, two (US and UK) of the 16 UN combat coalition members maintain forces in the ROK, and the UK force is one platoon assigned to the UNC Honor Guard Company. The historic friction between the Soviet Union and PRC was aggravated by the Korean War. The result was the eventual dissolution of the communist coalition in the late 1950s. This dissolution became complete with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the contemporary switch of sides by its successor state of Russia. Thus, coalitions are fractious and temporary in nature.

#### ROEs: A Rationalized Method to Determine the Balance of Power

Before the Korean War, the Cold War evolved de facto ROEs governing the employment of the elements of national power between the US and Soviet Union. The Korean War profoundly altered and added to these ROEs. However, each changed and added ROE resulted in mutually modified behavior to limit the war. For example, Soviet pilots were restricted from flying south of the Pyongyang-Wonsan line, which put them at a tactical disadvantage. However, this facilitated the fiction that the Soviets were neutral, thus allowing both

sides to conceal the actual Soviet combat intervention. The US made a similar decision to limit the war during the fall of 1951 when the US had a tactical opportunity to break through the DPRK and PRC lines and sweep north. Instead of seizing the opportunity, Ridgway ordered Van Fleet to cease all offensive operations and assume an active defensive.<sup>1</sup> The Korean War evolved and added ROEs that allowed the US and Soviet Union safely to test the balance of strength through the ensuing series of Cold War limited conflicts.

The concealment of Soviet combat intervention was critical in keeping public passions in check. Clausewitz wrote that inflamed public passions created the conditions to expand a limited war to a general war. If US or Soviet publics or the international community become aware of the direct US-Soviet combat, the limitation of the Korean War most likely would have been impossible. Thus, concealment of Soviet combat intervention was critical to limiting the war for all sides.

#### Vital Soviet Combat Role in Korea

The Soviet combat deployment was vital in keeping the communist lines of communications open. The Soviet 64th Detached Fighter Air Corps effectively combated and limited the US air campaign to restrict and cut communist resupply. Without the 64th, the PRC or DPRK would not have had the capability to challenge the US air campaign effectively. Without an effective air defense, the US air campaign may

have succeeded in cutting the communist lines of communications. Thus, the Soviet combat intervention played a critical role in sustaining communist forces, which cannot be underestimated in future evaluations of the Korean War.

### Korea as a Precedent: A Rerun in Vietnam

The military ROE of plausible deniability combined with active concealment was employed in Vietnam. The Soviet and American roles were almost identical: Soviet air defense against US warplanes. As with Korea, Soviet accounts of their combat intervention in Vietnam are just now being published. In a 7 January 1992 article, A. Kabannikov wrote:

The military records contain many glorious chapters of the history of Soviet-Vietnamese military cooperation. We supplied weapons to help the Vietnamese during their war of liberation against the USA. The first American bombers were shot out of the skies of Vietnam by Soviet missiles launched by our soldiers. Incidentally, documents on this assistance, which could in no way damage the army's prestige, are kept under lock and key in the archives of the Ministry of Defense at Podolsk, which are about as easy to access as a secret range.<sup>2</sup>

The plausible deniability ROE was not limited to direct US-Soviet confrontations. Lt. Col. A. Dokuchayev wrote on 29 December 1990 that Soviet "missile crewmen continued the tradition [from Vietnam] of ambushes in the summer of 1970 in Egypt, which was subjected to Israeli aggression."<sup>3</sup> In this sense, the plausible deniability military ROEs is a model for future limited conflicts.

The end of the Cold War in 1991 did not mean that the ROEs developed over this period are now historic relics. Instead, the value of studying and learning these ROEs is that they are the initial ROEs for our inevitable future conflicts because we have failed to break Clausewitz's dialectic of endless wars.

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<sup>2</sup>A. Kabannikov, "Generals of Sandy Beaches: Why Are Our Military Still in Vietnam," Komsomolskaya pravda (7 January 1992): 5, translated in JPRS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-91-002 (16 January 1992): 52.

<sup>3</sup>A. Dokuchayev, "Missile Ambushes," Krasnaya zvezda (29 December 1990): 1-2, translated in JRPS Report Soviet Union Military Affairs, JPRS-UMA-91-005 (13 February 1991): 136.

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