

The Causes of the Korean War, 1950-1953

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ABSTRACT

The causes of the Korean War (1950-1953) can be examined in two categories, ideological and political. Ideologically, the communist side, including the Soviet Union, China, and North Korea, desired to secure the Korean peninsula and incorporate it in a communist bloc. Politically, the Soviet Union considered the Korean peninsula in the light of Poland in Eastern Europe—as a springboard to attack Russia—and asserted that the Korean government should be “loyal” to the Soviet Union. Because of this policy and strategic posture, the Soviet military government in North Korea (1945-48) rejected any idea of establishing one Korean government under the guidance of the United Nations. The two Korean governments, instead of one, were thus established, one in South Korea under the blessing of the United Nations and the other in the north under the direction of the Soviet Union. Observing this Soviet posture on the Korean peninsula, North Korean leader Kim Il-sung asked for Soviet support to arm North Korean forces and Stalin fully supported Kim and secured newly-born Communist China’s support for the cause. Judging that it needed a buffer zone against the West and Soviet aid for nation building, the Chinese government readily accepted a role to aid North Korea, specifically, in case of full American intervention in the projected war. With full support from the Soviet Union and comradely assistance from China, Kim Il-sung attacked South Korea with forces that were better armed, equipped, and prepared than their counterparts in South Korea.

Keywords: Korean War, 1950-1953; Division of the Korean Peninsula; Military Occupation of the United States and the Soviet Union in the Two Parts of Korea; UN Resolution Calling for General Election throughout Korea; Establishment of North and South Korean governments; Military Imbalance between North and South Korea; North Korean Attack on South Korea.

The Korean War, like many wars in history, did not take place in a vacuum. It broke out because the North Koreans attacked South Korea with confidence that they could win the war and communize the entire Korean peninsula. North Korean confidence to win the fighting against the South was based not on hope but on high confidence that North Korean forces were able to secure an easy victory in the war. In fact, the North Korean forces were far superior to those of the South in all possible categories of the fighting capabilities and abilities. They were fully armed with heavy weapons and equipment supplied by the Soviet Union, well trained by the prudent guidance of Soviet military education and training advisers, greatly reinforced with the Korean soldiers and combat leadership, well-matured in the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949) period, and given a coordinated fighting plan prepared by the Soviet military war-planning advisers. Having judged from the facts, North Korea and its sponsors, the Soviet Union and Communist China, anticipated an easy victory over South Korea, provided that the United States would not rapidly intervene with its forces. With these expectations and anxieties, North Korea attacked South Korea on June 25, 1950, which became the immediate and direct cause of the Korean War.

In order to clarify the direct causes of the war, that is, that North Korea attacked South Korea, this article tries to uncover some answers as to why and how the two Koreas, instead of one, were established on the Korean peninsula in the first place, what roles the United States and the Soviet Union played in the course of having the two Korean governments established in Korea, and, assuming that the two parts of Korea were the same in almost all arenas including military after the Pacific War (1941-45), why and how North Korea became able to launch a full-scale military offensive against the South in 1950 with its armed forces, better armed, equipped, trained, and prepared than those of South Korea, while South Korea was not able even to defend itself. Without the fact of two Koreas, military imbalance between them, and their different sponsors, the Soviet Union and the United States, North Korea would not have dared to attack the South, and there might not have been a Korean war.

Division of the Korean Peninsula Along the 38th Parallel

At the last stage of the Pacific War, the United States and the Soviet Union, the temporary allied powers in the war against Nazi Germany in Europe, became at odds with each other. In dealing with the establishment of the government of the occupied areas, the Truman administration adhered to the principle of national self-determination, whereas the Soviet government under Stalin was mainly concerned about its own security. President Truman, a staunch supporter of self-determination, was extremely frustrated over the Soviet violation of the principle and the shrewd Soviet political manipulations in the occupied zone, conspicuously, in Poland and Rumania. Stalin, an intransigent communist, being obsessed with fear of being encircled by the capitalist nations. He was determined to establish buffer states amenable to the Soviet Union around the Soviet border. After Nazi Germany was destroyed in Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union had little in common. As a result, the main outcome of the Potsdam Conference (July 16-August 2, 1945) was a feeling of mutual distrust running beneath the ostensibly friendly talks between the United States and the Soviet delegates. The ambivalent feelings of President Truman were explicitly expressed when he said "Stalin was a S. O. B.," and "I guess he thinks I'm one too."¹ Gone indeed was the temporary allied relationship arranged for the fighting against Nazi Germany between the United States and the Soviet Union.

After the United States dropped the A-bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945 respectively and the Soviet Union declared war against Japan on August 9, 1945, the Japanese government made its offer of surrender on August 10, 1945.² The sudden collapse of Japan left little time to change the thrust of U.S. military planning from defeating Japan to dealing with the Japanese surrender. Planners in the Operations Division of the War Department began to prepare General Order No. 1 to be delivered by General Douglas MacArthur to the Japanese government. According to later testimony, Colonel Charles H. Bonesteel, chief of the Policy Section of the Division, and Major Dean Rusk, a reserve officer on active duty in the division, had "thirty minutes" before midnight on August 10-11, 1945 to prepare paragraph one that would specify the nations and commands to accept the Japanese surrender throughout the Far East. The State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) was waiting for a draft. Their major concern was to set up the line as far north as would be acceptable to the Soviets.

Another factor to be considered was that the nearest American troops were on Okinawa, 600 miles from Korea. Bonesteel and Rusk desired to divide Korea along the local provincial boundary lines north of Seoul. But there was only one available map in Bonesteel's office, in which the 38th parallel roughly divided Korea by half. After glancing over the document, Bonesteel and Rusk decided that this line would be the hypothetical line for accepting the Japanese surrender.³

The decision with regard to the surrender zones followed the same channel as for all important military ones in 1945. Drafts usually passed in turn through the Joint Planners, the SWNCC, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and the secretaries of State, War, and Navy, before they finally reached the President for final approval. The Joint Staff Planners received Bonesteel's draft at the predawn hours of August 11, 1945, and began to discuss it. The Navy representative (Admiral M. B. Gardner) immediately suggested the 39th parallel for the line so that Dairen would be in the American zone. But the Chief of Strategy and Policy Group (General George A. Lincoln) pointed out that the Russians might not accept the line and that American troops were too far away to reach that part of the Liaodong peninsula in time. He then called Assistant Secretary of State James Dunn and asked for the State Department's view. Dunn said that Korea was more important to the United States than Dairen, and believed this to be the view of Secretary of State James F. Byrnes.⁴ The JCS approved the proposed draft with their comment: "...this gives to the United States forces port and communications area of Seoul and a sufficient portion of Korea so that parts of it might be apportioned to the Chinese and the British in case of quadripartite administration eventuates."⁵ After the JCS approved the proposed "General Order No. 1," the Secretary of State sent the document to the President with the remarks that the Secretaries of State, War, Navy, and JCS approved the draft of "General Order No. 1." President Truman sanctioned this order, and the JCS sent the order to General MacArthur. Stalin tacitly endorsed the order by raising no objection regarding the 38th parallel and Korea.⁶ Thus was set the line to accept the Japanese surrender in Northeast Asia and the boundary of the military operations between the United States and Soviet troops in the area.

The 38th parallel was thus given a military and political meaning in addition to its geographical one, because it was chosen to facilitate the Japanese surrender and foster conditions for a possible multi-national trusteeship in Korea. Physically, it divided the Korean peninsula, cutting

more than 75 streams, 12 rivers, 181 small cart roads, 104 country roads, 15 provincial all-weather roads, 8 good highways, 6 north-south rail lines, and even a single house.⁷ Economically, since the northern and southern parts of Korea were largely complementary to each other both agriculturally and industrially, the division itself was not acceptable for the daily lives of the Koreans. Politically, because of the subsequent American and Soviet military occupations in the two parts of the peninsula, the line also divided the Korean people into the two different blocs of the ideological, political, economic values and systems. All in all, the 38th parallel, the artificial line, only promised to exacerbate the situation in the Korean peninsula.

Soviet and American Military Occupations of the Two Parts of Korea

The United States in South Korea and the Soviet Union in North Korea established military occupations and separate governments. The 24th Corps U.S. Army (under Lt. General John R. Hodge) was in charge in the American zone, while the 25th Army, the 1st Front of the Soviet Far Eastern Front Forces (under Col. General Ivan M. Chistiakov) was in charge in the Soviet zone.

Military government, however, came as a surprise and disappointment to the Koreans, which caused a high level of discontent and defiance, especially in the south. Furthermore, American forces were not so well prepared for the mission of occupation and governance as compared to those of the Soviet Union, since the Soviet forces had their vice-commanders whose mission was to handle extra-military matters, including ideological and political ones. Many self-styled representatives of the Koreans greeted American troops as if they were hosts, a situation for which General Hodge was completely unprepared. For example, Hodge was astonished that 1,200 Koreans appeared when he asked for a meeting with two representatives from each political party.⁸ By contrast, in the north the Soviet troops met the situation more skillfully through utilizing the Korean Communists headed by Kim Il-sung and launching a massive campaign to impose communist values, ideology, and system. General Chistiakov solved the problem of dissidents by allowing them to flee to the American zone or by liquidating “irreconcilables.”⁹ Skillfully, the Russians granted the Korean Communists the right to rule other Koreans, and the Soviet military authority tried to communize North Korea based on the Soviet

government's position that Korea was considered as "Finland, Poland, Rumania in Europe, a springboard for the attack on Russia."¹⁰ The Soviet military began at once to form and equip the North Korean forces with heavy weapons, such as tanks, machine guns, and artillery pieces in addition to its political efforts to pack its zone with "desirables."¹¹ In this way, the Soviet military government was more merciless and sophisticated in dealing with the disappointed and defiant Koreans.

Quite naturally, the Russians were not enthusiastic about cooperating with the American military in the south and, much less, fostering the stable conditions for a possible international trusteeship throughout Korea. General Hodge was eager to establish a workable agreement with the Soviet commander in North Korea in order to ease economic difficulties, solve the refugee problems, and discuss viable political arrangements for the future of Korea. But his early attempts were unanswered.¹² Under these uncertain and uncooperative conditions, cooperation between the two keepers of Korea, the United States and the Soviet Union, appeared to be far more necessary than ever before to solve the problems in and for Korea.

U.S. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes instructed his ambassador to the Soviet Union, W. Averell Harriman, to contact the Soviet government and raise the problem of agreement on the future of Korea. As instructed, Harriman approached the Soviet authority and raised the question of Korea on November 8, 1945. After the contact, Harriman, observed that the Soviet Union, not being satisfied with one of three or four voices in Korea, "is probably content to concentrate on action, not debate, on political consolidation in north Korea and political penetration of south Korea so that by the time the issue of civilian rule is raised, Soviet political ground will have been laid."¹³ The Soviet Union did not communicate any further on the Korean issue before the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers (December 16-26, 1945).

On December 17, 1945 Secretary Byrnes circulated at the Moscow Conference a memorandum entitled "United Administration for Korea."¹⁴ The proposal stressed joint action under the two military commanders, aiming at a four-power trusteeship for a period not to exceed five years and leading finally to an independent Korea.¹⁵ Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov countered with a proposal, "Regarding Korea," on December 20, 1945. The Soviet proposal did not contain even a single phrase about a possible multi-national trusteeship for Korea, but offered instead to form a joint commission composed of the

representatives of the two occupying commands. In the course of hammering out a compromise solution on the Korean problem, the U.S. and Soviet delegates agreed to organize a joint commission that would consult with “democratic” Korean parties and social organizations for forming a Korean provisional government as a preparatory measure before establishing one Korean government. Secretary Byrnes agreed to accept the idea of a joint commission; but the American delegation insisted upon inserting a clause confirming “a four-power trusteeship of Korea for a period of up to five years.”¹⁶ Thus, the agreement at the Moscow Conference, issued on December 27, 1945, was a loose “mingle-mangle” of the Soviet plan to establish a joint commission and the American idea of multi-national commitments by which Korea’s future integrity could be secured.¹⁷

Koreans, from the extreme left to the extreme right, in the south and the north, were strongly opposed to the Moscow agreement on a trusteeship over Korea. Even the Korean Communists joined with other Koreans in opposing trusteeship until the Soviet position was made known that the Koreans should respect the Moscow Agreement and that the trusteeship idea was not a Soviet one. Then the Korean Communists became staunch defenders of the agreement itself. In this way, all the Koreans except the communist Koreans openly opposed the Moscow agreement by depicting it as “a second Munich,” “another agreement for international slavery,” and “a violation of the principle of self-determination.”¹⁸ All the Koreans who wanted immediate independence rejected any idea of tutorship, multi-national or international. The Korean Communists, however, regardless of whether they accepted the idea of trusteeship over Korea, upheld the sanctity of the Moscow Agreement under the direction of the Soviet Union.

As agreed at Moscow, the United States-Soviet Joint Conference opened in Seoul on January 16, 1946 and held fifteen formal sessions before ending on February 5, 1946. The significant result of the preliminary meetings was an agreement to establish a Joint Soviet-American Commission, and to ease restrictions on land and coastal transportation, limited exchange of first class mail, and establish radio frequencies and direct communications between the two military commands. But the Russians refused to discuss even such subjects as free circulation of the press, unification of the broadcasting system and currency that the Americans judged to be indispensable for elimination of the 38th parallel, or an artificial boundary in Korea. The American

delegation considered this Soviet behavior as indicative of Russia's intention to stay in Korea until "it is satisfied that it has gained political ascendancy in the country."¹⁹ Thus, Koreans other than the Communists did not accept even a temporary agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, while the two occupiers of Korea could not produce a viable agreement on the future of Korea.

Incompatible Policies and Strategies of the Two Occupiers on One Korea

The Joint Commission convened in Seoul on March 20, 1946. Major General Archibald V. Arnold, head of the American delegation, and Colonel General Terenti F. Shtykov, head of the Soviet delegation, shared the chairmanship of the commission.

No compromise and no concession on one Korea was the major commonality of the U.S. and Soviet delegations. Before convening the Joint Commission, the U.S. delegation was briefed by one of its members, saying that "It is assumed that the Soviet government's long-term strategic aim is to establish complete domination over Korea.Since the primary objective of the U.S. is to prevent Russian dominance of Korea, . . . [i]t is not believed to be in the U.S. interest to form a Korean government which could be granted complete independence within the next few years. ..."²⁰ This American estimate of the Soviet aim in Korea was confirmed when the chief Soviet delegate, Shtykov, at the first session of the Commission in Seoul on March 20, 1946, proclaimed that Korea should become "a true democratic and independent country, faithful to the Soviet Union, so that in the future it will not become a base for an attack on the Soviet Union."²¹ General Shtykov also strongly indicated that those "reactionary and anti-democratic" groups of the Koreans who had opposed the Moscow decision should be excluded from participating in a provisional Korean "democratic" government. Should this Soviet position be chosen, a provisional Korean government would be a "communist" one, which the United States could not accept. Political advisers to the American military government, William R. Landon and Charles W. Thayer, recommended showing "our firm determination not to permit Soviet domination of Korea."²²

Based on this recommendation from Korea and the State Department maintained its position not to "compromise on the principle that freedom of expression must be safeguarded throughout Korea."²³ The Joint

Commission soon reached an impasse over the issue of who should be consulted for the preparation of a “provisional Korean democratic government.” The Russians demanded that all those Koreans who had opposed against the Moscow Agreement should be excluded from consultation, whereas the Americans insisted that all Koreans should enjoy their rights of free expression even to oppose any arrangements, including the Moscow Agreement. Unable to reach an agreement, the Commission deadlocked on April 9, 1946. The American delegation suggested that all the Koreans, if they showed their oath of support for the Moscow decision, should be consulted for forming a provisional government, and demanded that the Soviet delegation permit the same degree of political activities of all Koreans in the Soviet zone. The Russians flatly rejected this American proposal. The Joint Commission was adjourned sine die on May 8, 1946.²⁴ Neither side was willing to give up its position.

As directed, General Hodge communicated to General Chistiakov on June 15, 1946, calling for a resumption of negotiations between the two commands, only to receive Chistiakov’s cold reply of August 7, 1946. In his letter, Chischiakov reiterated that the Commission ought to uphold the exact fulfillment of the Moscow decision and should not consult any parties and individuals that had opposed the decision.²⁵ A subsequent exchange of letters between the two commanders clearly revealed no grounds for any compromise. Then, General Hodge continued his political efforts to Koreanize the military government, such as by creating an “Interim Legislative Assembly” which would be composed of 90 members—45 to be elected by the Korean people and 45 appointed by the military government.²⁶ Nevertheless, George F. Kennan, the leading U.S. expert on Russia and Soviet-American relations, commented that “of all commissions, control councils, etc., in which the United States was working with the Russians in Europe, America, and Asia, the show in Seoul was the best.”²⁷

Confronting an impossible situation in Korea, Hodge urged Washington to obtain a government agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union. A subsequent exchange of letters between Washington and Moscow revealed an insurmountable block between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Soviet government urged that the Joint Commission should consult those “democratic” parties and organizations that upheld fully the Moscow decision on Korea. The United States, on the other hand, insisted on the rights of Koreans to

oppose even trusteeship and the Moscow Agreement.²⁸ Behind the rhetoric was a direct clash of two wills—one that insisted “Korea should be loyal to the Soviet Union,” the other that “Korea should be free from foreign domination, especially, that of the Soviet Union.” Thus, the Joint Commission that reconvened in Seoul on May 21, 1947 lasted about three months and could not agree even to submit a joint report. On August 20, 1947, General John R. Hodge submitted the unilateral report of the Joint Commission.²⁹ “The best show” in Seoul ended in a permanent deadlock.

The U.S. government then proposed to convene Four-Power meetings in Washington to solve the Korean problem. The U.S. position was to hold elections in Korea and elect representatives based on the populations of the two zones so that they would establish a provisional government and decide the future of Korea. The Soviet Union flatly rejected the American proposal.³⁰ On September 16, 1947, the U.S. government informed the Soviet government of its intention “to refer the problem of Korean independence to the forthcoming session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,” and the next day did so. On September 21, the General Committee of the General Assembly took up the issue and recommended it to the General Assembly. The UN General Assembly included the Korean issue on September 23, 1947.³¹ Thus, the Korean issue became a “baby” of the United Nations.

Soviet Rejection of UN Proposal on Korea and the Two Koreas Established

On November 14, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution drafted by the United States to establish a unified Korean government through an election under UN supervision, calling for the creation of a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK). The UNGA rejected a Soviet proposal calling for the simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign troops and charging that the UN Commission represented a concrete measure to make Korea “an American colony.” The resolution called for an election on the basis of adult suffrage and secret ballot under UNTCOK supervision prior to March 31, 1948.³² The Soviet Union stood firm against this UN resolution on Korea, making impossible the establishment of one Korean government in Korea.

UNTCOK, created by the UN resolution, held its first meeting in Seoul on January 12, 1948. The Commission decided to hold the

elections by the occupation authorities under its supervision and so informed the two military commanders in the two zones. The Soviet military command in North Korea rejected the UN commission's offer. This Soviet boycott caused a sharp difference among the members of the commission on the subsequent measures to be taken. The representatives of the Republic of China, the Philippines, and El Salvador supported the idea of holding an election in the area accessible to the commission. Those of Australia, Canada, India, and Syria doubted this course, for, in their view, it would perpetuate the division of Korea. The French representative generally supported the former group. Unable to reach an agreement, on February 6, 1948, the commission decided to consult with the Interim Committee of the General Assembly.³³

The "Little Assembly" took up the matter and reviewed three possible alternatives: a separate election and a separate government in the American zone; elections only for consultative purposes; and another effort to mediate the meeting between the northern and southern leaders. Philip C. Jessup, the U.S. representative, clearly supported the first option and opposed the idea of conducting elections for consultative purposes. After heated debates, the Interim Committee adopted the American proposal and instructed the commission to conduct elections in the area approachable to the commission.³⁴

After the first universal suffrage election in Korea on May 10, 1948, the National Assembly for South Korea was formed, and elected Syngman Rhee as its chairman. The UN Commission reported that the elections were held in a "reasonably free atmosphere" and that the representatives chosen reflected "the valid will of more than two-thirds of the Korean people."³⁵ U.S. Secretary of State Marshall announced that the high degree of participation clearly revealed the Koreans' determination to establish their own government "by democratic means."³⁶ The government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) was formally established on August 15, 1948 with Syngman Rhee as its first president. The United States government immediately dispatched John J. Muccio as the Special Representative of the United States to Korea, but withheld its formal recognition of the new Republic of Korea, waiting for the UN action.³⁷

The Soviet Union was not slow to create a new government in its zone. At its fifth session, the North Korean People's Council adopted its own version of constitution and decided to hold an election on August 25, 1948. North Korean Communists then lowered the flag of Korea and

raised the new one of the so-called Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The "Supreme People's Council for Korea," newly formed as a result of the election, appointed Kim Il-sung as premier of the DPRK on September 9, 1948. The Soviet Union immediately recognized the new government and appointed Colonel General Shtykov, the former Soviet chief delegate on the U.S.-Soviet Joint Commission, as the first Soviet ambassador to North Korea.³⁸

The UNGA officially recognized the ROK in December 1948, and then the United States government extended its formal recognition to the republic and President Truman issued an executive order to assist this newly born government on January 1, 1949.³⁹ In this way, the two Korean governments were formally established. The two forces from the extreme right in the south and the extreme left in the north hastened the process of separation and hardened the result with each other's intention to overwhelm the other.

Military and Strategic Imbalance between North and South Korea

Strangely enough, North Korea and its sponsor were eager for joint troop withdrawal. On September 10, 1948, the Supreme People's Council appealed to the two occupation commands for troop withdrawals from their zones. On September 18, 1948, the Soviet government readily accepted this appeal and informed the American government that it would pull out the Soviet troops from Korea by the end of 1948, and advised the United States to do likewise.⁴⁰ The U.S. JCS and Army insisted on an early withdrawal of the occupation troops mainly because of the shortage of military forces and the insignificant strategic importance of Korea to the worldwide U.S. strategy. State Department officials and President Syngman Rhee, however, were against a hasty withdrawal of U.S. troops because of North Korea and the Soviet Union's yearning for the early withdrawal and the insufficiency of South Korean capability in coping with the internal disturbance in South Korea. The U.S. National Security Council (NSC) took the issue, and after a series of discussions and deliberations, decided on and recommended June 30, 1949 as the final withdrawal date. President Truman approved the NSC decision on the troop withdrawal issue.⁴¹

In fact, American troops completed their departure before the uneasy eyes of the South Koreans. Indeed, President Rhee expressed great anxiety for the future of South Korea in his statement announcing the withdrawal timetable: "The United States has left us with a problem too

great to be solved by ourselves alone ... We do not believe that the United States can or will withdraw its remaining troops until it has answered our question as to what will be done to aid us in case of a communist attack from across the 38th parallel line.”⁴² The United States completed its troop withdrawal as planned on June 30, 1949, giving no clear-cut answer to Rhee’s question except to suggest “Ask the United Nations for help.”⁴³

It was later revealed that North Korea and the Soviet Union had ample reasons to yearn for the early withdrawal of American troops from Korea. The Soviet Union, considering Korea as a Far Eastern Poland, had made its position clear that a Korea should be “acceptable and loyal” to it, and had acted accordingly by excluding all the Korean parties and organizations that had opposed against the Moscow decision from even consulting to form a provisional Korean government and by rejecting the UN proposal to hold an election throughout Korea and establishing a separate government in the north. Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley, President Truman’s personal representative on reparations, who had visited North Korea in June 1946, also confirmed this Soviet intention in North Korea by reporting that “Communism in Korea could get off to a better start than practically anywhere in the world.”⁴⁴ By instinct, sensing this Soviet intention and scheme, Kim Il-sung, premier of North Korea and handpicked by the Soviet military and government, strongly desired to sign the friendship and cooperation treaty with Soviet Union despite Soviet ambassador Shtykov’s efforts against the measure, saying that the conclusion of such a treaty could be used as a pretext to perpetuate the division of Korea.⁴⁵ Feeling the necessity to meet Kim Il-sung, Stalin summoned Kim to Moscow. Kim Il-sung and Park Hon-young, Vice Premier of North Korea and the former head of the South Korean Communist Party, visited Moscow and met Stalin on March 5 and 7, 1949. There, Stalin disclosed the meaning of the American troops’ presence in South Korea and their strategy in Korea.

Stalin asked Kim Il-sung and Park Hon-young about the tension along the 38th parallel and the strength of the two Korea’s armies.⁴⁶

Kim Il-sung: There are still American troops in the south and the provocations of reactionary forces against North Korea are getting more and more intensive. And though we have ground troops, we lack almost completely the seashore defense. We need assistance in this matter from the USSR.

Stalin: How many troops do Americans have now in South Korea?

Kim Il-sung: Up to 20 thousand soldiers.

Stalin: Do they have a national army in the South?

Kim Il-sung: Yes, about 60 thousand soldiers.

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Stalin: Are you afraid of them?

Kim Il-sung: No, we are not afraid, but we would like to have navy units.

Stalin: Which army is stronger, yours or theirs?

Park Hon-young: Our army is stronger.

Stalin: We can help you with the navy; you should also have military planes. Do you penetrate inside the South Korean army? Do you have your people inside that army? Park Hon-young: Yes, but these people keep a low profile there and don't do anything.

Stalin: It is correct. Is it true that Southerners attacked and captured a number of points and that later you took those points back?

Kim Il-sung: There was a clash in the province of Kangwondo near the 38th parallel. Our police were not armed well. But later the regular forces arrived and we chased the Southerners away.

Stalin: Did you chase them away or they left themselves?

Kim Il-sung: We defeated them, threw them out of the country.

Stalin: The 38th parallel should be peaceful. It is important.

For the first time Kim Il-sung officially asked for Stalin's permission to attack the South at the second meeting in the Kremlin on March 7, 1949.⁴⁷

Kim Il-sung: Comrade Stalin, we believe that the situation makes it necessary and possible to liberate the whole country through military means. Now is the best opportunity for us to take the initiative into our own hands. Our armed forces are stronger, and in addition we have the support of a

powerful guerilla movement in the South. The population of the South, which despises the pro-American regime, will certainly help us as well.

Stalin: You should not advance to the South. First of all, the Korean People's Army does not have an overwhelming superiority over the troops of the South. ... Second, in the South there are still American troops, which will interfere in case of hostilities. Third, one should not forget that the agreement is in effect between the USSR and the United States on the 38th parallel. If the agreement is broken by our side, it is more of a reason to believe that Americans will interfere.

Kim Il-sung: Does it mean that there is no chance to reunify Korea in the near future?

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Stalin: If the adversary has aggressive intentions, then sooner or later it will start the aggression. In response to the attack you will have a good opportunity to launch a counterattack. Then your move will be understood and supported by everyone.

Stalin did not permit Kim Il-sung's idea to use military forces against South Korea, mainly because of the lack of the overwhelming superiority of the North Korean forces over those of the South and the presence of U.S. troops in South Korea.

After the United States completed its troop withdrawal from South Korea on June 30, 1949, and following the Soviets' successful A-bomb explosion in August 1949, Kim Il-sung asked for permission to attack South Korea through the Soviet embassy in Pyongyang on September 3, 1949.⁴⁸ Kim Il-sung, through his secretary, Nam Il, said that the North Korean forces were capable of occupying South Korea in two weeks; at the maximum, it would take two months, he said. Then Stalin ordered the Soviet embassy to review the situation and make recommendations on Kim Il-sung's proposal. The Soviet embassy believed that "it is not sensible" to initiate a civil war at that point, because one could not count on a quick success in a "possibly" prolonged civil war, and "the extension of the war would give the Americans a chance to provide adequate assistance to Syngman Rhee."⁴⁹ On September 24, 1949, the

Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) passed a decision not to let Kim Il-sung attack South Korea. Ambassador Shtykov was ordered to meet Kim Il-sung and Park Hon-young and deliver Moscow's decision. Being informed, Kim Il-sung stressed that "he himself could not launch an offensive because he is a communist, a disciplined person and orders given by comrade Stalin are law for him."⁵⁰ The Soviet Union was opposed to North Korean's proposed overture because, although the North Korean forces were better equipped than the ROK army, well-trained with tanks and planes, and politically highly motivated, they were not overwhelmingly superior to those of the south. Moreover, the guerrilla movement in South Korea was not sufficiently developed to help North Korean advance to the South.⁵¹

The Soviet Union fully acknowledged the necessity to strengthen the North Korean forces more and to intensify the guerrilla movement in South Korea, and began to act accordingly. Having once agreed in 1948 to arm North Korea with 22 divisions, including 6 heavy armor divisions equipped with 500 tanks, the Soviet Union (on March 17, 1949) revised the plan. It now decided to arm North Korean with a strong army of 6 divisions and several mechanized and tank units, a formidable air force with 150 aircraft, and a navy. The Soviet military education and training advisers were charged with organizing and training the North Korean forces. On May 16, 1949, the 105th armored brigade (the 107, 109, and 203 regiments) was created, and expanded to be an armored division with 242 tanks. The Soviet Union released the Korean soldiers who had participated in the Stalingrad battle in 1942 and 1943; they became the cadre of the 105th armored brigade. Also, the Soviet Union induced Communist China to send the Korean soldiers well-seasoned in the Chinese Civil War to North Korea; they became the main cadre of the North Korean 5th, 6th, and 12th divisions.⁵² Thanks to the comradely help from the Soviet Union and Communist China, North Korea had 10 army divisions (including T-34 tanks and 122mm guns), 200 aircraft (including MIG-9s), a navy with amphibious and battle ships. Its armed forces were thus far superior to those of the south by the time when Stalin gave Kim Il-sung a green light on Kim's military adventure against South Korea in January 1950.⁵³

On January 17, 1950, at a dinner hosted by DPRK Foreign Minister Park Hon-young, Kim Il-sung raised the issue of attacking South Korea, saying that "now when China is finishing its liberation the next order of

things is liberation of the Korean people in the South of the country.”⁵⁴ Underlining the belief that Mao had promised him to give assistance after ending the war in China, Kim Il-sung stressed that the North Korean army was considerably stronger than that of South Korea, and that the guerrilla activities in the South were vigorous enough to help North Korean war effort. Shtykov reported all that was talked over to Stalin.⁵⁵ On January 30, 1950, Stalin sent “the green light” to Kim Il-sung through Shtykov, saying “I understand the unhappiness of comrade Kim Il-sung, but he must understand that such a big step regarding South Korea, ... requires thorough preparation. If he wants to talk to me on this issue, then I’ll always be ready to receive him and talk to him. Tell this to Kim Il-sung and stress that I am ready to help him in this matter.”⁵⁶ Then Stalin warned against leaking any information on this matter, stressing the need to “explain to comrade Kim Il-sung that at this point the question he wants to discuss with me must be completely confidential. It should not be shared with anyone even in the North Korean leadership, as well as with the Chinese comrades. During our talks with Mao Zedong, who is still in Moscow, we discussed the necessity and possibilities to help North Korea to raise its military potential and defense capabilities.”⁵⁷ Kim Il-sung wanted to have the trip to Moscow and the meeting with Stalin unofficial in the same fashion as the one in 1946.⁵⁸ Kim Il-sung and Park Hon-young traveled to Moscow by special plane prepared by the Soviet Union, arrived on March 30, 1950, and stayed in Moscow until April 25, 1950, during which Kim met Stalin three times.⁵⁹

Kim Il-sung and Stalin fully discussed “a big step regarding South Korea.” Stalin confirmed that with the Communist Chinese victory in China, no “American military challenge to the new Chinese authorities,” the conclusion of an alliance treaty between the Soviet Union and Communist China, and Soviet possession of the atomic bomb, a major improvement had occurred in “the environment for actions in Korea.”⁶⁰ Stalin, however, cautioned Kim Il-sung about the possibility of American intervention and the necessity to obtain the support of the Communist China, saying that “the liberation can be started only if the Chinese leadership endorses it.”⁶¹ Kim Il-sung expressed his view, saying that “America won’t interfere. ... Americans will not risk a big war. ... Comrade Mao Zedong said on a number of occasions that after the Chinese revolution is completed, China will help us, if necessary, will provide troops. ...”⁶²

Stalin, emphasizing the need for thorough preparation for war, instructed that the war plan must have three stages: first, troop concentration in the designated areas; second, another fresh peace proposal, with conditions attached that would be likely to be rejected by the South Korean authorities; third, after the proposal is rejected, a counterattack must take place. He also stressed the importance of a quick and speedy conduct of the fighting, and made clear that “the Koreans should not count on direct Soviet participation in the war because the USSR had serious challenges elsewhere to cope with, especially in the West.” Then Stalin again urged Kim to consult with Mao and secure Mao’s promise to help.⁶³

Kim Il-sung showed his confidence that “the attack will be swift and the war will be won in three days; guerrilla movement in the South has grown stronger and a major uprising can be expected.”⁶⁴ It was agreed that the North Korean army would be fully supported and mobilized by the summer of 1950, and that the North Korean general staff with the assistance of the Soviet military advisers would complete the concrete war plan by that time.⁶⁵ As directed, Kim Il-sung and Park Hon-young visited Mao during May 13-15, 1950, and secured Mao’s promise to help North Korea in case of American intervention in the fighting. Stalin’s support and guidance for the war in Korea was shrewd and prudent.

On the other hand, the United States, the sole protector of South Korea in fact, was not enthusiastic about strengthening South Korean armed forces’ capabilities. Originally, the American military government created 8 army companies, one for each of 8 provinces for the purpose of maintaining internal order and security based on the plan “Bamboo.” This army was expanded to 8 regiments, later 3 brigades by December 1947, and 5 brigades (15 regiments) by the time when the Korean government was established on August 15, 1948. The size of the Korean army was increased to 8 divisions (21 regiments) before the Korean War broken out. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had been opposed to providing 105mm howitzers to the Korean army, but accepted the necessity of issuance of these artillery pieces in order to preclude criticism that the Koreans were left “utterly defenseless.”⁶⁶

At the time the last U.S. troops left Korea, the strength of the Korean army was 65,000. Basically, the JCS judged that an army of 65,000 was “suitable for maintaining internal order and border security,” and a navy of 4,000 “for suppression of smuggling, piracy, illegal entry, and hostile infiltration by sea into South Korea.”⁶⁷ The JCS flatly rejected the South

Korean offer to purchase destroyer escort class vessel, because DDEs were “combatant” ships.⁶⁸ The U.S. government rejected three proposals suggested by President Rhee’s envoy, that is, the expansion of the Korean army from 65,000 to 100,000; a public American assurance to assist South Korea in case of the armed attack; and the formation of a Pacific pact similar to NATO in Europe.⁶⁹ President Truman expressed a similar view, stressing the importance of developing a sound economy rather than amassing a large military force when he replied to Rhee’s letter begging for further military aid, informing him that “we have ammunition available only for two days. ... We will not attack the territory north of the 38th parallel.”⁷⁰ U.S. policy and strategy toward South Korea thus was far different from the Soviet Union’s with respect to North Korea.

These policy and strategy differences created military and strategic imbalances between North and South Korea.

The North Korean Attack on South Korea

The North Korean forces, armed with heavy weapons and equipment supplied by the Soviet Union and reinforced by comradely support from Communist China, thus became a formidable force that could render a clear vision of success in the war to the communist leaders, Kim Il-sung, Mao Zedong, and Stalin. They were ready to use the war as a means to achieve their ideological and political goals.

Military imbalance between the two Koreas, intentionally created by the communist leaders, seemed to guarantee the realization of their ideal, the establishment of one communist Korea on the Korean peninsula. The North Korean forces were far superior to those of South Korea in all possible categories of fighting capabilities. They were numerically superior to those of South Korea (North Korea: 198, 380; South Korea: 105,752); they had 242 T-34 tanks, 176 SU-76 self-propelled guns, and 54 armored carriers, and 172 122mm guns, whereas the South Korean forces had only 27 armored carriers and 90 105mm guns; and the North had 210 aircraft, including YAK-9, while South Korean forces had only 22 (L-4, 5: 12; T-6: 10).⁷¹ The North Korean army completed its division-level training, while the South Korean army did only its company-level training mainly because of their full commitment to sweeping operations against the guerrillas. The leadership of the South Korean army was poor compared to that of the North, which had matured in the Chinese Civil War. The South Korean army considered a

camouflaged peace, utilized by the North Korean government for the first step in the fighting, as a real peace, and allowed soldiers to enjoy their summer vacations and sign-outs just one day before the war. All in all, military imbalance between the two parts of Korea was significant and insurmountable enough to afford the communist leaders a clear vision to secure an easy success in the war.

With this mostly “confirmed” confidence of victory in the projected war, Kim Il-sung, of course, with permission from Stalin and the guidance of the Soviet military advisers, ordered an attack on South Korea. This order became the “naked” cause of the Korean War, embracing all other ones, direct and indirect, immediate and remote, definite and circumstantial.

Because of the swift American and UN intervention in the war, however, the communist side could not secure a quick victory; and it recovered the status quo ante-bellum only after Chinese intervention. After the fighting for one year, both sides acquiesced in the view that the Korean problem was too complex to be solved by military means only. The result was an honorable armistice, leaving the ultimate solution on the Korean issue to time and future, producing two victors instead of one victor and the other loser.

The conclusion of the war in this fashion, a cease-fire rather than a peace, in fact set the stage for another type of war in the Korean peninsula, that is, a subversive war, employing all kinds of violent and seemingly peaceful ways and means, particularly by North Korea. North Korea, having failed to communize Korea by military means, has engaged in a subversive war against South Korea in order to overthrow the South Korean government by mobilizing all available destructive and disruptive, deceitful and cunning measures and means even in the so-called post-Cold War period. In this regard, the Korean War has not actually ended. The fundamental cause of the Korean War still lingers on the Korean peninsula, breeding incidents such as the sinking of the patrol ship *Cheonan* on March 26, 2010. No doubt other asymmetrical attacks against South Korea on and under ground, at sea and in the air, will occur in days to come.

Notes:

¹ Quoted in John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), p. 243; Lisle A. Rose, *After Yalta: America and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), p. 51. President Truman later expressed his feeling about Stalin in his letter to Dean Acheson (unsent) by saying that "I liked the little son of a bitch." See Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), pp. 348-349.

² U.S. *Department of State Bulletin*, vol. 13, p. 205.

³ SWNCC Meeting Minutes, August 12, 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter, *FRUS*], 1945, vol. 6, p. 645; Memo by Dean Rusk, July 12, 1950, *FRUS*, 1945, vol. 6, p. 1039; James F. Schnabel, *Policy and Direction: The First Year* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 8-9.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Memo from the Secretary of the JCS to the SWNCC, August 14, 1945, SWNCC 21-Series, Record Group (RG) 319, ABC 014 Japan (13 April 1944), sec., 1-A, National Archives (NA), Washington, D. C.

⁶ Stalin to Truman, telegram, August 16, 1945, enclosed in Memo, From Admiral Leahy to General Marshall, April 29, 1947, RG 59, 740.00119 Control (Japan)/4-2947, NA. President Truman sent this approved General Order No. 1 to the British Prime Minister on August 15, 1945. See Byrnes to Winant, August 16, 1945, RG 59, 740.00119 Pacific War/8-1645, NA.

⁷ Shann C. McCune, "Physical Basis for Korean Boundaries," *Far Eastern Quarterly*, No. 5 (May, 1946), pp. 286-7; Schnabel, *Policy and Direction*, p. 11.

⁸ *New York Times*, September 9, 1945.

⁹ General Hodge complained a great deal about the refugees from the Soviet zone. See Hodge to MacArthur, September 24, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, vol. 6, p. 1054.

¹⁰ Harriman to Byrnes, November 12, 1945, *ibid.*, p. 1122. In this message Harriman cited the contents of one article that appeared in the *New York Times* (August 15, 1945).

¹¹ Memo by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs to the Under Secretary of State, October 1, 1945, *ibid.*, p. 1067.

¹² *Ibid.*, memo by Hodge to MacArthur, September 24, 1945.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Harriman to Byrnes, November 12, 1945, p. 1122.

¹⁴ *Moscow Meeting of Foreign Ministers, December 16-26, 1945*, Department of State Pub. No. 3448 (1946), *FRUS, 1945*, vol. 2, pp. 587, 599, 617-20, 641-3.

¹⁵ Memo by the U.S. Delegation, December 17, 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 641-3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, memo by the U.S. Delegation at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, sub.: “Korea—Suggested Rephrasing of Russian Proposal of December 20, 1945,” p. 721.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, the Communique Agreed to at the Moscow Conference, pp. 1150-51.

¹⁸ Soon Sung Cho, *Korea in World Politics, 1940-1950: An Evaluation of American Responsibility* (Los Angeles, Calif.: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 105-107. Being exposed later, the Soviet Union utilized the opposition of the non-Communist Koreans against the Moscow Agreement as a pretext to exclude them from among those to be consulted to form a provisional Korean government for their opposition to the agreement of the Foreign Ministers’ Conference at Moscow.

¹⁹ Benninghoff to Secretary of State, February 15, 1946, *FRUS, 1946*, vol. 8, p. 636.

²⁰ U. S. Document No. 3, Joint Commission Files, sub.: “Observations and Methods of Negotiating Formation of A Korean Government,” undated and unsigned, History Files, USAFIK, NA; U.S. Department of the Army, *American Military Government in Korea: War Policy and the First Year of Occupation, 1941-1946*, prepared by C. Leonard Hoag (History Division, Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1970), p. 413.

²¹ *New York Times*, March 21, 1946.

²² Langdon and Thayer to Secretary of State, May 24, 1946, *FRUS, 1946*, vol. 8, pp. 685-689.

²³ This State Department’s position was later delivered to the War Department in the form of a policy paper, “Policy for Korea.” Memo by the Assistant Secretary of State for Occupied Areas (Hilldring) to the Operations Division, War Department, June 6, 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 692-699.

²⁴ Cho, *Korea in World Politics*, pp. 117-23; *Military Government in Korea*, pp. 414-20.

²⁵ Hodge to War Department, August 13, 1946, RG 213, CCS 383.21 Korea (3-19-45), sec., 8, NA.

²⁶ *New York Times*, October 16, 1946.

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- ²⁷ Letter, Charles Thayer to General Archibald V. Arnold, August 1, 1946, Thayer Papers, Truman Library.
- ²⁸ Marshall to Molotov, April 30, May 12, 1947, *FRUS, 1947*, vol. 6, pp. 638-639; Molotov to Marshall, May 7, May 17, 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 640-642, 643.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, Hodge to Secretary of State, August 20, 1947, pp. 757-760.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, Acting Secretary of State (Robert A. Lovett) to the Embassy in the Soviet Union, August 26, 1947, pp. 771-4; Molotov to Marshall, September 4, 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 779-781.
- ³¹ UN, *Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly, General Committee* (New York: Lake Success, 1947), p. 36; *FRUS, 1947*, vol. 6, p. 792.
- ³² UN Document A/C. 1/218, October 17, 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 832-835; Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 14, 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 857-859.
- ³³ UN Documents, A/575, p. 6; A/AC, 18/28, quoted in Cho, *Korea in World Politics*, pp. 178, 184.
- ³⁴ Austin to Secretary of State, February 24, 1948, *FRUS, 1948*, vol. 6, pp. 1128-29; *New York Times*, February 20, 25, 27, 1948.
- ³⁵ UNTCOK views on Korean elections, June 16, 23, 30, 1948, RG 319, P&O 091 Korea, sec., V, cases 66, NA; Department of State, *A Historical Summary of US-Korean Relations*, p. 69.
- ³⁶ Statement issued by Secretary of State, George C. Marshall, in *FRUS, 1948*, vol. 6, p. 1195.
- ³⁷ The Truman administration, after a series of discussions at the various levels of policy makers, decided to wait until the United Nations took action on the issue of recognition.
- ³⁸ Jacobs to Secretary of State, July 11, 1948, *FRUS, 1948*, vol. 6, pp. 1238-39; John J. Muccio to the Secretary of State, September 18, 1948, *ibid.*, pp. 1305-06.
- ³⁹ Confidential Executive Order No. 10026-A, January 5, 1949, *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 7, p. 940.
- ⁴⁰ John J. Muccio to the Secretary of State, September 18, 1949, *ibid.*, pp. 1305-06; Harry S Truman, *Memoirs, II: Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963), p. 328.
- ⁴¹ Memo for the President, sub.: A Summary of the Discussion at the 36th Meeting of the NSC, March 23, 1949, NSC Meetings, President Secretary's File, Truman Papers, Truman Library, Independence, Missouri, USA; Message to

MacArthur, March 29, 1949, Selected Records Relating to the Korean War, Department of Defense, Truman Papers, Truman Library.

⁴² President Rhee's press statements, in Muccio to Secretary of State, May 7, 16, 19, and June 6, 1949, *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 7, pp. 1011-2, 1023-4, 1030-1, 1035-6, 1039. In these reports, Muccio informed the State Department that "the clamor and fear" of the Koreans "aroused by troop withdrawal ... have far exceeded my expectations."

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley to President, June 22, *FRUS, 1946*, vol. 8, pp. 706-13.

⁴⁵ Shtykov's cable to the Foreign Ministry, January 19, 1949, Archives of the President of Russia, pp. 1-2. ROK Foreign Ministry trans., *Soviet Top Secret Documents Relating to the Korean War*, delivered by Russian President Yeltsin to the South Korean Government, vol. 1, p. 1 (hereafter, *Soviet Top Secret Documents Relating to the Korean War*); also quoted in Evgeniy P. Bajanov and Natalia Bajanova, *The Korean Conflict, 1950-1953: The Most Mysterious War in the 20th Century--Based on Soviet Secret Archives* (unpublished, hereafter *The Korean Conflict, 1950-1953*), p. 2.

⁴⁶ *Soviet Top Secret Documents Relating to the Korean War*, 3, pp. 6-10; Stalin's conversation with the DPRK's government delegation headed by Kim Il-sung, March 5, 1949, quoted in Bajanov and Bajanova, *The Korean Conflict, 1950-1953*, pp. 4-6.

⁴⁷ Conversation between Stalin and the DPRK's delegation headed by Kim Il-sung, the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the DPRK, March 7, 1949, Archives of the President of Russia, pp. 3-4, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 17-8.

⁴⁸ Tunkin's cable to the Kremlin, September 3, 1949, Archives of the President of Russia, pp. 1-3, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁹ Tunkin's cable to the Kremlin, September 14, 1949, Archives of the President of Russia, pp. 1-8, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 23-4.

⁵⁰ Shtykov's cable to Stalin, October 4, 1949, Archives of the President of Russia, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

⁵¹ Decision of the Politburo of the CC of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), No. P 71/191, Question N 191, September 24, 1949, quoted *ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵² The contacts between Kim Il, the representative of Kim Il-sung, and Mao on this matter, see *ibid.*, pp. 43-47.

⁵³ ROK Army G-2, *Analysis on the North Korean Attack against South Korea* (1970), pp. 11-16.

⁵⁴ Shtykov's cable to Stalin, January 19, 1950, Archives of the President of Russia, pp. 1-5, *Soviet Top Secret Documents Relating to the Korean War*, 3, p. 53-4; quoted in Bajanov and Bajanova, *The Korean Conflict, 1950-1953*, pp. 34-35.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Stalin's cable to Ambassador Shtykov, January 30, 1950, *Soviet Top Secret Documents Relating to the Korean War*, 3, pp. 60-5; quoted *ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

⁵⁷ Stalin's cable to Shtykov, February 2, 9, 1950; Shtykov's cable to Stalin, February 10, 1950, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 37-38. Mao stayed in Moscow from December 16, 1949 to February 17, 1950 to revise the treaty concluded between Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin in 1944, eliminate the Soviet predominant position in Manchuria and Sinkiang province, and secure the Soviet economic assistance. Zhou Enlai joined Mao on January 20, 1950. Interview with Dr. Kim Dongkil, a China expert, in Seoul on September 13, 2004.

⁵⁸ Shtykov's cable to Stalin, March 23, 1950, quoted in Bajanov and Bajanova, *The Korean Conflict, 1950-1953*, p. 40.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Report on Kim Il-sung's visit to the USSR, March 30-April 25, 1950, Prepared by the International Department of the CC of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), Archives of the President of Russia, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-2.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, In fact, the Soviet military advisers drew the concrete offensive plan. Interview with Yoo Sung-chul, then Director of the Division for Operations, Seoul, October 2, 1992. His main job was to translate the war plan drawn by the Soviet war-planning military advisers into Korean.

⁶⁶ "Should the Department of the Army reconsider and approve 105mm howitzer for issue to the Korean Constabulary?" August 3, 1948, in Memo for General Wedemeyer, sub.: Korean Request for US Arms and Ammunition, August 23, 1948, RG 319, P&O 091 Korea, sec., V, cases 66, NA.

⁶⁷ JCS Decision on the Position of the United States with Respect to Korea, March 21, 1949, *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 7, pp. 967-968.

⁶⁸ JCS Decision on Request for Destroyer Escort Class Vessel for Korea, September 28, 1948, RG 319, P&O 091 Korea, sec., IV, cases 51-65, NA.

⁶⁹ Memo of Conversation by the Secretary of State, July 11, 1949, *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 7, pp. 1058-59.

⁷⁰ President Rhee to President Truman, August 20, 1949, *ibid.*, pp. 1075-76; Ordnance Inventory attached to the letter, RG 319, P&O 091 Korea, sec., 1-E, case 16, book I, nos., 1-4, NA; President Truman to President Rhee, September 26, 1949, *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 7, pp. 1084-85.

⁷¹ Chae-Jin Lee, "The Effects of the War on South Korea," in Chae-Jin Lee, ed., *The Korean War: 40-Year Perspectives* (The Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies, 1991), pp. 113-131, especially p. 120; Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953* (New York: Times Books, 1987), pp. 40-61; Chang-Il Ohn, *War History of Korea* (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2001), pp. 488-489.