

[Communist] party in the interest of foreign imperialism, ultimately the profound civilization and the democratic individualism of China will reassert themselves, and she will throw off the foreign yoke. I consider that we should encourage all developments in China which now and in the future work toward this end.

2. Senator Joseph McCarthy Blasts "Traitors" (1952)

The loss of a half-billion or so Chinese to the communists was a staggering blow to U.S. policy. Scapegoats had to be found. The violently anticommunist Republican senator Joseph R. McCarthy leaped into the fray, flinging accusations wildly and indiscriminately. In his view, Secretary Acheson and General Marshall, themselves allegedly "soft" on communism and advised by communist "traitors" in the State Department, had deliberately and treasonably allowed China to go down the drain. Senator McCarthy asked himself the following questions—and answered them—in a book published in 1952. Which of his charges seem the most convincing? the most overdrawn? Did he prove that more arms for China would have averted the communist takeover? Do you think Acheson realized he was following the Communist party line in Asia?

Either he knew what he was doing or he was incompetent beyond words. As late as November, 1945, William Z. Foster, head of the Communist Party of the United States, notified the world that China was the prime target of the Soviet Union. He said: "On the international scale, the key task . . . is to stop American intervention in China. . . . The war in China is the key of all problems on the international front."

Less than a month after this Communist proclamation, Marshall embarked upon the "Marshall Mission to China." The testimony before the Russell Committee was that this mission was an Acheson-Marshall-Vincent* project. Before Marshall went to China the Communists occupied a very small portion of China. Their Army numbered less than 300,000 badly equipped troops. When Marshall returned from China to be rewarded by Truman with an appointment as Secretary of State, the Communist-controlled area had greatly increased and the Communist Army had grown from 300,000 badly equipped troops to an Army of over 2,000,000 relatively well-equipped soldiers.

What about the State Department's excuse that we withdrew aid from Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] because his government was corrupt?

Chiang Kai-shek had been engaged in conflict and warfare since 1927—first with the Communists, then with Japan, then simultaneously with the Communists and Japan, and after Japan's defeat, again with the Communists. During that time, all the disruption of war beset Chiang's Government. Under the circumstances it would be a miracle if there were no corruption or incompetence in his government.

But if corruption and incompetence are grounds for turning an administration over to the Communists, then Earl Browder should be President of the United States,

²Quoted from Senator Joseph McCarthy, *McCarthyism: The Fight for America* (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1952), pp. 37-40.

*John C. Vincent was a foreign service officer allegedly "soft" on communism.

Harry Bridges should be Secretary of Labor, and Alger Hiss* should be Secretary of Defense.

What about Acheson's claim that we gave Chiang Kai-shek every help which he could utilize, including \$2 billion worth of aid since the end of World War II?

That is untrue. Acheson made this claim in a letter to Senator Pat McCarran on March 14, 1949, in arguing against any further aid to anti-Communist China, which according to Acheson "would almost surely be catastrophic."

Of the phony \$2 billion figure, \$335,800,000 was for repatriating Japanese soldiers in China and transporting Chinese Nationalist armed forces to accept the surrender of the Japanese. Even President Truman declared that those expenditures should properly have been charged to World War II. . . .

Is it true that Marshall, under State Department instructions, signed an order cutting off not only arms to our friends in China, but also all ammunition so that the arms they had would be useless?

Yes. The embargo on all arms and ammunition to China began in 1946 and continued into 1947.

Those were crucial years, and China's plight was so bad that even the *New York Times* reported on June 22, 1947, that the guns of the anti-Communists were so worn and burned out that "bullets fell through them to the ground."

The Communists, on the other hand, were kept well supplied by the Russians. Admiral Cooke has so testified before the McCarran Committee. . . . [a Senate committee, chaired by Nevada democrat Patrick McCarran, that investigated alleged communist subversion]

Do you claim that General Marshall, who has long worked with Acheson, was knowingly working for the Communist cause in China?

As I stated in my book, *The Story of General George Marshall—America's Retreat from Victory*, I cannot delve into the mind of Marshall. I can only present the facts to the American people. Whether Marshall knowingly betrayed China or whether he honestly thought that he was helping China, the results are equally disastrous for America. . . .

Since the fall of China has Acheson ever admitted that his China policy was a failure?

No. There is no indication that Acheson considers the loss of China to Communism a "failure." Instead, he hailed it as "a new day which has dawned in Asia."

[The United States supplied Jiang's Nationalists with vastly more arms than the Soviet Union sent to the Chinese communists, although departing Soviet troops did abandon large quantities of Japanese munitions to the communists. The Americans also abandoned comparable supplies of their own to the Nationalists. The tale about bullets falling out of worn-out guns came from an unnamed Chinese correspondent's report (New York Times, June 22, 1947, p. 38) that "some machine gun barrels were so burned that bullets fell through them to the ground." Machine guns can be so badly worn as to fire inaccurately, but the bullets are firmly lodged in the cartridges, and the cartridges are either clipped or belted together.

*Alger Hiss was a former State Department official convicted in 1950 of perjury in connection with passing secrets on to the Soviets. Harry Bridges was a Pacific Coast labor leader accused of Communist party affiliation. Earl Browder was twice a candidate for the presidency on the Communist party ticket.

General Barr, a U.S. military observer, reported to the Department of the Army on November 16, 1948: "I am convinced that the military situation has deteriorated to the point where only the active participation of United States troops could effect a remedy. . . . Military matériel and economic aid in my opinion is less important to the salvation of China than other factors. No battle has been lost since my arrival due to lack of ammunition or equipment. Their military debacles in my opinion can all be attributed to the world's worst leadership and many other morale-destroying factors that lead to a complete loss of will to fight. The complete ineptness of high military leaders and the widespread corruption and dishonesty throughout the Armed Forces could, in some measure, have been controlled and directed had the above authority and facilities been available. Chinese leaders completely lack the moral courage to issue and enforce an unpopular decision." (United States Relations with China, with Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949 [1949], p. 358.)

The Korean Crisis and the NSC-68

I. Senator Tom Connally Writes Off Korea (1950)

Secretary Acheson compounded his China felony, in McCarthyite eyes, by making a memorable speech to the National Press Club of Washington early in 1950. He outlined the United States' "defensive perimeter" in the Far East but conspicuously omitted from it the Republic of South Korea and Jiang's last-hope Formosa. He stated that the areas thus excluded would have to depend on themselves for defense and on "the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations." Some three months later Senator Connally, chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign

Answer. No. Of course, any position like that is of some strategic importance. But I don't think it is very greatly important. It has been testified before us that Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines make the chain of defense which is absolutely necessary. And, of course, any additional territory along in that area would be that much more, but it's not absolutely essential.

2. Truman Accepts the Korean Challenge (1950)

President Truman was forced to make a series of agonizing decisions: the Truman Doctrine (1947), the Marshall Plan (1947), the Berlin airlift (1948), the North Atlantic Pact (1949), the Korean intervention (1950). Speaking later (1959) at Columbia University, he was asked, "Mr. President, what was the most complicated, the one single, most difficult decision you had to make?" Unhesitatingly he replied: "Korea. The reason for that was the fact that the policies of our allies and the members of the United Nations were at stake at the same time as ours." Here in his Memoirs he explains more fully the reasons for intervening with armed forces to support the South Korean republic, a special ward of the United Nations. Remembering that the League of Nations had collapsed in the 1930s because it failed to act resolutely, assess the validity of Truman's view that his intervention in Korea averted World War III.

On Saturday, June 24, 1950, I was in Independence, Missouri, to spend the weekend with my family and to attend to some personal family business.

It was a little after ten in the evening, and we were sitting in the library of our home on North Delaware Street when the telephone rang. It was the Secretary of State calling from his home in Maryland.

"Mr. President," said Dean Acheson, "I have very serious news. The North Koreans have invaded South Korea."

My first reaction was that I must get back to the capital, and I told Acheson so. . . .

The plane left the Kansas City Municipal Airport at two o'clock, and it took just a little over three hours to make the trip to Washington. I had time to think aboard the plane. In my generation, this was not the first occasion when the strong had attacked the weak. I recalled some earlier instances: [Japan in] Manchuria, [Italy in] Ethiopia, [Germany in] Austria. I remembered how each time that the democracies failed to act it had encouraged the aggressors to keep going ahead.

Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier. I felt certain that if South Korea was allowed to fall, Communist leaders would be emboldened to override nations closer to our own shores. If the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation would have the courage to resist threats and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors. If this was allowed to go unchallenged it would mean a third world war, just as similar incidents had brought on the second world war. It was also clear to me that the

²*Memoirs by Harry S. Truman: Years of Trial and Hope* (1956), vol. 2, pp. 331–333. Published by Doubleday and Company. Copyright © 1956 by Time, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Margaret Truman Daniel.

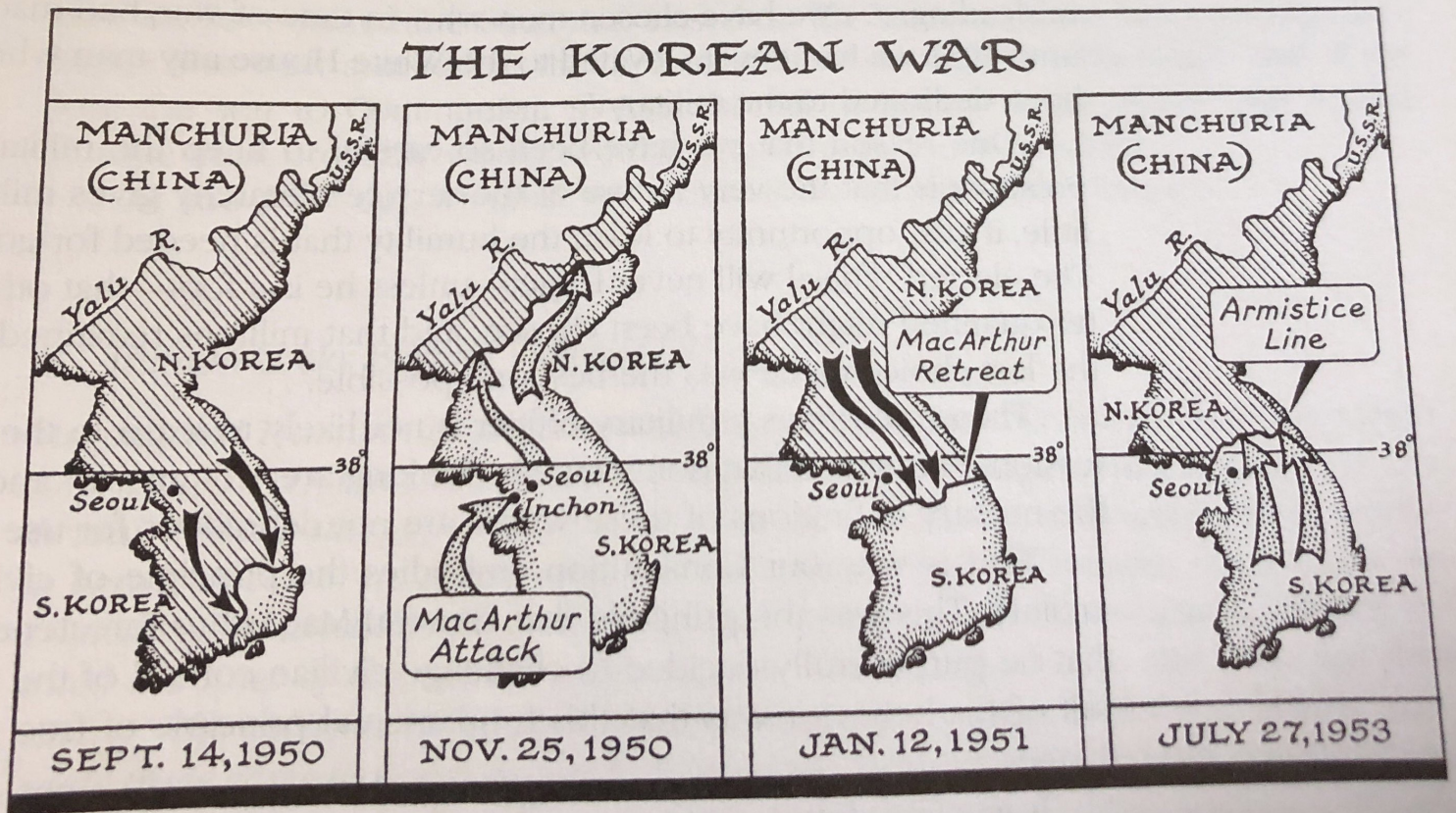


foundations and the principles of the United Nations were at stake unless this unprovoked attack on Korea could be stopped.

3. NSC-68 Offers a Blueprint for the Cold War (1950)

Jolted by the communist success in China and the Soviet development of an atomic bomb, the early 1950s ordered a far-reaching reassessment of U.S. strategy. This document, declassified only a

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his Memoirs. How does he defend the view that the military must be subordinate to civil authority?

that we have joined the issue thus raised on the battlefield; that here we fight Europe's war with arms while the diplomats there still fight it with words; that if we lose the war to Communism in Asia the fall of Europe is inevitable; win it, and Europe most probably would avoid war and yet preserve freedom.

As you point out, we must win. There is no substitute for victory.

3. *Truman Looks Beyond Victory (1951)*

An angered Truman abruptly dismissed MacArthur from his Far Eastern commands (April 11, 1951), but circumstances conspired to make the general's removal unduly brutal. The five-star general, "fired by a two-bit president," returned home to receive a hero's welcome. He delivered a dramatic speech before Congress in which he repeated the no-substitute-for-victory formula and then, with tear-inducing pathos, recited the lines of the old barracks ballad: "Old soldiers never die; they just fade away." The excitement faded away, even though the general did not, and a stalemate truce came to Korea in 1953. A cocksure Truman delivered this rebuttal in his Memoirs, taking as his text the indiscreet MacArthur letter to Congressman Martin. Why, in Truman's view, was the kind of victory that the general proposed the wrong kind of victory?

Of course the third paragraph of MacArthur's letter was the real "clincher." I do not know through what channels of information the general learned that the Communists had chosen to concentrate their efforts on Asia—and more specifically on his command. . . . Actually, of course, my letter of January 13 [to MacArthur] had made it clear that Communism was capable of attacking not only in Asia but also in Europe, and that this was one reason why we could not afford to extend the conflict in Korea. But then MacArthur added a belittling comment about our diplomatic efforts, and reached his climax with the pronouncement that "there is no substitute for victory."

But there is a right kind and a wrong kind of victory, just as there are wars for the right thing and wars that are wrong from every standpoint.

As General Bradley later said: "To have extended the fighting to the mainland of Asia would have been the wrong war, at the wrong time and in the wrong place."

The kind of victory MacArthur had in mind—victory by the bombing of Chinese cities, victory by expanding the conflict to all of China—would have been the wrong kind of victory.

To some professional military men, victory—success on the battlefield alone—becomes something of an end in itself. Napoleon, during his ill-fated Moscow campaign, said, "I beat them in every battle, but it does not get me anywhere."

The time had come to draw the line. MacArthur's letter to Congressman Martin showed that the general was not only in disagreement with the policy of the government but was challenging this policy in open insubordination to his Commander in Chief.