

The Cold War**Lesson 2**

The Cold War Heats Up

Key Terms and People

Chiang Kai-shek Leader of the Nationalist forces in China

Mao Zedong Leader of the Communist forces in China

Taiwan Island off the coast of China

38th parallel Imaginary line that divides Korea at 38 degrees north latitude

Korean War War begun when North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950

Before You Read

In the last lesson you read about postwar Europe. In this lesson you will read about the postwar situation in Asia and about the Korean War.

As You Read

Use a chart to take notes on events in China and Korea.

CHINA BECOMES A COMMUNIST COUNTRY**How did the Communists gain control of China?**

For two decades, the Chinese Communists struggled against the Nationalist government led by **Chiang Kai-shek**. The United States supported Chiang and sent him aid because he opposed communism. But U.S. officials knew that Chiang's government was inefficient and corrupt. He overtaxed the Chinese people even during times of famine.

Mao Zedong led the Communist forces in the North. He won the support of many Chinese peasants. His forces encouraged peasants to learn to read and helped them improve food production. By 1945 much of northern China was Communist.

President Truman refused to send American troops to help the Nationalists

fight communism. But he did send \$2 million worth of military equipment and supplies. Even so, in 1949 Chiang and his forces had to flee to **Taiwan**, an island off the coast of China. The Communists ruled all of mainland China and set up the People's Republic of China, which the United States refused to accept as China's true government.

Americans were stunned that China had become Communist. American conservatives said that the United States had "lost" China because there was not enough help for the Nationalists. Containment had not worked in Asia. Truman's supporters said that the Communist success was because Chiang could not win the support of the Chinese people. Conservatives claimed that the U.S. government was filled with Communist agents. American fear of communism began to burn out of control.

Lesson 2, *continued*

1. How did Communists gain control of China?

THE KOREAN WAR; THE UNITED STATES FIGHTS IN KOREA

What caused the Korean War?

Japan had ruled Korea since 1910. At the end of World War II, Japanese forces in the north surrendered to the Soviets. In the south, the Japanese surrendered to the Americans. Two nations then developed. They were separated by the **38th parallel**, an imaginary line that divides Korea at 38 degrees north latitude.

In 1948 South Korea became an independent nation. North Korea became a Communist nation.

In June 1950 North Korea started the **Korean War** by invading South Korea. Its efforts were supported by the Soviet Union. Truman was afraid another Asian nation was about to fall to communism. He ordered air and naval support for South Korea. Then, the United Nations agreed to help South Korea. Troops from 16 nations, most of them American, were sent to South Korea. They were led by General Douglas MacArthur.

North Korean troops moved steadily south. They conquered the capital of South Korea, Seoul. Then MacArthur launched a counterattack. His forces trapped about half the North Korean army, which surrendered. MacArthur's success in Korea made him a national hero.

United Nations and South Korean forces advanced toward the 38th parallel. If they crossed it, the war would become an offensive rather than a defensive one. In October 1950 the

UN told MacArthur to cross the 38th parallel and reunite Korea.

The Chinese opposed UN forces moving into North Korea. China said it would not let the Americans near its border, and China joined the war on the side of North Korea. Chinese troops drove UN forces southward. In January 1951 the Communists recaptured Seoul.

For two years, fighting continued. MacArthur wanted to extend the war into China. He even suggested using nuclear weapons. Truman was against this strategy. The Soviets were allies of the Chinese. Truman felt bombing China would start World War III.

MacArthur continued to argue for his plan. He spoke to the press and to Republican leaders. Truman felt that he could no longer allow MacArthur's behavior. He fired MacArthur as commander. At first, the American public sided with MacArthur. Later, they came to agree with Truman's idea of a limited war.

Meanwhile, a cease-fire went into effect in June 1951. Both sides agreed on a demilitarized zone at the 38th parallel. An armistice was signed in July 1953. The agreement was a stalemate. Korea was still divided between Communist North Korea and non-Communist South Korea.

Many people felt that American lives and money had been lost for little gain. As a result, the American people rejected the party in power, the Democrats, in the 1952 election. Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected president. Americans also became even more worried about Communist expansion abroad and Communist spies at home.

2. What was gained by the Korean War?

Lesson 2, *continued*

Complete the chart below by writing answers to the questions in the appropriate boxes.

	Civil War in China	Civil War in Korea
1. Which side did the United States support, and why?		
2. What did the United States do to affect the outcome of the war?		
3. What was the outcome of the war?		
4. How did the American public react to that outcome, and why?		