

7

THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION
AND KOREA

KOREA AND UNITED STATES
FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE
TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

by

TERENCE A. BYRAM, B.A.

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

McMaster University

May, 1964

MASTER OF ARTS (1964)
(History)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY,
Hamilton, Ontario.

TITLE: Korea and United States
Foreign Policy During
the Truman Administration.

AUTHOR: Terence A. Byram, B.A.
(University of Toronto, 1958)

SUPERVISOR: Professor John Pollock Campbell.

NUMBER OF PAGES: vi, 333

PREFACE

This thesis is intended to be primarily an exposition and analysis of the Truman Administration's policies towards Korea. The greater part of the work deals, of course, with the Korean war and the response of the United States Government to that conflict. I have also made some attempt to fit President Truman's Korean policy within the framework of his overall foreign policy.

The traditional criticism directed against those who write about recent history is that one must inevitably lack sufficient perspective. While acknowledging the validity of this charge, I feel that a start must be made somewhere, and that those who write first on a topic perform some service, even if it is only the dubious one of stimulating a desire in others to improve on such inadequate beginnings. A more serious problem in doing research on recent events is the limited quantity of source material available. I did not, however, find this a great handicap, thanks to the speed with which the United States government releases documents, and the general openness of the American system of government. As Max Freedman, the Washington correspondent of the Manchester Guardian has said, "Everything that a reporter wants to know about the United States Government is spread out openly before him in the records of committee hearings, Congressional debates and transcripts of press conferences. There's no such complete freedom from mystery in the rest of the world."

I should like to thank Dr. E.T. Salmon and Dr. J.P. Campbell of the History Department of McMaster University, both of whom read the complete manuscript and made many valuable suggestions. Because of the freedom allowed me in writing this thesis, however, full responsibility for its defects remains with me.

T. B.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter I The Truman Administration's Overall Foreign Policy to June 1950.	1
Chapter II The Truman Administration's Far Eastern Policy to June 1950.	28
Chapter III United States Policy Towards Korea to June 25, 1950.	62
Chapter IV The Attack.	102
1. Who attacked whom?	
2. Warning of the attack.	
Chapter V The United States Intervenes.	112
1. The Decision to Intervene.	
2. The Question of Legality.	
3. The Course of Events from June to November 1950.	
Chapter VI China Intervenes.	156
1. Warning of the Intervention.	
2. The American View of Chinese Intervention.	
3. American Responsibility for the Chinese Intervention.	
4. The Reaction to the Chinese Intervention.	
Chapter VII Truce Attempts.	191
Chapter VIII Working Through the United Nations.	207
Chapter IX Problems Faced by the Truman Administration.	226
Chapter X United States Policy Towards Korea after June 1950.	271
Chapter XI The Effects of the Korean War on United States Foreign Policy.	292
Chapter XII Conclusion.	306
Bibliography	329

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

<u>AFPBD</u>	United States Department of State, <u>American Foreign Policy 1950-1955: Basic Documents</u> (Washington, 1957)
<u>DOAFR</u>	World Peace Foundation, <u>Documents on American Foreign Relations</u> (Boston, 1939)
<u>Documents</u>	(R.I.I.A.) <u>Documents on International Affairs</u> (Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs)
<u>HST</u>	Harry S. Truman, <u>Memoirs</u> (Garden City, N.Y., 1955-1956)
<u>SENCOM</u>	United States Senate Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees, investigating the dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur.
<u>Stabul</u>	Department of State <u>Bulletin</u> .
<u>Survey</u>	Royal Institute of International Affairs, <u>Survey of International Affairs</u> .
<u>TUSIWA</u>	Council on Foreign Relations, <u>The United States in World Affairs</u> (New York, 1932)

CHAPTER I

THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION'S OVERALL FOREIGN POLICY PRIOR TO THE KOREAN ATTACK

I

In a dynamic world, a country's foreign policy is, of necessity, constantly in transition. As the factors influencing foreign policy change, so must the policy. For example: policy-makers may die or fail to be re-elected; friendly nations may become cool, while former foes seek a rapprochement; new states appear, as old ones shrink or vanish; public opinion at home may change, forcing the nation's leaders to alter their policies accordingly. It is, therefore, difficult and probably inaccurate to say that "on Jun 24, 1950 this was the foreign policy of the United States." Instead, what I shall do is outline some of the salient features of United States foreign policy as it developed from the end of World War II to the outbreak of the Korean conflict.

The end of the war against Japan in Sep, 1945, marked the final achievement of what had been the United States' primary foreign policy objective during the past four years, the defeat of the enemy. This objective was replaced by other, relatively short-term goals concerning reconstruction and peace settlements, and by a long-term objective which had already achieved prominence during the past war, viz. establishment and support of a system of international co-operation to provide permanent stability, security, and peace.

In 1945 the overall goal of United States foreign policy was the achievement of the kind of world described in the Atlantic Charter Aug 14, 1941 and reaffirmed in the Declaration by the United Nations Jan 1, 1942.¹ This was a world in which countries sought no aggrandizement and desired no territorial changes not in accordance "with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned"; a world in which "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live" would be respected, and in which all States would enjoy "access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their prosperity". In their ideal world the Americans envisaged "the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labour standards, economic adjustment and social security". Finally, this world would rest upon a peace which would "afford all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and . . . afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want". This peace could only be achieved if "all the nations of the world . . . (came) to the abandonment of the use of force".²

¹W.A. Reitzel, M.A. Kaplan, C.G. Coblenz, United States Foreign Policy 1945-1955 (Washington, 1956), 30-32.

²"The Atlantic Charter" Aug 14, 1941, text in Louis L. Snyder (ed.), Fifty Major Documents of the Twentieth Century (Princeton, N.J., 1955), 92-93.

On Oct 27, 1945, Navy Day, President Harry S. Truman delivered his first major address on foreign affairs.³ In it he listed his twelve "fundamental principles of righteousness and justice" which he later reiterated in his Jan 14, 1946 Message to Congress, this time calling them, less grandiloquently, his "understanding of the fundamental foreign policy of the United States". Since they represent the general position of the United States in the early post-war period the twelve points merit reproduction in their entirety.

1. We seek no territorial expansion or selfish advantage.
We have no plans for aggression against any other state, large or small. We have no objective which need clash with the peaceful aims of any other nation.
2. We believe in the eventual return of sovereign rights and self-government to all peoples who have been deprived of them by force.
3. We shall approve no territorial changes in any friendly part of the world unless they accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.
4. We believe that all peoples who are prepared for self-government should be permitted to choose their own form of government by their own freely expressed choice, without interference from any foreign source. That is true in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, as well as in the Western Hemisphere.
5. By the combined and co-operative action of our war allies, we shall help the defeated enemy states establish peaceful democratic governments of their own free choice. And we shall try to attain a world in which nazism, fascism, and military aggression cannot exist.

³Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs 1945-1947 (New York, 1947), 23.

6. We shall refuse to recognize any government imposed upon any nation by the force of any foreign power. In some cases it may be impossible to prevent forceful imposition of such a government. But the United States will not recognize any such government.
7. We believe that all nations should have the freedom of the seas and equal rights to the navigation of boundary rivers and water-ways and of rivers and water-ways which pass through more than one country.
8. We believe that all states which are accepted in the society of nations should have access on equal terms to the trade and the raw materials of the world.
9. We believe that the sovereign states of the Western Hemisphere, without interference from outside the Western Hemisphere, must work together as good neighbours in the solution of their common problems.
10. We believe that full economic collaboration between all nations, great and small, is essential to the improvement of living conditions all over the world, and to the establishment of freedom from fear and freedom from want.
11. We shall continue to strive to promote freedom of expression and freedom of religion throughout the peace-loving areas of the world.
12. We are convinced that the preservation of peace between nations requires a United Nations Organization composed of all the peace-loving nations of the world who are willing jointly to use force, if necessary, to insure peace.⁴

⁴From "Message of the President on the State of the Union and Transmitting the Budget" Jan 14, 1946, The Budget of the United States Government for the fiscal year ending Jun 30, 1947 (Washington, 1946), xiv-xv.

These principles indicate that Mr. Truman intended to fulfil his assurances that he would continue the policies of his predecessor. Points 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, are simply a restatement, using in several places the identical wording, of the principles laid down in the Atlantic Charter. Point 9 is a traditional element of United States foreign policy, and the use of the words "good neighbours" stresses the continuity of policy between Mr. Truman and his immediate predecessor in this area of international affairs. Point 11 embodies the first two of the famous "four freedoms" specified by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941. The twelfth point, support of an international organization for the preservation of peace, was, of course, a cardinal feature of President Roosevelt's foreign policy.

Point 6 reflected the decision of the Truman Administration not to recognize the Communist-dominated governments of Bulgaria and Romania, because the non-representative character of these governments violated the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe. Even this stand marked a continuation of the previous Administration's policy; after the Communists gained control of the Romanian Government in early Mar, 1945 the United States Government invoked the Yalta Declaration and requested consultation and joint action on the Romanian question. Receiving no satisfaction the Roosevelt Government renewed its requests and reduced to a bare minimum its contacts with the new Romanian regime.⁵

⁵See TUSIWA 1945-1947 pp. 53-61 on the Balkans in 1945.

It was a logical continuation of Mr. Roosevelt's policy, therefore, for the Truman Administration to withhold recognition when the Soviet Union proposed it in May, 1945.

The first part of the fifth point, which promised that the recently conquered nations would eventually be allowed to elect their own government, was also existing United States policy. A Department of State briefing book paper entitled "The Treatment of Germany", prepared for the Malta and Yalta conferences in early 1945, recommended that it should be United States policy to prepare the German people for self-government as soon as possible.⁶ And according to Chiang Kai-shek, President Roosevelt at the Cairo Conference Nov, 1945 "fully approved" of the Generalissimo's idea that if the Japanese people overthrew their militarist government they should be allowed to choose their own form of government.⁷

It seems clear, then, that the guidelines laid down for United States foreign policy towards the end of 1945 were the same ones used by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This is not surprising in view of the manner in which Mr. Truman became President, his inexperience in foreign affairs, and his concurrence with Mr. Roosevelt's ideas on

⁶United States Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers: The Conferences at Yalta and Malta 1945 (Washington, 1955), 186.

⁷Message of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to the Chinese People Jan 1, 1944, text in Documents on American Foreign Relations (Boston, 1939) VI, 234.

international relations;⁸ in fact, Mr. Truman had promised, in his first address to Congress as President, that he would carry out the war and peace policies of Franklin Roosevelt.⁹

However, during this immediate post-war period, while keeping to the goals set forth by Mr. Truman in his Navy Day speech, American leaders were considering a basic reinterpretation of American foreign policy.¹⁰

This exploration of possible alternative policies stemmed from the difficulties met by the United States in its relations with the Soviet Union. Dealings with the Soviet Union had never proved easy, but during the war the American Government had interpreted Russian motives and actions in the most favourable way possible. Towards the end of the war, however, doubts as to Soviet objectives began to develop within the Administration.¹¹ This concern, and the wide range of friction points in Soviet-American relations at this time are shown in a State Department report which Mr. Truman ordered prepared for him as soon as he became President. This summary, dated Apr 13, 1945, was supposed to outline the principal problems faced by the American Government in its dealings with other states; it gave the following information under the subtitle SOVIET UNION:

⁸Harry S. Truman, Memoirs (Garden City, N.Y., 1955-1956) I, 12.

⁹Ibid., I, 42.

¹⁰Reitzel et al, op. cit., 85-86.

¹¹Ibid., 85.

Since the Yalta Conference the Soviet Government has taken a firm and uncompromising position on nearly every major question that has arisen in our relations. The more important of these are the Polish question, the application of the Crimea agreement on liberated areas, the agreement on the exchange of liberated prisoners of war and civilians, and the San Francisco Conference. In the liberated areas under Soviet control, the Soviet Government is proceeding largely on a unilateral basis and does not agree that the developments which have taken place justify application of the Crimea agreement. Permission for our contact teams to go into Poland to assist in the evacuation of liberated prisoners of war has been refused although in general our prisoners have been reasonably well treated by Soviet standards. The Soviet Government appears to desire to proceed with the San Francisco Conference but was unwilling to send their Foreign Minister. They have asked for a large post-war credit and pending a decision on this matter have so far been unwilling to conclude an agreement providing for the orderly liquidation of lend-lease aid. In the politico-military field, similar difficulties have been encountered in collaboration with the Soviet authorities.¹²

The report also mentioned the interference of the Soviet Union in the politics of the Balkans, in violation of the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe, and the subsequent unsuccessful protests by the United States.

¹²HST, I, 15.

Difficulties with the Soviet Union tended to increase rather than diminish in the next year and a half. Frustrated in their relations with the Soviet Union, American officials came to view that country as an expansionist state which was seizing every possible opportunity to advance its own interests, attempting to disrupt the international system agreed upon, and which was also apparently adhering once more to the thesis of world revolution which its war-time allies had hoped had been discarded.

The Soviet Union established and directed the Communist regimes in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Romania; it supported the self-installed Communist governments in Albania and Yugoslavia. The local Communist parties in France, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Korea were encouraged to sabotage their nations' politics, and indirect support in open civil war was provided to the Greek and Chinese Communists. Turkey and Iran came under direct Russian pressure. In the enemy states joint control was being made unworkable, and occupation policies became more distinctly national.¹³

During 1946, therefore, a new position was built up by the American policy-makers; a firmer line was to be adopted towards the Soviet Union, to be used only in specific issues as they arose. It was hoped that the Soviet Union would thereby be made to feel that its own interests would be best served by carrying out its international obligations as the United States and most Western nations understood them.¹⁴

¹³Reitzel et al., op. cit., 87.

¹⁴Ibid., 88-89.

The new course of action and the changed analysis of Soviet aims on which it was based were summarized in the famous "X" article in Foreign Affairs of Jul, 1947.¹⁵ The author, G.F. Kennan, stated that the Soviet Union continued to believe that capitalism was doomed to eventual destruction and that it was the duty of the proletariat to hasten this destruction and assume power. Moreover, Mr. Kennan believed that one of the basic concepts governing Soviet action was a belief in an innate antagonism between capitalism and Communism and that this "has profound implications for Russia's conduct as a member of international society. It means that there can never be on Moscow's side any sincere assumption of a community of aims between the Soviet Union and powers which are regarded as capitalism . . . and from it flow many of the phenomena which we find disturbing in the Kremlin's conduct of foreign policy; the secretiveness, the lack of frankness, the duplicity, the war suspiciousness, and the basic unfriendliness of purpose. These phenomena are there to stay, for the foreseeable future."¹⁶

Another basic Soviet concept, wrote Mr. Kennan, was the infallibility of the Kremlin. All Communists were obliged to believe in and

¹⁵By X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 25 (July, 1947), 566-582. "The Article was written by George Kennan, formerly the United States Charge d'Affaires in Moscow, and had official blessing; hence its significance." Reitzel et al, op. cit., 94n.

¹⁶"The Sources of Soviet Conduct", reprinted in George F. Kennan, American Diplomacy 1900-1950 (New York, 1951), 109.

follow the party line. This meant that the Communist subordinates could not be swayed from their view by any logical arguments the Western representatives might make. All that the Westerner could hope for was that his views would be transmitted to the Kremlin where they might have effect, and to be effective these views must be backed by unchallengeable facts.¹⁷ Since there was no time-limit on the ultimate Soviet goals, the Soviet leaders were willing to retreat, without panic, in the face of superior force. Their main concern was "that there should always be pressure, increasing constant pressure, toward the desired goal."¹⁸

Proceeding from analysis of Soviet aims to the lesson that must be learned from them, Mr. Kennan went on to outline what American policy towards the Soviet Union should be: "

. . . the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment¹⁹ of Russian expansive tendencies. It is important to note, however, that such a policy has nothing to do with outward histrionics: with threats or blustering or superfluous gestures of outward 'toughness'. While the Kremlin is basically flexible in its reaction to political realities, it is by no means unamenable to considerations of prestige . . . it is a sine qua non of successful dealing with Russia that the foreign government in question should remain at all times cool and collected and that its demands on Russian policy should be put forward in such a manner as to leave

¹⁷ Ibid., 110-112

¹⁸ Ibid., 112

¹⁹ According to Reitzel et al, this article was the first public presentation of the strategy of containment. op. cit., 105.

the way open for a compliance not too detrimental to Russian prestige."²⁰

One factor which enabled the Truman Administration to adopt a policy of containment, despite the serious weakness of conventional American military forces, was sole possession of the atomic bomb. In 1945 and 1946 there was no consensus on the use of the atomic bomb as an instrument of policy. Monopoly of nuclear weapons was simply regarded as a type of insurance which allowed the United States to take greater risks in international affairs than otherwise would have been possible.²¹

The preceding views on the function of the atomic bomb were developed more fully in the next three years. The weapon was seen as a part of the containment programme. The Soviet Union, the American policy-makers theorized, would be deterred from aggression by the atomic retaliatory power of the United States. At the same time, the United States must use this period of safety, when the Soviet Union was without the atomic bomb, to build up its conventional forces so that a non-atomic Soviet threat could also be met effectively.²²

The first big step in the new containment policy was taken

²⁰ Kennan, op. cit., 113.

²¹ Reitzel, et. al., op. cit., 109-110.

²² Ibid., 326-328.

with the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine Mar 12, 1947. In his address to Congress on that date, President Truman announced that the United States was taking over Great Britain's role as the patron of Greece and Turkey. ". . . Fully aware of the broad implications involved if the United States extends assistance to Greece and Turkey" Mr. Truman declared that "We shall not realize our objectives, however, unless we are willing to help free people to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes. This is no more than a frank recognition that totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States . . . I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support peoples who are resisting attempted subjugations by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

"I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way."²³

It was thus announced that the United States had an important interest in countries threatened by Soviet expansion²⁴ and would help them to resist Communist domination. This help was to be "primarily

²³Text of address in Snyder, op. cit., 134-135.

²⁴The U.S.S.R. was not mentioned by name, but it was quite clear from other parts of the speech what country was threatening "the free peoples".

through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes."²⁵

Before Congress had approved the Greek-Turkish aid bill the Administration took the first step towards another major foreign policy commitment. In a little-noted speech at Cleveland, Mississippi on May 8, 1947, Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson presented what, according to Mr. Truman, "might be called the prologue to the Marshall Plan."²⁶ Defending American expenditures on foreign relief and reconstruction as commitments required by national self-interest, Mr. Acheson said, "We know now that further financing, beyond existing authorization, is going to be needed."²⁷ The United States could not supply all the goods and services desired by the world; it must, therefore, concentrate its assistance on areas where outside aid would most effectively increase world political and economic stability, promote democratic institutions, and foster liberal trading policies. Western Europe, obviously, was such an area.²⁸

Mr. Acheson's speech indicated the Government's continuing concern with European economic conditions. During the winter of 1946-47 the State Department received alarming reports from Europe. The Administration became convinced that action must be taken quickly; if the European

²⁵ Snyder, op. cit., 136.

²⁶ HST, II, 113.

²⁷ Quoted in TUSIWA 1947-1948, 57.

²⁸ Ibid., 57.

economies collapsed the United States' economic objective of multilateral world trade would be unattainable, and the political objective of a Europe free from Communist control would be seriously threatened.²⁹ On Jun 5, 1947 Secretary of State George Marshall gave the speech at Harvard which initiated the Government's action on the European problems.

Mr. Marshall opened his speech on a sombre note: "I need not tell you, gentlemen, that the world situation is very serious." He went on to describe the critical state of the European economies, and concluded that "the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health to the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace." Avoiding the overtones of ideological conflict found in the Truman Doctrine,³⁰ Mr. Marshall declared, "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist." The Secretary of State then came to the heart of his proposal:

²⁹ Ibid., 54-55. Also HST, II, 111-113.

³⁰ Mr. Truman had said in his speech Mar 12, 1947: "At the present moment in history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life . . .

"One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty . . .

"The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections and the suppression of personal freedom."

Any assistance that this government may develop in the future should provide a cure rather than a mere palliative.

Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full co-operation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government . . .

It is already evident that, before the United States Government can proceed much further in its efforts to alleviate the situation and help start the European world on its way to recovery, there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by this Government. It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a programme designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European programme and of later support for us to do so. The programme should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all European nations. 31

The offer had been made; the United States would help those who helped themselves. Mr. Marshall's speech dealt solely with economics; Communism was mentioned only obliquely, when the Secretary said that "Any government which manoeuvres to block the recovery of other countries cannot expect help from us. Furthermore, governments, political parties or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit therefrom politically or otherwise will encounter the opposition of the United States."³² In a subsequent press conference

³¹Quotations from text of address in Snyder, op. cit., 138-141.

³²Ibid., 141.

Mr. Marshall said that his remarks applied to all European countries that were willing to co-operate, thus leaving the way clear for participation by the Soviet Union and the Communist-ruled countries in Eastern Europe.³³

The Secretary of State had shown considerable shrewdness in casting his programme solely in economic terms. Without sacrificing any objectives, he succeeded both in avoiding and mitigating much of the criticism aroused by the Truman Doctrine. Many who had disliked the military and anti-Soviet aspects of Mr. Truman's doctrine, and its unilateral character, welcomed the Marshall Plan as a step in the opposite, and right, direction. Those who had criticized the Administration's past lending policy as wasteful and piecemeal praised the businesslike, sensible nature of Mr. Marshall's proposition. In Europe, governments such as the French and British, which still hoped that it might be possible to secure the friendship and co-operation of the Soviet Union, were pleased that the American offer applied to Communist and non-Communist states alike.³⁴

The difference in tone and content between the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan indicates, perhaps, that the United States policy-makers were not quite sure of the approach which they should take towards the Soviet Union - implacable opposition or renewed efforts to win Soviet friendship and co-operation. On the other hand, it is possible that the

³³Reitzel et al, op. cit., 118.

³⁴TUSIWA 1947-1948, 417-420.

two speeches merely reflected differences in personality and outlook between Mr. Truman and Mr. Marshall, for less than two weeks after the Harvard Address, Mr. Truman reiterated the views that he had expressed in March:

Weakness on our part would stir fear among small or weakened nations that we were giving up our world leadership. It would seem to them that we lacked the will to fulfil our pledge to aid free and independent nations to maintain their freedom or our commitments to aid in restoring war-torn economies. In such an atmosphere of uncertainty, these nations might not be able to resist the encroachments of totalitarian pressures.

We must not let friendly nations go by default.³⁵

The Soviet policy-makers might find some evidence of the Marshall helping hand in the phrase "our commitments to aid in restoring war-torn economies", but the whole tone of the passage is that of the Truman Doctrine.

These three speeches in 1947 - Mr. Truman's address to the Congress Mar 12, 1947, Mr. Marshall's Harvard speech Jun 5, 1947, and Mr. Truman's remarks of Jun 17, 1947 - demonstrate that the Administration was following the policy of "containment" described by Mr. George Kennan

³⁵ Address by President Truman at Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., Jun 17, 1947, Text in DOAFR, IX, 289.

in the "X" article. Mr. Truman had made it clear that the United States would resist Soviet attempts to take over Greece, Turkey, and other "friendly nations" (Mr. Kennan's "firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies"). At the same time, Mr. Marshall's offer left the door open for a Soviet return to reasonably friendly relations with the United States, and partially offset the effect of the President's more hostile public attitude (in accordance with Mr. Kennan's view that "demands on Russian policy should be put forward in such a manner as to leave the way open for a compliance not too detrimental to Russian prestige").

In the second half of 1947 and the early months of 1948, Communist pressure in Europe increased. The government of Hungary was taken over by the Communists, Czechoslovakia and Poland were forced to withdraw from participation in the Marshall Plan, Czechoslovakia was the object of a successful Communist coup. Alarmed by this evidence of Soviet expansion, Mr. Truman felt it necessary to deliver a special address to Congress Mar 17, 1948.³⁶ In this speech the President attacked the Soviet Union more directly and specifically than usual.

. . . the situation in the world today is not primarily the result of the natural difficulties

³⁶HST, II, 241.

which follow a great war. It is chiefly due to the fact that one nation has not only refused to co-operate in the establishment of a just and honourable peace, but - even worse - has actively sought to prevent it.

One nation, has persistently obstructed the work of the United Nations by constant abuse of the veto. That nation has vetoed 21 proposals for action in a little over two years.

But that is not all. Since the close of hostilities, the Soviet Union and its agents have destroyed the independence and democratic character of a whole series of nations in eastern and central Europe.

It is this ruthless course of action, and the clear design to extend it to the remaining free nations of Europe, that have brought about the critical situation in Europe today.

(The) significance (of the signing of the Brussels treaty)³⁷ goes far beyond the actual terms of the agreement itself. It is a notable step in the direction of unity in Europe for the protection and preservation of its civilization. This development deserves our full support. I am confident that the United States will, by appropriate means, extend to the free nations the support which the situation requires. I am sure that the determination of the free countries of Europe to protect themselves will be matched by an equal determination on our part to help them to do so.

The time has come when the free men and women of the world must face the threat to their liberty squarely and courageously.³⁸

³⁷A Western Union was established by the Brussels treaty of Mar 17, 1948, signed by Britain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg. The treaty promised co-ordination of the efforts of the five signatories in the sphere of collective military defence, and in economic, social, and cultural fields.

³⁸Message of President Truman to a Joint Session of the Congress, Mar 17, 1948, text in DOAFR, X, 5-9.

In this address Mr. Truman abandoned the general phrases which he had used up to this time - "way of life . . . based upon the will of a minority", "totalitarian pressure" - and in a major foreign policy address laid the blame for current international tension squarely upon the Soviet Government. He combined this with an assurance that Soviet attempts to extend Communist control in Europe would be resisted by the United States. Clearly and publicly, the United States was committed to a policy of containing the Soviet Union in Europe.

Evidence of the containment policy is found not only in the speeches, but also in the actions, of the American leaders. High-ranking American military "observers" were sent to the meetings of the Western Union military organs and took an active part in the discussions there.³⁹ And in Jul, 1948 informal talks on a North Atlantic defence treaty were begun at Washington by representatives of the United States, Canada, and the Western Union powers. After months of difficult negotiations, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed Apr 4, 1949.

The key article of the North Atlantic Treaty, Article 5, states, in part, that "The parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North American shall be considered an attack against them all; and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack

³⁹TUSIWA 1948-1949, 515.

occurs, each of them . . . will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area."⁴⁰

To put it simply, the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty made it clear, to the Soviet Union and everyone else, that the Truman Administration meant what it said; the United States would not passively accept Soviet expansion into Europe and other non-Communist areas of the world.

The participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization reflected another aspect of American foreign policy; a new emphasis on collective security, on the need for allies. In Jun, 1947 Mr. Truman spoke of the "peace-loving nations";⁴¹ modifying the word "nations" with an adjective indicates that the American Government felt a sense of association with some countries and not with others, but there was no suggestion at this time of military co-operation for the mutual protection of the peace-loving nations. Where military defence was mentioned or alluded to, the image created was that of a strong United States, world leader in the quest for peace, supporting weaker

⁴⁰Text of North Atlantic Treaty in DOAFR, XI, 613.

⁴¹Address at Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., Jun 17, 1947, Text in DOAFR, IX, 289.

countries, rather than that of a United States which realized the need for allies. The benefits of association flowed in one direction, from the United States to her friends.⁴²

The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Pact) signed Sep 2, 1947, with its collective security clause, might seem to contradict the above views. However, the Rio Pact should not be considered part of American action to thwart the aims of the Soviet Union in particular. This treaty was, instead, in the tradition of the Monroe Doctrine; in the sense that it was meant to deter any outside power from attempting to penetrate the Western Hemisphere. Proof of this lies in the statement of the Chairman of the United States Delegation at the conference that drew up the Rio Pact:

The immediate task we face at this conference is to draft the treaty contemplated in the Act of Chapultepec Mar, 1945. In that act we jointly declared that every attack by a state against an American state shall be considered as an act of aggression against all . . . This principle of collective responsibility for our common defense is a natural development of inter-American collaboration.⁴³

⁴²For example, in his speech at Princeton University Jun 17, 1947, Mr. Truman said that: "Weakness on our part would stir fear among small or weakened nations that we were giving up our world leadership. It would seem to them that we lacked the will to fulfil our pledge to aid free and independent nations to maintain their freedoms . . ." In a radio address Oct 24, 1947 the President said, "We are following a definite and clear foreign policy. That policy...is...to assist free men and free nations to recover from the devastation of war, to stand on their own feet, to help one another, and to contribute their share to a full and lasting peace."

⁴³Text in DOAFR, IX, 532-533.

The American Government thus considered this instrument of collective security to be the direct descendant of an agreement signed in 1945, before the cooling-off of Soviet-American relations.

An American need for collective security in the East-West struggle was recognized by the United States Government by the middle of 1948, for this was when informal talks on an Atlantic pact were begun. One finds in the speeches of American leaders a shift from an emphasis on American support of other states to an affirmation of the need for mutual support among the United States and other non-Communist states. In his inaugural address Jan 20, 1949 President Truman announced that the Government was negotiating "a collective defence arrangement" which was intended "to strengthen the security of the North Atlantic area." "The primary purpose of these agreements", said Mr. Truman,

is to provide unmistakable proof of the joint determination of the free countries to resist armed attack from any quarter. Each country participating in these arrangements must contribute all it can to the common defense.

If we can make it sufficiently clear, in advance, that any armed attack affecting our national security would be met with overwhelming force, the armed attack might never occur.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Inaugural Address of President Truman Jan 20, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 9-10.

In June of the same year the President declared, "We need other nations as our allies in the cause of human freedom."⁴⁵ Almost exactly one year later Mr. Truman listed the advantages of American participation in a system of collective security:

Such a balanced collective defense as NATO will be stronger and less costly than the old system of completely separate defense establishments. It will make it possible to provide the necessary military protection without imposing an unmanageable burden upon the economies of the member countries.⁴⁶

There remains to be mentioned one other feature of American policy from the end of World War II to the beginning of the Korean conflict: throughout this period the Truman Administration steadily supported the United Nations Organization.

As we have seen, in Jan 1946 Mr. Truman expressed, as part of his "understanding of the fundamental foreign policy of the United States", the conviction

that the preservation of peace between nations requires a United Nations Organization composed of all the peace-loving nations of the world who are willing jointly to use force, if necessary, to insure peace.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Address by President Truman at Little Rock, Ark., text in the New York Times, Jun 12, 1949.

⁴⁶Address by President Truman at St. Louis, Missouri, Jun 10, 1950, text in DOAFR, XII, 8-9

⁴⁷"Message of the President on the State of the Union and Transmitting the Budget". Jan 14, 1946, in Budget 1947, op. cit., xiv-xv.

One year later, the President still saw the United Nations as "man's hope of putting out, and keeping out, the fires of war for all time."⁴⁸ In his 1948 State of the Union Message to the Congress Mr. Truman stated, "We are giving, and will continue to give, our full support to the United Nations";⁴⁹ in the inaugural address for his second term in 1949 he listed strong and consistent backing of the United Nations and related agencies as the first of the four major courses of action that his Administration would pursue in its foreign policy.⁵⁰ And in May, 1950 Mr. Truman said that "As long as I am President, we shall support the United Nations with every means at our command."⁵¹

This continuous backing of the United Nations Organization was amply repaid after the outbreak of the war in Korea. The United States was then able to present its intervention as the action of a loyal member of the international body, responding to the requests of the General Assembly; and the American Government could point to its consistent support of the United Nations as proof of its selfless motives in the Korean War.

⁴⁸Address by President Truman at Washington Apr 5, 1947, text in DOAFR, IX, 8.

⁴⁹Annual Message of the President (Truman) to the Congress on the State of the Union Jan 7, 1948, text in DOAFR, X, 3.

⁵⁰Inaugural Address of President Truman Jan 20, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 9.

⁵¹Address by President Truman at Laramie, Wyoming, May 9, 1950, text in DOAFR, XII, 5.

Examining Mr. Truman's overall foreign policy prior to the Korean attack one finds that at the beginning of his presidential career he continued, not surprisingly, the policies of his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt. By the end of 1946, however, American policy was revised as the result of a new analysis of the aims of the Soviet Government. The new policy called for a "firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies." Support of Greece and Turkey under the Truman Doctrine, and the strengthening of Western Europe's economies through the Marshall Plan were major steps in this new containment policy. In the face, however, of the apparently growing Communist threat, the United States Government began to emphasize the value of collective security; it spoke less of its support of other nations and more of "common defense". Finally, throughout this period the Truman Administration gave consistent support to the United Nations Organization.

CHAPTER II

THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION'S FAR EASTERN POLICY PRIOR TO THE KOREAN ATTACK

I

The Truman Administration's policy towards Korea will be more intelligible if it is seen in perspective, against the broad picture of United States overall foreign policy of the same period; it is for that reason that I attempted in the last chapter to outline the main features of general American policy from 1945 to the outbreak of hostilities in Korea in 1950. With the same motive in mind, I propose now to examine the most important characteristics of American Far Eastern policy from 1945 to 1950. A brief exposition of this policy will, I hope, throw light on the Truman Administration's Korean policy, and will serve as a basis for comparison later on when I examine the effects of the Korean War on American foreign policy.

American Far Eastern policy during the period 1945-1950 can be divided for convenience into three main sections dealing with China, Japan, and the Colonial Territories.¹

I

From the end of World War II to the beginning of the Korean conflict the situation in China was probably the greatest problem faced

¹I omit Korea because I will be studying it in detail in the next chapter.

by the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs; certainly it was the aspect of Far Eastern affairs which commanded most attention in Congress and in the American press. Much of this scrutiny was highly critical, and as the situation in China deteriorated the Administration came under heavy fire from its "political" opponents who accused it of having the wrong China policy, or no policy at all. While the State Department had in 1945 certain specific objectives and policies with regard to China, the march of events made many of them unrealistic. Because of this transitional state of affairs in China, the State Department appeared to be controlled by events, rather than controlling them. While understandable, and often unavoidable, this situation does not signify successful foreign policy.

In Apr, 1945 the United States had two main objectives in China: effective Sino-American co-operation in the war against Japan, and, as a long-range objective, the establishment of a strong, united China that would act as a stabilizing factor in the Far East. While supporting the government of Chiang Kai-shek, for the time being, the State Department proposed to keep its policy sufficiently flexible to allow co-operation with other leaders in China who might better be able to achieve unity and supply the desired stability in the Far East. Similarly, it was hoped that after the war China would develop an effective military organization, but because of the danger of civil war and complications with Soviet Russia the United States did not want to promise post-war military assistance to the Chiang Kai-shek regime until it was certain

that that government was making progress in unifying China and gaining strong support from the people of China.² The Truman Administration had no intention of engaging American troops in a Chinese civil war.³

While attempting to avoid being too firmly committed to Chiang Kai-shek, the United States Government was anxious to prevent Communist expansion in China. Thus when the war with Japan ended, steps were taken to ensure that Kuomintang rather than Communist troops would occupy the areas vacated by the withdrawing Japanese armies. The Japanese were ordered to stay where they were and maintain order until Nationalist troops appeared to take control; the United States flew many of the Kuomintang forces to their destination and used American marines to occupy several important seaports. In this way the Communists were prevented from extending their control in the confusion of the Japanese surrender.⁴ These tactics fitted in with the American policy of supporting Chiang Kai-shek for the time being. The United States Government was able to hide its motives by claiming that it was simply providing the normal aid an ally would give under the circumstances to the recognized government of China.

²State Department memorandum on basic United States policy towards China, prepared for Mr. Truman when he first became President. Text in HST, I, 102-104.

³Ibid., II, 63.

⁴Ibid., II, 62, 65.

On Dec 15, 1945 President Truman stated the policy of his country towards China. He said that a strong, united, democratic China was vitally important; it was essential, therefore, that the Nationalist and Communist armies in China stop fighting each other, and participate instead in a national conference to bring China's internal strife to an end. Since the National Government was the only legally recognized government in China, it was the proper instrument to unify China. However, the United States felt that peace, unity, and democratic reform would be furthered if other political elements were to be included in the National Government. Unity was impossible as long as autonomous armies existed, and the formation of a more representative government should be followed by the elimination of autonomous armies and the integration of all armed forces into the Chinese Nationalist Army. Mr. Truman noted that United States forces were helping the Nationalist Government to disarm and evacuate Japanese troops, but he promised that American troops would not take part in a Chinese civil war. In closing, the President said that the Chinese political and military groups had a responsibility to the other United Nations to end armed strife in China, and that as China moved towards peace and unity the United States would be willing to assist her in every reasonable way.⁵

⁵Text in United States Department of State, United States Relations with China (Washington, 1949), 607-609. Hereafter cited as Relations with China.

In an effort to bring about peace and unity in China, President Truman dispatched General George C. Marshall on a special mission to China. General Marshall was instructed to attempt to persuade the Chinese Government to gather the major political groups together in a national conference to bring about the unification of China and the end of civil hostilities, particularly in North China. The General was told that he could use, as a lever, the warning that the United States would grant no economic or military aid to a disunited China.⁶

During the first half of 1946 General Marshall laboured to bring the Kuomintang and Communist leaders to agreement on an effective cease-fire. Each apparent advance towards this objective was soon frustrated by the outbreak of new military conflict, for which the Nationalists blamed the Communists, and the Communists the Nationalists, thus exacerbating the distrust and anger that the two groups felt towards each other.

As the situation worsened in mid-summer 1946, Mr. Truman, believing that Chiang Kai-shek was no longer willing to listen to General Marshall's advice, sent a warning message to the Generalissimo.

⁶ Letter of Harry Truman to George Marshall Dec 15, 1945, text in HST, II, 67-68.

Noting the disappointment of the American people over the failure of the Chinese to settle their differences - and his personal conclusion that the blame for this failure rested as much with the Kuomintang as with the Communists - President Truman declared ominously that:

There exists in the United States an increasing body of opinion which holds that our entire policy toward China must be re-examined in the light of spreading strife . . . Unless convincing proof is shortly forthcoming that genuine progress is made toward a peaceful settlement of China's internal problems, it must be expected that American opinion will not continue in its generous attitude towards your nation. It will, furthermore, be necessary for me to redefine and explain the position of the United States to the American people.⁷

The threat was obvious; if Chiang Kai-shek did not make a greater effort to co-operate with General Marshall and bring peace to China, there would be a change in United States' policy towards China. What the new policy would be was not specified, but one possibility, suggested by Mr. Truman's next letter to Chiang Kai-shek, was that the United States would reconsider its programme of aid to the Nationalist Government. In this second letter, Aug 31, 1946, the President said,

I hope it will be feasible for the United States to plan for assisting China in its industrial economy and the rehabilitation of its agrarian reforms. This can be rendered feasible, I believe, through the prompt removal of the threat of widespread Civil War in China.⁸

⁷Text in ibid., 82-83.

⁸President Truman to President Chiang Kai-shek Aug 31, 1946, text in Relations with China, 654.

It cannot have been too difficult for the Generalissimo and his foreign affairs advisers to infer from this that it was an economic weapon that President Truman was threatening them with.

Despite Mr. Truman's personal intervention and continued efforts by General Marshall, the mutual distrust of the two main opposing Chinese parties made a peaceful settlement impossible. Finally, on Jan 3, 1947 President Truman instructed the Secretary of State to recall General Marshall for consultation,⁹ and then before the General reached the United States the President announced the nomination of General Marshall as Secretary of State.¹⁰ The Marshall Mission had ended, in failure.

During 1947 the position of the Nationalist Government steadily deteriorated; reports from the American Ambassador to China, John Leighton Stuart, and the special report of Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer painted a gloomy picture. The Nationalist armies were not succeeding in their efforts to destroy the Communist forces; the morale and efficiency of the latter appeared to be improving as the spirit and capabilities of the Nationalist troops declined. Economically, the Nationalist Government was faced with hyper-inflation and disinvestment; the execution of remedial measures was hampered by the low morale and

⁹ HST, II, 89.

¹⁰ Relations with China, 219

panic of government officials in the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank.¹¹ The political scene was equally bleak; the Kuomintang was shot through with corruption, and any creative effort was paralyzed by a pervading mood of defeatism.¹²

American policy towards China appeared publicly during 1947 to be unchanged from that outlined by President Truman at the end of 1945. However, remarks made by Ambassador Stuart to President Chiang Kai-shek Aug 6, 1947 suggest that the United States was adopting a firmer anti-Communist policy in China. Mr. Stuart said that China should join the democratic group of nations in opposition to aggressive Communism. He noted that his country had been consistently ready to aid China, provided that the Nationalist Government effected reforms which would recover the support of the non-Communist Chinese; such reforms should include reduction of the Kuomintang to the status of any other party in a democracy, reorganization of the army, and improvement of the administration.¹³ The position of the United States Government thus appears to have changed; a united China was still desired, but this unity apparently was to be achieved by the military and political victory

¹¹ Their fears were understandable since, according to General Wedemeyer, "personal responsibility is frequently assigned and scapegoats found, partly for political reasons..." Text in Relations with China, 781.

¹² Wedemeyer Report and reports of John Leighton Stuart, texts in ibid., 729-834.

¹³ From report of Ambassador John Leighton Stuart to the Secretary of State Aug 11, 1947, text in ibid., 822.

of the Chinese non-Communists, rather than by the co-operative efforts of non-Communists and Communists. This shift probably resulted not only from the failure of General Marshall and others to bring about a peaceful agreement between Nationalists and Communists, but also from the State Department's new appreciation of the menace of world Communism.

There is other evidence that the Truman Administration adopted a stronger anti-Communist policy in China after 1946. A press release issued by the State Department Mar 11, 1948 said in part:

When asked specifically whether broadening the base of the Chinese Government meant we favoured the inclusion of the Chinese Communist Party, (General Marshall) replied that the Communists were now in open rebellion against the Government¹⁴ and that this matter (the determination of whether the Communists should be included in the Chinese Government) was for the Chinese Government to decide, not for the United States Government to dictate.¹⁵

At a press conference on the same day, Mar 11, 1948, Mr. Truman was asked about the inclusion of Chinese Communists in the Government of China. The President said that it was not American policy to urge the Nationalist Government to take Communists into the Government; the policy of the United States further carried out by General Marshall

¹⁴On Jul 4, 1947 the Chinese State Council had proclaimed the Chinese Communists to be in open rebellion against the Nationalist Government. Ibid., 251.

¹⁵Text in ibid., 272.

during his special mission, was to help the Chiang Kai-shek regime to cope with the situation confronting it. Mr. Truman stated that he hoped Chinese liberals would be included in the Government, but that "we did not want any Communists in the Government of China or anywhere else if we could help it."¹⁶

The press release and Mr. Truman's remarks are open to various interpretations. The United States in 1945 and 1946 obviously did not want the Chinese Communists to gain ground; as we have seen, the American Government carried out the capture and evacuation of the Japanese troops in China in such a way as to prevent the Communists from extending their control. Nonetheless, in public and in the instructions given to General Marshall for his mission to China there was no suggestion that the United States was opposed to the inclusion of Communists in the Chinese Government; in fact, quite the opposite impression was given. To have done otherwise would have made General Marshall's mission as an "honest broker" completely senseless. Thus General Marshall's statement that "the Communists were now in open rebellion against the Government" (had they not, in fact, always been so?), and Mr. Truman's public expression of his disapproval of Communist participation in the Chinese Government, when compared with earlier public and private expression of United States policy, indicate that the Administration was now taking a

¹⁶ Ibid., 272-273.

more forceful stand against the Chinese Communists than it had two years before.

One last bit of evidence can be adduced. On Apr 12, 1948 the Secretary of State sent a policy directive to the American Embassy in China. It said in part:

1. The United States Government must not directly or indirectly give any implication of support, encouragement or acceptability of coalition government in China with Communist participation.¹⁷

This was a far different position from that held by General Marshall during his ill-fated special mission.

During 1948 the chronicled summaries on the general situation in China, prepared for the Department of State by the American Embassy in Nanking, painted a relentlessly gloomy picture of events in that divided country.¹⁸ The reports of the American Ambassador in China did nothing to dispel the gloom. On Aug 10, 1948 Mr. Stuart reported to the Secretary of State that the Communists were still winning the civil war, that in spite of this the Nationalist Government ignored competent military advice and did not take advantage of the military opportunities which occurred, and that China was gripped by a mood of defeatism which

¹⁷ Quoted in ibid., 279.

¹⁸ See ibid., 901-919.

extended even to members of the cabinet.¹⁹

The worsening situation in China strengthened the American Government's resolve not to become too deeply involved in the Civil War. In fact, Secretary Marshall's instructions to Ambassador John L. Stuart towards the end of Oct, 1948 give the impression that the United States Government hoped to dissociate itself from what was obviously a losing cause. Acknowledging that the United States Government preferred a friendly government in China, the Secretary went on to say that

underlying our recent relations with China have been the fundamental considerations that the United States must not become directly involved in the Chinese civil war and that the United States must not assume responsibility for underwriting the Chinese Government militarily and economically. Direct armed intervention in the internal affairs of China runs counter to the clearly expressed intent of Congress . . .²⁰

But without such direct intervention, Mr. Marshall said, the Chinese Communists could not be reduced to a satisfactorily weak condition; more aid to the Nationalist Government would not do the job. Secretary Marshall then cited a large number of Ambassador Stuart's sombre reports on the deteriorating situation in China to prove that the United States would be unwise to increase its aid to Chiang Kai-shek's

¹⁹ John Leighton Stuart to George C. Marshall Aug 10, 1948, text in ibid., 885-886.

²⁰ George Marshall to United States Embassy in China Oct, 1948, text in ibid., 280.

government. The Secretary's policy review noted that every effort was being made to hasten the delivery to China of war material purchased under the existing aid programme, but the statement ended with a firm refusal to increase United States aid to the Government of China.²¹

To sum up, the Secretary said that the Nationalist Government of China could not survive without direct military intervention by the United States, and that such intervention would not occur. Moreover, the United States did not intend to throw good money after bad by providing additional financial support for what was obviously a bankrupt enterprise.

The Administration did not reverse its decision to refrain from sending additional aid to Chiang Kai-shek's government, and, indeed, such a reversal was unlikely in view of the steady corrosion of the Nationalists' position. In early Nov, 1948 Ambassador Stuart reported that, in the opinion of the senior American military and diplomatic personnel in China, the early fall of the Nationalist Government was inevitable.²²

The military map of China told the story; from Sep, to Dec, 1948 the Communists gained control, in turn, of Tainan, Chinchow, Changchun, Mukden, and Hsuehchow.

On Dec 21, 1948 Mr. Stuart informed his Secretary that President

²¹Ibid., 281-283.

²²John Leighton Stuart to George C. Marshall Nov 6, 1948, text in ibid., 894.

Chiang had completely lost public confidence in recent months, and that the "view is not infrequently expressed that (Chiang) is (the) best asset (the) Communists have." It is not surprising, therefore, that when Mme. Chiang made a special trip to Washington to press for additional aid to her government, she was given no satisfaction by Mr. Truman.²⁴

By the end of 1948 the Nationalist Government's requests for American advice were being answered by Ambassador Stuart with rather vacuous exhortations to face adversity with a stiff upper lip;²⁵ and by Mar, 1949 the Administration had withdrawn its support of the Nationalist regime to the extent of suggesting to the Senate Committee on Foreign

²⁴ See the New York Times Dec 11, 1948 and Dec 16, 1948. Also John Leighton Stuart to George C. Marshall Dec 19, 1948, text in Relations with China, 897.

²⁵ (In a conversation with General Wu Te-chen, new Vice Premier and Acting Foreign Minister) "I added that I had greatest admiration for resolute will-power of Generalissimo in fighting Communism by military means, and that, whatever decision responsible leaders should make as to present crisis, I hoped they would all show that same resolute will in resisting the evils of Communism by every available means. They ought not to think of situation as hopeless and irretrievable. They would probably have some distasteful and even bitter experiences and outlook might seem very depressing, but more thorough co-operation among themselves and grim determination were called for...I reminded him in leaving that the U.S. was watching with keenly solicitous interest and readiness to help in whatever ways might seem justifiable and effective when time came." John Leighton Stuart to George C. Marshall Dec 29, 1948, text in Relations with China, 899-900. Cold comfort for General Wu Te-chen.

Relations that a proposed Bill providing further large-scale aid to the Nationalists would serve no useful purpose.²⁶

At this point American policy towards China must have been largely determined by the operations of the Chinese Communist army. In Jan, 1949 Tientsin and Peiping were captured by the Communists, and in March Taiyuan was also taken. On Apr 20, 1949 the Communists crossed the Yangtze River, and in May and June their forces gained control of Hankow, Shanghai, and Tsingtao.

Faced with the inevitability of a Communist victory, and unwilling to send American troops to China, the United States Government had no course of significant action open to it, especially in view of the internal nature of the Chinese conflict. The Administration had to content itself, therefore, with statements of its continued desire to encourage the development of China as an independent, libertarian state, and its opposition to the control of China by a foreign state, or by a government acting in the interests of a foreign state.²⁷ The Administration also issued a White Paper in Aug, 1949 covering Sino-American relations from 1944 to 1949. Aside from its great value as source material, the White Paper is important for this analysis as an indicator of the attitude of

²⁶Letter of Dean Acheson to Senator Tom Connally Mar 15, 1949, text in ibid., 1053-1054.

²⁷Statement by Dean Acheson in Etatbul., XXI: 528 (Aug 15, 1949), 236.

the American Government towards the Chinese Nationalist Government in Aug, 1949. Taken as such, the book clearly shows the extent to which the Truman Administration had withdrawn its support from the Kai-shek regime, for Secretary of State Dean Acheson, in his letter of transmittal, discredited the Nationalist Government by placing the blame for the Chinese debacle squarely upon their shoulders. To take just one example, Mr. Acheson wrote:

The fact was that the decay which our observers had detected in Chungking early in the war had fatally sapped the powers of resistance of the Kuomintang. Its leaders had proved incapable of meeting the crisis confronting them, its troops had lost the will to fight, and its Government had lost popular support . . . The Nationalist armies did not have to be defeated; they disintegrated. History has proved again and again that a regime without faith in itself and an army without morale cannot survive the test of battle.²⁸

A public indictment of this nature, issued by the Secretary of State himself, and at a time when the Nationalist Government was in the direst of straits, could only mean that the United States Government was severing most of its ties with the Kuomintang regime.²⁹

The speech made by Mr. Acheson before the National Press Club at

²⁸ Relations with China, xiv.

²⁹ The White Paper also contained graphic descriptions of atrocities committed by Chinese Nationalist troops on Taiwan, ibid., 926-932. Publication of such accounts clearly demonstrates that the United States Government no longer wished to present Chiang Kai-shek to the American people as a desirable ally.

Washington, D.C. on Jan 12, 1950 indicates that the Administration's China policy remained unchanged from the previous summer. In this address the Secretary of State again blamed the Nationalist Government for its defeat, saying that the Nationalists failed because they completely lost the support of the Chinese people. He went on to suggest two "rules" for American policy towards Asia: first, the United States must do nothing to draw attention from Russian encroachments upon Chinese territory and must continue to take the position that anyone who violated the integrity of China was China's enemy and acted contrary to American interests; secondly, the United States must keep its own purposes "straight" and "pure".³⁰ There is not much to work with here, but one can perhaps infer from the Secretary's remarks a few ideas on American policy at that time. First, the United States Government did not intend to change its position and strengthen its support of the Nationalist Government. Secondly, the United States would not engage in any provocative action towards the Chinese Communist Government, for this would deflect Asian hatred from Russia and draw it upon the United States (Mr. Acheson specifically mentioned the "folly of ill-conceived adventures on our part" which could easily "obscure the reality" of Russian imperialism in Northern China"); this can perhaps be seen as a reiteration of the Government's refusal to intervene militarily in China. As for the rule

³⁰Text in AFPB, II, 2310-2322.

on "straight" and "pure" purposes, one can view it as a promise by the Secretary of State that the United States would not try to achieve any objectives in Asia contrary to the interests of the Asians.

To conclude this analysis of the Truman Administration's China policy up to Jun, 1950, one should examine the American policy towards Formosa after the Chinese Nationalist Government moved there on Dec 8, 1949. The available evidence conflicts at some points, but a reasonably clear picture can be drawn nonetheless.

On Jan 5, 1950 President Truman issued a statement saying that the United States had no predatory designs on Formosa or any other Chinese territory, and did not, at the present time, desire to obtain special privileges or to establish military bases on Formosa. The United States Government, said the President, would not involve its armed forces in the Chinese civil war; and would not provide "military aid or advice to Chinese forces on Formosa" although the existing ECA programme of economic assistance would be continued.³¹

At a press conference the same day, Secretary of State Acheson elaborated on Mr. Truman's statement. He said that the underlying

³¹Text of statement in the New York Times Jan 6, 1950.

factors of the decision on Formosa were matters of principle and not military strategy. These factors, he went on,

have to do with the fundamental integrity of the United States and with maintaining in the world the belief that when the United States takes a position it sticks to that position and does not change it by reason of transitory expediency or advantage on its part . . .

It is important that our position in regard to China should never be subject to the slightest doubt or the slightest question.³²

These remarks, coupled with the Secretary's Washington address a week later, which has already been mentioned, indicate that by refusing further military aid to the Nationalist Government the United States hoped to present an image of itself to the Asians as a country with the purest of intentions in its Asian policy; it was vitally important to any successful Far Eastern policy that such an image be presented and accepted, bearing in mind the very strong nationalistic, anti-colonial feelings of the Asians after World War II. At the same time, the United States hoped that the Soviet Union would, in the eyes of the Asian people, suffer by comparison with the United States.

The Administration arrived at this particular policy on Formosa partly because, despite the contrary views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, it does not seem to have believed that Formosa was strategically very important. This is the conclusion suggested by testimony presented

³²Quoted in ibid., Jan 6, 1950

before the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees in 1951. At these hearings Senator Alexander H. Smith, questioning General Omar Bradley, recalled that when Mr. Smith returned from the Far East in Dec, 1949 he understood that the Joint Chiefs of Staff felt that Formosa should not fall into Communist hands, and that the President had then announced Jan 5, 1950 that the Nationalists would receive no further military aid or assistance at that time. Senator Smith asked "whether there was a conflict of view there between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Department of State that was advising the President on that point." General Bradley replied,

Yes, sir. Prior to the outbreak of the Korean conflict the Joint Chiefs of Staff had recommended in December of 1949 a modest programme of military assistance. This was dropped after the President made a public statement in January, 1950, that the United States would no longer provide military advice to the Chinese nationalist forces.³³

Later, Senator William F. Knowland produced a confidential bulletin from the Department of State to its overseas representatives, dated Dec 23, 1949. Two parts of the document are of interest:

. . . largely because of the mistaken popular conception of Formosa's strategic importance to the U.S. defense in the Pacific.

(Information issued by the United States should) counter the false impression that: . . . (Formosa's) loss would

³³ From testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees May 21, 1951, text in the New York Times May 22, 1951.

seriously damage the interests of either the United States or of other countries opposing communism.³⁴ [Italics added]

Commenting on this document, Secretary of State Acheson said that it did not reflect Administration foreign policy but was designed to make American information services put the best possible light on the fall of Formosa which was anticipated in the near future.³⁵ But the above excerpts would seem to indicate that the Administration did not believe Formosa was important, since the document under study was not intended for public reading, but was a confidential message from the State Department to its own officials. The only other possible interpretation is that the State Department wished to delude its own representatives as well as the public; this cannot of course be ruled out, but a Department which followed such a policy consistently would not function for very long.

On Jan 12, 1950, Secretary of State Acheson gave what later became a famous definition of the United States' Far Eastern "Defensive perimeter."³⁶ The exclusion of Formosa from this strategic frontier is another indication that the Administration did not at this time believe that Formosa was strategically important.

³⁴ Text of document in the New York Times Jun 2, 1951.

³⁵ Testimony by Mr. Acheson before SENCOM, Jun 1, 1951, text in the New York Times Jun 2, 1951.

³⁶ AFPBD, II, 2310-2322.

As a result, the United States Government in Jan, 1950 was ready to accept the capture of Formosa by the Communist forces; it believed that this would take place by the end of 1950.³⁷

This acceptance of complete victory of the Chinese Communists was not accompanied by an American move towards diplomatic recognition of the triumphant regime. Very strong domestic political pressure, and the harsh treatment by the Communists of American Consul Angus Ward and his staff in Mukden in 1948-1949 seem to have been the main factors influencing the Administration's decision not to recognize the Chinese Communist Government. When the Communists requisitioned certain American and other foreign consular properties in Peking in Jan, 1950 the United States recalled all American officials in Communist China. This move, comparable to a break in diplomatic relations, ended official contact between the two governments, and no move was made to establish new relations.³⁸

Reviewing the policy of the United States towards China from 1945 to Jun, 1950, one finds that after World War II the United States Government wanted a strong, united China which would be a stabilizing influence in the Far East; it did not want this powerful China to be under

³⁷ Testimony by Mr. Acheson before SENCOM Jun 1, 1951, text in the New York Times Jun 2, 1951.

³⁸ TUSIWA 1950, 33-35.

Communist control. As the Chinese civil conflict continued, however, the United States tried to bring it to an end, and if these efforts were sincere one assumes that the American Government was ready to accept some Communist participation in the Chinese Government. Then in 1947, after the failure of General Marshall's mission, the United States adopted a more strongly anti-Communist policy. But as the Nationalists' position continued to deteriorate in 1948-1949 the Truman Administration began to withdraw its support from the Chiang Kai-shek regime, until by Jan, 1950 the Administration accepted the fact that Formosa must soon fall and refused to grant further military aid to the Nationalist Government. It seems to have chosen this course partly for propaganda purposes, partly because it considered Formosa to be strategically expendable, and partly because it believe that Formosa could be successfully defended only by direct American military intervention,³⁹ which the United States Government consistently refused to countenance, from the end of World War II to the outbreak of the Korean War. Despite this acceptance of the ultimate defeat of the Nationalist Government, the United States refused to recognize the Communist regime as the official government of China.

I have examined the Truman Administration's China policy in some detail because it was such an important area of policy at the time, and also because China later was such an important factor in the Korean

³⁹ Testimony by Mr. Acheson before SENCOM Jun 1, 1951, text in the New York Times Jun 2, 1951.

situation. Japan and the other parts of the Far East have a more tangential importance in the Korean question and will accordingly be dealt with more briefly.

II

Before the second World War ended, the United States Government, which had borne the brunt of the war in the Pacific and exercised the greatest actual control in the area, had decided that it wanted Japan to be under the authority of an American commander. He would be considered to be acting on behalf of the Allies, and the United States proposed to have the Allies' wishes co-ordinated through a body called the Far Eastern Advisory Commission.⁴⁰ The arrangement agreed on by the Allies after Japan's surrender differed only slightly from the American plan. General Douglas MacArthur was named Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers,⁴¹ and in that capacity directed the Allied occupational policy. A Far Eastern Commission was set up in Washington, and in Tokyo there was established an Allied Council composed of SCAP as Chairman with the representatives of the Soviet Union, one from China, and one representing jointly Great Britain, India, Australia, and New Zealand. Despite the existence of these two bodies, the occupation policy carried out in Japan was essentially that of the United States Government.⁴²

⁴⁰HST, I, 431-432.

⁴¹Referred to, with his headquarters, as SCAP.

⁴²DOAFR, VIII, 266-267.

At the end of Aug, 1945 the United States issued "a statement of general initial policy relating to Japan after surrender." This document laid down the basic objectives of American policy towards Japan; these were:

1. To insure that Japan would never again threaten the United States or the peace and security of the world.
2. To eventually bring about the establishment of a peaceful and responsible government in Japan, adhering to the ideals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The United States wanted this government to conform as closely as possible to principles of democratic self-government, but stated that it was "not the responsibility of the Allied Powers to impose upon Japan any form of government not supported by the freely expressed will of the people.

The document went on to outline the principal means by which the above objectives were to be attained. These included disarming and demilitarizing Japan, encouraging the Japanese people to develop a desire for individual liberties and to form democratic organizations, and providing the Japanese with the opportunity to develop an economy which would meet the peacetime needs of their nation.⁴³ General MacArthur was given supreme authority to carry out these and other American policies in Japan.⁴⁴

⁴³Text of document in ibid., VIII, 267.

⁴⁴Joint Chiefs of Staff to General Douglas MacArthur Sep 6, 1945, text in ibid., VIII, 273.

One year later, General MacArthur reported that a long step had been taken towards the achievement of United States objectives in Japan. The Japanese army had been disarmed and demobilized, the Japanese War material had been destroyed or appropriated by the Allies, the war industry of Japan had been destroyed or placed under complete control by the occupation authority. Politically, a democratic constitution had been drawn up, the electorate had been greatly broadened, and the civil service had been reorganized to prevent the revival of totalitarian influences. Monopolistic industrial enterprises were being dissolved in order to provide freer economic opportunity. Although the magniloquence of the General's report creates skepticism in the mind of the reader, one competent study of the American occupation, by a Japanese, largely substantiates the claims made by General MacArthur in his report on the first year of occupation.⁴⁵

American policy towards Japan remained essentially constant from the end of the war through 1947.⁴⁶ Many of the problems faced by the American officials were economic in nature. The Japanese economy had been wrecked by the war, and the United States found it necessary to ship large quantities of foodstuffs to Japan in order to prevent large-scale starvation. As the expenses of occupation mounted the United States laid

⁴⁵ See Kazuo Kawai, Japan's American Interlude (Chicago, 1960), 21-25, 29-31, 91-96, 142-143.

⁴⁶ See Policy Decision on Basic Post-Surrender Policy for Japan, Adopted by the Far Eastern Commission, June 19, 1947, text in DOAFR, IX, 96-104.

more and more stress on the need for Japan to reach a self-sustaining economic level.⁴⁷ A number of documents demonstrate the growing concern of the United States throughout 1948 with the economic aspects of the occupation of Japan. On Jan 21, 1948 the United States representative on the Far Eastern Commission, Frank R. McCoy, stated that his government believed that "a much greater effort must be made to bring about the attainment of a self-supporting Japan with a reasonable standard of living." Therefore, he said, both Allies and Japanese, "recognizing the conditions which now require that more emphasis be placed on such a programme, should take all possible and necessary steps, consistent with the basic policies of the occupation, to bring about the early revival of the Japanese economy on a peaceful self-supporting basis."⁴⁸ On Apr 26, 1948 the Johnson Committee,⁴⁹ established to study the economic position of Japan and Korea, transmitted its report to the Secretary of the Army, Kenneth C. Royall. After reviewing the economic situation in Japan the Committee concluded

that industrial recovery of Japan on a peaceful basis is necessary to bring about a self-supporting economy; that this programme has now properly become a primary objective of the occupation; and that the American Government in the national interest should support a reasonable recovery programme.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ TUSIWA 1945-1947, 266-267.

⁴⁸ Statement by Frank R. McCoy made before the Far Eastern Commission Jan 21, 1948, text in DOAFR, X, 159-160.

⁴⁹ Members; Percy H. Johnson, Chairman of the Chemical Bank and Trust Company; Paul G. Hoffman, Administrator of the Economic Co-operation Administration; Robert F. Loree, Chairman of the National Foreign Trade Council; and Sydney H. Scheuer, senior partner of Scheuer and Company.

⁵⁰ Text in DOAFR, X, 161-162.

And in Dec, 1949 the Department of State and the Department of the Army issued a joint statement which declared that Japanese "economic stability is a most urgent requirement for assuring the continuation of Japan's economic recovery and to insure the maximum effect from use of US appropriated funds." The statement also announced that an effective Economic Stabilization Programme was to be carried out by the Japanese government.⁵¹

During 1949 economic factors continued to influence United States policy towards Japan; their net effect was to lead the American Government to ease the economic restrictions on Japan. Thus in May, 1949 the United States announced that it would no longer remove industrial equipment from Japan for reparations. This reflected the continuing desire of the United States that Japan become self-sufficient, a desire produced by the fact that it was the United States which was making good the deficits of the Japanese economy.⁵²

At the same time, the United States moved in other ways to bring Japan back to a normal existence. In May, 1949 the United States recommended to the Far Eastern Commission that, under SCAP's supervision, Japan be permitted to attend international meetings and to adhere to and

⁵¹Text in ibid., 165-166.

⁵²Statement by Frank R. McCoy, American Representative, made before the Far Eastern Commission May 12, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 177-182.

take part in whatever international arrangements and agreements other countries might be willing to conclude with Japan.⁵³ This was followed in Aug, 1949 by a State Department announcement that SCAP was "correctly allowing Japanese international relationships of a limited character."⁵⁴

By the spring of 1950 the United States Government had proceeded to the point where it was considering the end of occupation and the signing of a peace treaty with Japan. This move had been recommended by General MacArthur as early as Mar, 1947, but his views were not generally accepted at that time.⁵⁵ By 1950, however, some of the American leaders had changed their views on the matter, although others still opposed the signing of a peace treaty. It was reported May 12, 1950 that the Department of State and General MacArthur favoured an early peace settlement, while the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defence Department believed that the withdrawal of American troops from Japan as the result of a peace treaty would invite internal disorder or Soviet aggression.⁵⁶ On May 18, President Truman said that he hoped a peace treaty was not too far distant, and the State Department announced that John Foster Dulles was studying problems related to a Japanese peace settlement.⁵⁷ It was

⁵³ Announcement by Department of State May 6, 1949, text in ibid., 174.

⁵⁴ Text in ibid., 174-175.

⁵⁵ K. Kawai, op. cit., 31-32.

⁵⁶ DOAFR, XII, 486.

⁵⁷ TUSIWA 1950, 184.

generally assumed that the American leaders who wanted a peace treaty were willing to make a settlement with Japan which would not have the approval and agreement of the Soviet Union, if the latter country did not co-operate to the satisfaction of the United States.⁵⁸

In summary, it can be said that the policy of the United States towards Japan at the end of the war was immediately to disarm and punish that country and, in the longer term, to create a peaceful, democratic Japan which would eventually occupy a normal position among the nations of the world. Rather quickly, the punitive aspects of this policy were mitigated, and greater emphasis was laid upon developing Japan into the kind of nation favoured by the United States and upon bringing Japan back to normal relations with other countries. There were a number of reasons for this change in emphasis: the rapid progress of the occupation authority's demilitarization and reorganization programme; the heavy expense incurred by the United States as long as Japan remained weak and occupied; the deterioration of Soviet-American relations; the new analysis of Communist aims; and the success of the Chinese Communists, which led the Administration "to conceive of Japan, rather than China, as the new major force in the Far East for peace, democracy, and friendliness toward the United States."⁵⁹ In connection with this last reason, the Communist threat, by 1950 the United States considered Japan a vital

⁵⁸ DOAFR, XII, 486.

⁵⁹ K. Kawai, op. cit., 27.

part of the American defence system in the Far East, and had firmly committed itself to maintaining its defensive positions there, even in the event of a peace settlement with Japan.⁶⁰

III

At the end of World War II the United States Government hardly concerned itself with the areas of Southeast Asia that were under the control of European powers. These colonies were considered to be an extension of the European political system, and although the American Government was aware of the existence of native nationalist groups, it gave them no help. There were two main reasons for this lack of attention; one was that the United States was simply too preoccupied with questions of greater importance - the occupation of Japan, the Chinese civil conflict, the reconstruction and independence of the Philippines. The other reason arose from the American Government's policy towards Europe; the colonial powers of Southeast Asia were European, and it was important not to reduce their strength or lose their co-operation, if American policy towards Europe was to succeed.⁶¹ Since interference in their colonial affairs would have both weakened and angered these European powers, the United States confined its official views on the Southeast Asian colonies "to friendly suggestions to the colonial powers that they meet the legitimate demands of the native populations, and to

⁶⁰ Address by Dean Acheson at Washington D.C. Jan 12, 1950, text in AFPBD, II, 2310-2322.

⁶¹ F.H. Michael and G.E. Taylor, The Far East in the Modern World (New York, 1960), 652-653.

statements of gratification when agreements were reached.⁶²

As the years passed, however, the more pressing problems faced by the United States in the Far East began to be resolved, while the efforts of the Communists to capture the leadership of the nationalist movements in the colonial territories gave these areas a higher priority in the considerations of the American policy-makers.⁶³ By the spring of 1950 the United States openly accepted a share of the responsibility for halting internal disintegration in the countries of Southeastern Asia; in the early part of that year Ambassador Philip Jessup toured the area and came back and convinced the Administration that more action was needed than had previously been taken, if American interests in the area were to be maintained.⁶⁴

The Administration's analysis of the situation in Southeast Asia included the belief that two basic ideas were held by most Asians; they refused to accept misery and poverty as the normal conditions of life, and they had a revulsion against foreign domination. The American leaders realized that for the Asians national independence had become the symbol of freedom from both poverty and foreign control. It was felt that the newness of the Southeast Asian governments and their economic

⁶²TUSIWA 1945-1947, 306.

⁶³Michael and Taylor, op. cit., 653.

⁶⁴TUSIWA 1950, 178.

difficulties made them susceptible to penetration by the Communists who took advantage of their ignorance, their belief in false promises, and their distress; and it was also felt that if one Southeast Asian country should fall the Communist influence would spread quickly. Militarily, the United States did not consider itself capable of guaranteeing all these nations against military attack.

What was United States' policy to be in these circumstances? Its aim was to prevent the Communists from subverting the new Asian governments; the means of achieving this aim reflected the Administration's analysis of the problem. The American Government proposed to encourage individual countries, despite their ideology, to promote their nationalism. It was aware that the idea and practice of independence must be developed, and realized that it must back up its encouragement with money, propaganda, and force when necessary. To this end the United States was prepared to make available to these nations the techniques of administration, agriculture, and industry that the United States had learned, if the nations wanted such help. If necessary it would provide loans or grants of money, and it would also supply military assistance if the situation seemed to require it.

The whole programme, however, was quite limited in scope. The American Government promised aid only if such aid would provide a missing component without which a country's efforts would be unsuccessful. The Secretary of State in a major speech said that the United States felt only an indirect responsibility for these new nations, and militarily the

new countries were told that their defence against military attack depended first upon themselves, and then upon the United Nations. One gets the impression that the United States Government was aware that there was a challenge in Southeast Asia that must be met, but that it was not willing or able to respond as forcefully as it had to the Communist threat in Europe. The reasons for this weaker reaction may have included the following; the large worldwide commitments already assumed by the United States made the Government cautious about taking on greater burdens; the Southeast Asian area was so varied and complex that it made a uniform policy, and thus a concerted effort, difficult; the United States had to step carefully because it wanted to co-ordinate the defence of the area with Britain and France, but definitely did not want the Asians to associate the United States with the British and French colonial traditions.⁶⁵

Thus one finds that in the period between 1945 and Jun, 1950 the American policy makers became increasingly aware of the growing Communist effort in Southeast Asia, realized that some effort must be made to counter the threat, and in 1950 adopted a rather limited programme of counteraction based on its analysis of the situation.

⁶⁵ The preceding three paragraphs are based upon the following main sources; Address by Dean Acheson Jan 12, 1950 at Washington D.C., text in AFPPD, II, 2310-2322.

Address by Dean Acheson to Commonwealth Club of California Mar 15, 1950, text in the New York Times Mar 16, 1950.

Article by C.L. Sulzberger in the New York Times Mar 14, 1950.

CHAPTER III

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARDS KOREA UP TO JUN 25, 1950

I

It seems certain that during and immediately after the second World War the Administration in Washington did not consider Korea to be a very important area of American foreign policy. One finds few references to the peninsula in the speeches of the American leaders at that time, except for the occasional statement, not elaborated upon, that the United States desired the establishment in Korea, as soon as possible, of a democratic government. In Feb, 1946 George M. McCune, who had until recently been in charge of Korean affairs in the Department of State, wrote that Korea was "still looked upon as a step child in high government circles." He pointed to the lack of preparation in the War Department and State Department for the occupation of Korea as evidence of the prevailing attitude, and stated that even after five months of occupation there was still no move towards meeting the Korean problem with the emphasis and care that it deserved.¹ This contention was borne out by Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley who made a tour of inspection of all Korea in May and Jun, 1946. In a letter to President Truman Jun 22, 1946 Mr. Pauley said that he was greatly concerned about the American position in Korea and believed that it was not receiving the attention and consideration it should.² For at least the first year after World War II then,

¹George M. McCune, "Occupation Politics in Korea", Far Eastern Survey, XV: 3(Feb 13, 1946), 37.

²Pauley to Truman, Jun 22, 1946, text in HST, 320-322.

"the United States", as one authority puts it, "apparently regarded Korea as a low priority nuisance in the total field of its foreign policy."³

This attitude was changed by the events of the next few years. It might be helpful at this point, therefore, to describe the most important of these events before examining how they influenced, and were influenced by, United States' foreign policy.

On Dec 1, 1943 the United States, Great Britain, and China issued the Cairo Declaration which among other things promised that "in due course Korea shall become free and independent."⁴ In Jul, 1945 at Potsdam the same Powers reaffirmed the Cairo Declaration, and in Aug, 1945 the Soviet Union, when it declared war on Japan, subscribed to the Potsdam Declaration.

The Korean problem began with the decision to divide Korea in order to facilitate the acceptance of the Japanese surrender. President Truman had been urged by Ambassadors Edwin W. Pauley and Averell Harriman, both in Moscow, to have United States troops occupy all Korea,⁵ but this was impossible due to the fact that when Japan surrendered, Russian forces were already on the ground in Korea. The decision to divide Korea,

³ Reitzel et al, op. cit., 75.

⁴ Text in DOAFR, VI, 232-233.

⁵ Pauley to Truman, Aug, 1945, quoted in HST, I, 433; Harriman to Truman, Aug, 1945, quoted in ibid., I, 434-435.

for purposes of accepting the surrender of the Japanese, was made by the War Department; the line of the Thirty-eighth Parallel seems to have been chosen because it was south of the area reportedly occupied by Soviet troops, and north of the populous city of Seoul. The directive on the Japanese surrender which was sent to General MacArthur included the division of authority in Korea at the Thirty-eighth Parallel, and this part of the directive was accepted by Marshall Stalin without comment.

It appears then that the division of Korea was forced on the United States by military factors which by Aug, 1945 were largely beyond its control; the dividing of the peninsula really had its roots in the decision to bring Russia into the war against Japan. Actually, the United States was lucky to control even southern Korea, for Soviet forces could probably have captured all Korea before American troops arrived from Okinawa. As it was, the Russian army penetrated as far south as Seoul, but withdrew behind the Thirty-eighth Parallel when United States forces arrived.⁶

In May 1945 President Truman had sent Harry Hopkins on a special mission to see Marshall Stalin, to learn the Russian leader's views and

⁶ This account of the decision to divide authority at the Thirty-eighth Parallel is taken from Arthur L. Grey, Jr., "The Thirty-eighth Parallel", Foreign Affairs, XXIX: 3 (Apr, 1951), 482-487. The author also suggests some possible reasons for Russia's unquestioning acceptance of the Thirty-eighth Parallel demarcation line.

to assure him that there would be no basic change in American foreign policy. On May 28, 1945 Mr. Hopkins had sent the President a cable which included this sentence; "Stalin agreed that there should be a trusteeship for Korea, under China, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States."⁷ In Dec, 1945 Secretary of State James F. Byrnes went to Moscow and presented there a statement of United States' policy towards Korea. He reviewed the Cairo Declaration and stressed that that statement committed the Powers to the establishment of an independent Korea. To achieve this, the United States Government suggested action to abolish the separate zones of military administration which had been established by the Russian and American Governments after the surrender of the Japanese. These zones would be replaced by a unified administration which would be a temporary preliminary to a four-Power trusteeship under the United Nations. The American Government believed that independence might then be granted Korea within five years.

Soviet Foreign Minister V.M. Molotov admitted to Secretary Byrnes that the Soviet Union had agreed to a four-Power trusteeship, but he said that it was a long-term rather than an immediate question. He then presented a Soviet counterproposal that a provisional government be set up in Korea to undertake all necessary measures for the development of industry, agriculture, transportation, and the national culture of the

⁷Quoted in HST, I, 265.

Korean people. A joint commission of representatives of the Soviet and United States commands in Korea was to assist in forming the provisional government, consulting with Korean democratic parties and social organizations and presenting its recommendations to the respective governments for their consideration. The commission would also work out trusteeship proposals for the joint consideration of Great Britain, China, the Soviet Union, and the United States. The Soviet plan also called for a meeting within two weeks of representatives of the American and Russian commands to consider urgent questions relating to both zones and to draw up measures for the establishment of permanent co-ordination between the two commands in the administrative and economic spheres. The United States accepted the Soviet proposal with two minor changes.⁸ The Moscow agreement, with its provision for a trusteeship in Korea, was accepted by the Korean Communists, but was violently opposed by the extremely nationalistic right-wing leaders in southern Korea who organized demonstrations against it.⁹

Representatives of the two commands in Korea met in Jan, 1946 but by February they were in such disagreement that they saw no point in meeting further. The two delegations looked at the problem from different positions: the Americans wanted a broad solution aimed at a large degree of economic unification, while the Russians wanted limited

⁸ Ibid., II, 319.

⁹ TUSIWA 1945-1947, 276.

discussion on specific problems such as the flow of electric power or the re-establishment of rail and auto traffic. Partial agreement was reached on only a few topics, and even most of these arrangements were not implemented.¹⁰

The proposed Joint Commission began its meetings Mar 20, 1946 in Seoul, but was also unable to come to any agreement. As soon as the discussion began, the Soviet delegation proposed that the Korean parties and organizations that had opposed the Moscow agreement should not be consulted and should be excluded from the provisional government. Since this would have removed from future power the Korean groups hitherto closest to the American authorities, the United States objected, arguing that such a course would deny freedom of speech and would disregard the obligation laid down in the Moscow agreement to consult with democratic parties. After six weeks of debating this point, with no compromise in sight, the Commission was adjourned sine die on May 8, 1946.¹¹

The Joint Commission's adjournment marked an important turning point in United States occupation policy in Korea. From that time on the United States Government was convinced, mistakenly or not, that the aim of the Soviet Government was to extend Communist control over the whole Korean peninsula. Accordingly, the American occupation authority

¹⁰ DOAFR, VIII, 835.

¹¹ TUSIWA 1945-1947, 277.

responded by undertaking a vigorous suppression of Communist agitation in Southern Korea. The Americans also progressively relinquished more and more responsibility to the Korean bureaucracy; on Sep 11, 1946 Koreans were placed in charge of governmental administration in southern Korea, and American personnel officially assumed an advisory capacity. Finally, the United States moved to establish a semi-legislative body which would mirror Korean opinion and share the burden of forming policies; this Korean Interim Legislative Assembly held its first meeting on Dec 12, 1946.¹²

An exchange of notes between the American Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister in the spring of 1947 led to the reconvening of the joint United States-Soviet Union Commission on May 21, 1947. At first the possibilities of success seemed bright; the opening speech of the chief Soviet delegate was much more conciliatory than the Russians' opening address of the previous year had been.¹³ And on Jun 10, 1947 it was reported that the Commission had agreed to consult the Korean political parties and social organizations as specified by the Moscow plan, and that the American concept of the broadest possible basis for consultation had been accepted.¹⁴ Then on Jul 5, 1947 the Chief American delegate, Major-General A.E. Brown, announced that the talks were deadlocked once again on the question of consultation, the Soviet delegation

¹² L.M. Goodrich, Korea, A Study of U.S. Policy in the United Nations (New York, 1956), 55.

¹³ New York Times, May 22, 1947.

¹⁴ Ibid., Jun 10, 1947.

having objected to the inclusion of certain parties and organizations.¹⁵ By Jul 15, the rift was serious, and although the Commission continued to meet, progress ceased; the session finally ended Oct 18, 1947.

The blame for the failure of the Joint Commission cannot be laid completely upon the Soviet Union. While the Russians' refusal to consult with the right-wing groups caused the impasse on the Commission, their stand was not so unreasonable when one considers that there were many indications that the Korean rightists intended to sabotage the efforts of the Joint Commission.¹⁶ Furthermore, on Jul 10, 1947 the American command lifted the ban on mass demonstrations against the Moscow agreement; rightist terrorist groups, apparently with the collusion of the Korean police, immediately began a violent anti-Communist campaign. Lyuh Woonhyung, the leading compromise candidate for leadership in a provisional government, was murdered on Jul 19, and assailants attacked Soviet delegates on Jul 26.¹⁷ While Major-General Brown answered Soviet protests with the charge that the Russians were interfering in the internal affairs of southern Korea,¹⁸ it is not difficult to see why, in the prevailing situation, the Soviet delegation might be especially suspicious and unco-operative. On the other hand, the United States

¹⁵ Ibid., Jul 6, 1947.

¹⁶ George M. McCune, Korea Today (Cambridge, 1950), 66.

¹⁷ Ibid., 67, 87.

¹⁸ Ibid., 67.

obviously could not agree to a plan which would have set up a provisional government dominated by Communists. It should also be pointed out that the American strengthening of the reactionary political groups was partly an attempt to counteract the activities of what the American command believed was a powerful Communist underground movement in southern Korea.¹⁹ Had the Soviet delegation attempted to fulfil at Seoul the spirit of the Moscow agreement, and had the American command exercised greater control over the rightist political elements, the Joint Commission might have had a good chance of success.

On Aug 26, 1947 the United States suggested a meeting of the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China, at Washington, to consider how the Moscow agreement might be speedily implemented. The United States also made the following proposals regarding Korea:

1. Early elections should be held in Korea to choose provisional legislatures for each of the Russian and American zones. The voting should be by secret, multi-party ballot on a basis of universal suffrage, and the elections should be held in accordance with the laws adopted by the existing Korean legislatures in each zone.
2. These provisional legislatures were to choose representatives in numbers which would reflect the proportions between the population of the two zones; the representatives thus selected would constitute a national provisional legislature which would meet at Seoul to establish a provisional government for a united Korea.

¹⁹ Ibid., 85.

3. The provisional government would meet with representatives of the four Powers adhering to the Moscow agreement on Korea to discuss what aid and assistance was necessary to give Korean independence a firm economic and political foundation, and on what terms this aid and assistance would be given.
4. The United Nations would be invited to have observers present at all the above stages.
5. The Korean provisional government and the Powers concerned would agree on a date by which all occupation troops in Korea would be withdrawn.
6. The provincial legislatures in each zone should be encouraged to draft provisional constitutions which could later be used as a basis for the adoption by the national provisional legislature of a constitution for all Korea.
7. Until such time as a united, independent Korea was established, public and private Korean agencies in each zone should be brought into contact with international agencies established by or under the United Nations.²⁰

The above proposals were rejected by the Soviet Union, in a note from Foreign Minister Molotov dated Sep 4, 1947, for the following reasons: the proposed Washington conference was not part of the plan laid down for Korea at the Moscow conference in Dec, 1945; the Joint Commission in Korea was "still far from exhausting all its possibilities for working out agreed recommendations, which is entirely possible"; the

²⁰ Acting Secretary Robert A. Lovett to V.M. Molotov Aug 26, 1947, text in The Department of State, Korea 1945 to 1948, (Washington, 1948), 43-44.

suggested establishment of separate provisional legislative assemblies in southern and northern Korea would consolidate the existing "abnormal" division of Korea, rather than achieve the desired single organ of authority.²¹

The sincerity of Mr. Molotov's reply is open to question. The first Russian objection listed above displays an excessive legalism; while the Moscow agreement did not call for a Washington conference, the American proposals to be considered at the conference were not at odds with the Moscow plan, and the letter accompanying the American proposals specifically stated that the Washington meeting was to be held "to consider how . . . [the Moscow] agreement may be speedily carried out."²² Mr. Molotov's second reason for rejecting the American plan reflects an exceptional optimism, to say the least, considering the failure of the Joint Commission to accomplish the first stage of its assignment in twenty-two weeks of negotiations. The last objection seems at first glance to be the most valid and plausible, but an inspection of the American proposal shows that the provincial assemblies were to be interim bodies whose chief function would be to form the "single organ of authority" mentioned by Mr. Molotov.

The Russian position is understandable; the type of government

²¹Molotov to Marshall Sep 4, 1947, text in ibid., 46-47.

²²Lovett to Molotov Aug 26, 1947, ibid., 43.

likely to be formed under the American plan would resemble the Western democratic governments rather than the Communist governments, and such a Korean government because of the similarities might be friendlier to the West than to the Communist world. It should be remembered also that it was more important to the Russians to have in Korea a friendly government because of the proximity of the two countries.

On the other hand, the American proposals accorded with the Moscow Agreement, and if the Russians had disliked the type of Korean government likely to result from the arrangements, they theoretically could have objected at that time. (In practice they might not have wanted, in 1945, to arouse American distrust.) Moreover, even if a Western-type democracy did emerge as a result of the American proposals, there was a good chance that the leftists would control it; at least they would not be dominated by the conservative parties. On the basis of the population of the two zones,²³ assuming that the northern delegates would represent one Communist-controlled party, the Communists would hold approximately 30% of the seats in the national provisional legislature without any support in southern Korea at all. And support could be expected from the southern zone; George McCume has written that the leftists had strong popular support in southern Korea because of their revolutionary programme of agrarian and industrial reform, although the rightists had a

²³North Zone: 8,229,000 South Zone: 19,369,000. The Statesman's Yearbook 1948 (London, 1948), 1060.

more powerful political position.²⁴ Furthermore, had the Soviet Government returned to direct negotiation with Washington it might have been able to obtain a freer hand for the southern Korean Communists, since the American Government was more removed from the situation in southern Korea than was its occupation authority, and was therefore less committed to suppression of the southern Korea Communists or to an alliance with the Korean conservatives.

It would seem then that the Soviet Government in 1947 preferred to control northern Korea completely rather than to help form a united Korea that might or might not be amenable to Russian desires. Clouding the whole issue, however, and making any analysis of the significance of the Soviet-American disagreement difficult, was the deep mutual suspicion held by each side towards the other at this time.²⁵

The American proposals and their rejection are important not only because of what they show about Soviet aims, but also because they mark the last attempt by the American Government to negotiate directly with the Soviet Government for the unification of Korea. On Sep 17, 1947 Secretary of State George C. Marshall announced the intention of his Government to present the problem of Korean independence to the current

²⁴ McCune, Korea Today, 90.

²⁵ For example, see Andrei Gromyko's address before the United Nations General Assembly Nov 13, 1947 (U.N. doc. A/P.V. 111, Nov 13, 1947) and President Truman's address to Congress Mar 12, 1947.

session of the United Nations General Assembly, citing as reason the inability of the United States and the Soviet Union to reach agreement on the question.²⁶ On Sep 23, 1947 the General Assembly placed the Korean problem on its agenda.

Acting to counter this surprise move by the United States, the Soviet Government proposed Oct 9, 1947²⁷ that American and Russian troops be simultaneously withdrawn from Korea at the beginning of 1948, leaving the Koreans to form their own government without outside interference.²⁸ In reply, the United States took the position that the Korean problem was now on the General Assembly's agenda, that the question of withdrawal of occupation troops was an integral part of the solution of the problem, and that, therefore, the United States hoped that the General Assembly would consider this and other aspects of the Korean problem and arrive at a solution.²⁹ In short, the matter was now in the hands of the United Nations, and the United States would no longer deal directly with Russia on the Korean question.

On Nov 14, 1947 the General Assembly adopted a resolution designed

²⁶ Address by George C. Marshall Sep 17, 1947, text in United States Department of State, Korea 1945 to 1948, 47-48.

²⁷ The proposal was originally made Sep 26, 1947 by the Soviet Delegation to the Joint United States-Soviet Union Commission in Seoul. The United States Delegation said that the proposal was outside the Commission's authority.

²⁸ Molotov to Marshall Oct 9, 1947, text in ibid., 48-49.

²⁹ Lovett to Molotov, delivered Oct 18, 1947, text in ibid., 50-51.

to solve the Korean problem. It stated that elected representatives of the Korean people should be invited to participate in consideration of the Korean question; in order to make sure that these representatives were duly elected, a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) was established³⁰ to observe elections in Korea. The elections were to be held not later than Mar 31, 1948 on the basis of adult suffrage and by secret ballot; the elected representatives would constitute a National Assembly which was to form a National Government. This Government would establish its own security forces, take over governmental functions from the two occupation authorities, and arrange with the occupying Powers for the withdrawal of all their troops as speedily as possible. UNTCOK was to consult and assist throughout all the foregoing stages.³¹

The Temporary Commission held its first meeting in Seoul Jan 12, 1948. The Soviet Union and its allies refused to have anything to do with the Commission; the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic did not appoint a representative to the Commission, and efforts by the Commission to meet the authorities of northern Korea were unsuccessful due to the refusal of the Soviet Government to answer any letters sent to it by the Commission. Accordingly, the Commission concluded that it would be unable

³⁰Members: Australia, Canada, China, El Salvador, France, India, Philippines, Syria, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

³¹Text of resolution in ibid., 66-67.

to exercise the functions laid upon it, and requested advice from the Interim Committee of the General Assembly.³² The latter body advised UNTCOK to implement the programme laid down by the General Assembly resolution of Nov 14, 1947 "in such parts of Korea as are accessible to the Commission",³³ and on Feb 29, 1948 the Temporary Commission announced that it would do so.³⁴

An election was held in the American zone of Korea on May 10, 1948, and the Temporary Commission passed a resolution Jun 25, 1948, stating its opinion that the elections were "a valid expression of the free will of the electorate in those parts of Korea which were accessible to the Commission and in which the inhabitants constituted approximately two-thirds of the people of all Korea."³⁵

Syngman Rhee's party won a majority of the seats, and Dr. Rhee organized a government. A constitution for the Democratic Republic of Korea was enacted Jul 12, 1948, and on Jul 24, Dr. Rhee was inaugurated as first President of the Republic. An exchange of notes Aug 9 - 11 1948 between President Rhee and Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, the United

³²Resolution of UNTCOK Feb 6, 1948, text in ibid., 69-70.

³³Resolution of the Interim Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations Feb 26, 1948, text in ibid., 70-71.

³⁴Text in ibid., 71.

³⁵Resolution of UNTCOK Jun 25, 1948, text in ibid., 72-73.

States Commander in Korea, started the transfer of governmental authority from the United States Army to the new Government of the Republic of Korea.³⁶ On Aug 12, the United States announced its view that the new Korean Government was "entitled to be regarded as the Government of Korea envisaged by the General Assembly resolution of November 14, 1947", and appointed John J. Muccio as special representative of the President, with the personal rank of Ambassador, to negotiate with the new Government with regard to the transfer of governmental functions and the withdrawal of occupation troops.³⁷ On Aug 15, General Hodge officially proclaimed that at midnight of that date the United States Army Military Government in Korea would end. Negotiations continued between the United States and the Republic of Korea, until on Sep 11, 1948 the transfer of authority was virtually completed with the signing of a property and financial settlement.³⁸

Meanwhile, in northern Korea, elections were held Aug 25, 1948 for a Supreme People's Assembly, which announced on Sep 9, the formation of a People's Republic of Korea, claiming authority over the whole peninsula. This government was later recognized by the Soviet Union and its allies. Thus there were now two rival regimes in Korea, each claiming to rule the entire nation.

³⁶Text of notes in ibid., 98-99.

³⁷Text of announcement in ibid., 100-101.

³⁸Ibid., 20.

On Dec 12, 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution which declared that a lawful government based on free elections had been established in "that part of Korea where the Temporary Commission was able to observe and consult", and that this was "the only such government in Korea." The resolution also recommended that the occupying Powers withdraw their troops from Korea as quickly as possible. A Commission on Korea was established³⁹ to replace UNTCOK and continue the latter body's functions; it was to go to Korea and try to facilitate the unification of Korea.⁴⁰

The new United Nations Commission on Korea (UNCOK) faced very great obstacles in its attempts to fulfil its assignment. The Soviet Union and the Government of northern Korea would not co-operate with it; it could not, therefore, take effective action to bring about unification. The commission was also hampered by the opposition of the Rhee regime; the Government of southern Korea did not want UNCOK to deal with the northern "illegal" government, or to work out a plan for conciliation. Instead, Dr. Rhee saw the Commission's function as being that of "helping to mobilize world opinion in favor of the Korean Government."⁴¹

The United States extended full diplomatic recognition to the

³⁹Members; Australia, China, El Salvador, France, India, Philippines, Syria.

⁴⁰Text of resolution in DOAFR, X, 178-179.

⁴¹Quoted in TUSIWA 1948-1949, 310.

Republic of Korea Jan 1, 1949. Discussions between the two governments were held in the spring of that year on the withdrawal of American troops, and the last occupation forces left Korea in Jun, 1949; an American Military Advisory Group of 500 men remained. The Commission on Korea verified the withdrawal of the American occupation forces, and notified the Soviet Union that it was ready to verify the withdrawal of Russian troops from northern Korea which had been completed, according to the Communists, by the end of 1948. No reply was received.

In Oct, 1949 the General Assembly decided that the Commission on Korea should continue to exist, with the additional function of observing and reporting "developments which might lead to or otherwise involve military conflict in Korea."⁴²

Up to the attack of Jun, 1950 the situation in Korea improved somewhat, from the American point of view. By early 1950 the security forces of the Republic of Korea had virtually eliminated guerrilla resistance, and strict enforcement of the Republic's stringent internal security act had considerably increased internal stability. Economic and social conditions were also improving slowly; with the aid of large fertilizer imports by the Economic Co-operation Administration,⁴³ South

⁴²U.N. General Assembly, Official Records of the Fourth Session Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly, I, Annex, 70-71.

⁴³On Jan 5, 1949 the United States Government announced that the Economic Co-operation Administration would take over the Relief and Rehabilitation Program which had been carried out by the Army in Korea.

Korea for the first time was close to achieving self-sufficiency in foodstuffs.

The picture was not all bright. The Rhee regime ignored the niceties of democracy and freedom which Western democracies consider to be a vital part of their way of life. There were reports of police brutality, of torture and death for enemies of the South Korean Government. In early 1950 American officials in South Korea were disturbed by the trend towards centralized authority; on the grounds that a state of national emergency existed, the system of democratic checks and balances had been repressed. National Assembly members were arrested, Dr. Rhee justifying his opposition to political parties by saying that Koreans were not ready for complete democracy, that party politics would lead only to sectional strife and perhaps foreign intervention.

Despite these despotic features of the Government, progress was maintained. The National Assembly courageously resisted the encroachments of the Executive; opposition newspapers still in existence continued to criticize the Government, although more circumspectly; the United States Government sharply and effectively warned the Rhee Government in Apr, 1950 of the possible consequences of mounting inflation and postponement of general elections beyond the legal limit. As a result, adequate measures were taken to curb inflation, and a general election was held May 30, 1950 which resulted in the return of a much more representative Assembly, due to the participation of moderate parties which had boycotted the previous election.

Thus just prior to the outbreak of conflict, the Republic of Korea appeared to be progressing favourably, considering the political and administrative inexperience of the Koreans, and the tense atmosphere created by the hostile presence north of the Thirty-eighth Parallel.⁴⁴

Having reviewed the Korean situation as it developed from 1945 to 1950, we can now examine how the United States Government viewed, and attempted to cope with, that situation.

Until the outbreak of civil war, Korea presented the American policy-makers with a dilemmatic problem of conflicting objectives and policies. In the first place, the United States was committed to taking some sort of action in Korea; it could not simply leave the Koreans to their own devices. This commitment arose originally from the Cairo Declaration Dec 1, 1943 which promised eventual freedom and independence for Korea, and was made more binding - because reiterated - by the Potsdam Declaration of Jul, 1945. The American obligation was increased, in southern Korea at least, when United States troops entered Korea to accept the Japanese surrender, since in carrying out this operation the Americans came face to face with the political-economic-social conditions of Korea, and, as the only capable authority present, were forced to

⁴⁴TUSIWA 1950, 185-187; Goodrich, op. cit., 91; Articles by Walter Sullivan in the New York Times Feb 1, 1950 and Feb 2, 1950.

accept the responsibility for dealing with these problems. The United States Government continued to feel bound by these commitments, as is revealed by the State Department's reference to the United States Jun, 1949 as "a principally interested power" in matters concerning Korea; the Department of State, at the same time, noted that the United States entertained "a particularly [italics added] deep and sympathetic concern for the welfare of the Republic of Korea."⁴⁵ In Jan, 1950 Secretary of State Dean Acheson, in a letter to President Truman, pointed out that the Republic of Korea owed "its existence in large measure to the United States, which freed the country from Japanese control"; he implied that the peoples of the non-Communist world felt that the United States still had a responsibility for the welfare of Korea, and the Secretary's whole letter is an acknowledgement of that American responsibility.⁴⁶ As late then as Jan, 1950, the Administration felt obliged to act in Korea, and the Secretary of State's letter - placing together the original American occupation of Korea and the responsibility still existing in 1950 - indicates that the American commitments made during World War II still influenced American policy as late as 1950.

Thus the United States in 1945 was committed to a course of action in Korea, and herein lies the first contradiction in the

⁴⁵ Department of State press release Jun 8, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 555-557.

⁴⁶ Acheson to Truman Jan 20, 1950, text in AFPPD, II, 2527-2528.

Administration's Korean policy, for at that time the American Government did not consider Korea to be at all important. This conclusion is substantiated, as I have shown, by the statements of United States officials in 1946. One perceives, therefore, the first paradox of United States' policy towards Korea; at the end of the second World War the American Government considered the peninsula to be of small account, and yet assumed an obligation there which was eventually to prove a heavy drain on American energies, manpower, and wealth.

Within a year of the end of the War, suspicion of Russian motives gave the United States Government a new reason for continuing its effort in Korea. But now a new variation of the original contradiction faced the American leaders, a conflict of political-strategic aims.

The theory of "containment", accepted as the basis of the Administration's anti-Communist policy, called for the prevention of any Communist advance. According to this principle then, it was important that Communist penetration in Korea be rebuffed. Throughout the period under study, the American leaders were influenced in their thinking about Korea by the containment theory. Thus in Sep, 1947 Lieutenant-General Albert C. Wedemeyer wrote in his report on Korea that the United States should develop a south Korean scout force under American commanders which would be strong enough to cope with the north Korean army and would, therefore, be able to prevent the Communists from expanding further in

Korea.⁴⁷ A State Department press release of Jun 8, 1949 spoke of the need to support the Republic of Korea "so long as the authority of the Republic of Korea continues to be challenged within its own territory by the alien tyranny which has been arbitrarily imposed upon the people of north Korea";⁴⁸ in other words, Communist ambitions in Korea must be checked. And in Mar, 1950 Secretary of State Acheson said that the United States hoped to strengthen the Republic of Korea to the point where it could successfully withstand the danger of Communist influence and control from north Korea.⁴⁹ These examples show that the theory of containment was one of the factors influencing United States' policy towards Korea at this time: south Korea must be kept independent in order to frustrate the Communists' expansionist aims.

The American leaders believed that there was another important reason for making some effort to keep the Republic of Korea independent of Communist control. In their opinion, the Korean peninsula was a testing ground where the two conflicting systems - Communism and Democratic Capitalism - were competing before the peoples of the world. With the leading exponents of the two ideologies controlling contiguous areas of the same nation, comparisons were inevitable, just as the progress of

⁴⁷ Report by Lieutenant-General Albert C. Wademyer, submitted to President Truman, Sep 9, 1947.

⁴⁸ Department of State press release Jun 8, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 555-557.

⁴⁹ Statement by Dean Acheson before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, Mar 7, 1950, text in DOAFR, XII, 508-509.

the two parts of Germany was later to be compared. The success or failure of its protege, the Republic of Korea, was therefore linked by the American Government to overall United States' foreign policy.

There is considerable evidence that this view was firmly held by the Administration and was an important factor in United States' policy towards Korea. In Jun, 1949 President Truman told the House of Representatives that:

The survival and progress of the Republic [of Korea] toward a self-supporting stable economy will have an immense and far-reaching influence on the people of Asia. Such progress by the young Republic will encourage the people of southern and southeastern Asia and the islands of the Pacific to resist and reject the Communist propaganda with which they are besieged. Moreover, the Korean Republic, by demonstrating the success and tenacity of democracy in resisting communism, will stand as a beacon to the people of northern Asia in resisting the control of the Communist forces which have overrun them.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Message from President Truman to the House of Representatives Jun 7, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 558-561.

Much the same argument was presented by Acting Secretary James E. Webb when he defended the Administration's programme of economic assistance to Korea before the House Foreign Affairs Committee Jun 8, 1949. "If we do not do all in our power", he told the Committee, "consistent with our world-wide obligations, to assist this outpost of freedom so that it will have an opportunity to survive, countless millions of the peoples of Asia will begin to doubt the practical superiority of democratic principles." Text in Stabul XX: 520 (Jun 19, 1949) 785-786. Testifying before the same Committee, Dean Acheson said that inaction by the United States in Korea would send through the Philippines, southeast Asia, and India, a "shiver of fear" that the United States was no longer trying to help the free peoples in the Far East. New York Times, Jul 2, 1949.

Mr. Acheson returned to the same theme in Jan, 1950 when he wrote President Truman a letter telling of the State Department's concern and dismay over the House of Representatives' rejection of the Korean Aid Bill of 1949. "The peoples of the Republic of Korea", he wrote,

The evidence indicates that the United States originally became involved in Korean affairs because of circumstances arising from the conduct of the second World War. While these war-time commitments continued to influence the American Government to continue its efforts in Korea, more important factors appeared in United States policy towards Korea. These were, first of all, the theory of containment which posited the idea that any Communist territorial expansion was bad, and that therefore the Republic of Korea must be supported so that it could prevent the Communists from pushing further down the Korean peninsula. Secondly, there was the view of the American policymakers that the success of the United States' general anti-Communist policy, especially in Asia, was closely linked to the success of the United States in developing a democratic, independent Republic of Korea. The Administration believed that if the Asians decided that democratic capitalism did

⁵⁰ the other peoples of Asia, and the members of the United Nations under whose observation a government of the Republic was freely elected, alike look to our conduct in Korea as a measure of the seriousness of our concern with the freedom and welfare of peoples maintaining their independence in the face of great obstacles . . . We are concerned not only about the consequences of this abrupt about-face in Korea . . . but we are also deeply concerned by the effect which would be created in other parts of the world where our encouragement is a major element in the struggle for freedom. Acheson to Truman, Jan. 20, 1953, text in AFPPD, II, 2527-2528.

not work in Asian territory, and that the United States was unwilling or unable to maintain the security of friendly nations, then the uncommitted Asian nations would succumb to Communist expansionist forces; and the Administration felt that the Asians' decision would be based on what happened in Korea, where comparison between the two competing systems seemed so obvious.

Against these political-strategic considerations which made the American effort in Korea seem an important part of United States foreign policy, the Truman Administration had to weigh a contradicting military factor, viz., the opinion of the Government's military advisors that Korea was strategically unimportant to the security of the United States, and that American forces in South Korea should be withdrawn. In Sep, 1947 the State Department requested the Joint Chiefs of Staff to give their views on the interest of the United States in military occupation of southern Korea "from the point of view of the military security of the United States."⁵¹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff replied that from the standpoint of military security, the United States had little strategic interest in keeping its troops in Korea. Their conclusion was based on the following reasoning. In the event of hostilities in the Far East, the American troops in Korea would be a military liability and would need substantial reinforcement prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Moreover, any offensive operations the United States might be likely to

⁵¹Memorandum of the State-War-Navy Co-ordinating Committee to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, text in the New York Times Nov 3, 1952.

carry out on the Asian continent would probably by-pass the Korean peninsula. If an enemy occupied all Korea, he might be able to interfere with United States communications in eastern China, Manchuria, the Yellow Sea and Sea of Japan, and so on, but to do so the enemy would have to have large air and naval forces in the area which would be subject to attack and neutralization by United States air forces. The present occupation was very expensive, and the existing shortage of manpower meant that the 45,000 men now in Korea could well be used elsewhere. Finally, the Joint Chiefs noted that certain unfavourable conditions, including violent disorder, could very possibly occur in Korea, that this would make the position of United States occupation forces untenable, and that withdrawal of troops under these conditions would lower United States military prestige, which might have adverse effects in areas more vital to United States security.⁵²

The exclusion of Korea from Mr. Acheson's vital "defensive perimeter" in Jan, 1950 indicates that there had been no change of opinion by that date on the strategic significance of Korea for United States security.

The fundamental dilemma faced by the American leaders dealing with the Korean question can now be seen. The United States Government

⁵²Reply of Secretary of Defense James Forrestal to Coordinating Committee's memorandum, text in the New York Times Nov 3, 1952.

believed that it was important for the success of American foreign policy that south Korea remain independent, that Communist ambitions should be checked there. At the same time, it was held that Korea was not important strategically, in the most limited military sense, and that American troops should therefore be withdrawn from Korea as soon as possible. But the main Communist threat in Korea was either military in nature, or most easily controlled by the presence of American forces in south Korea; up to 1950 the independence of south Korea was threatened by possible external attack from north Korea, and by internal economic, political, and social distress which could lead to disorders and Communist subversion; after internal stability was attained in some measure by early 1950, the danger of a north Korean attack still remained. These were the conflicting objectives and conditions which had to be reconciled by the American policymakers; south Korea had to be kept independent, in the face of a military threat, without using the normal military means. The Truman Administration attempted to solve the problem with a variety of policies, some of which were followed concurrently, while others arose from the failure or inadequacy of previous courses of action.

During 1946 and 1947, as we have seen, the United States attempted to gain its ends in Korea by means of direct negotiation with the Soviet Union. Had the meetings of the United States - Soviet Joint Commission resulted in real progress towards an independent, democratic, unified Korea, then, of course, the various American objectives would have been

obtained, but this was not to be. Actually, the negotiations in 1946 can hardly be seen as an attempt by the United States to resolve the conflicting objectives outlined above. The talks of 1946 were rather the result of World War II, that is, of the Cairo, Potsdam, and Moscow conferences. By 1947, however, the Americans were suspicious of Soviet motives in Korea and had accepted the idea of containment, so that the attempt to settle the Korean problem by negotiation in 1947 can be seen, I think, as a move by the Administration to achieve its aims in Korea while avoiding serious commitments in that area.

When direct dealing with the Soviet Union proved unsuccessful, the United States Government was forced to try a different tack and chose to present the problem of Korea for solution to the United Nations General Assembly. Such a course had several advantages. First, it would meet a criticism of American foreign policy, made when the Truman Doctrine was proclaimed, that the United States was by-passing the United Nations, and would give substance to the claim continually made by the Truman Administration that support of the United Nations was a basic feature of United States foreign policy. Taking the question to the General Assembly would also place on the United Nations and its Members some of the responsibilities hitherto borne by the United States alone; failures - and there were several - of American occupation policy in Korea had unfavourably impressed people, whose approval the United States desired, and provided material for Communist propaganda accusing the United States of having imperialist designs. These charges were often believed in

those nations which were just emerging from foreign rule; the United States wanted to present itself to such countries in the best possible light, and transferring responsibility for Korea to the United Nations seemed a good way to deflect the criticism and blame for failures which were blackening the American image in the eyes of the Asians.⁵³ Moreover, given the membership of the United Nations, and the absence of a veto in the General Assembly, a United Nations solution to the Korean problem would likely result in an independent, democratic Korea of the type desired by the United States, and would allow the United States to withdraw its forces from the peninsula in accordance with the American view of Korea's strategic insignificance. Thus the United States' basic objectives with regard to Korea would be achieved.

Although the General Assembly was unable to solve the Korean problem, and Korea remained split into two parts, the United States found the United Nations a useful device for pursuing American policies in Korea. Its utility was demonstrated early. The Soviet proposal on Oct 9, 1947 of simultaneous withdrawal of occupation forces was unwelcome to the United States because the north Koreans had their own army numbering 125,000 men, whereas the south Koreans had only a constabulary force of some 16,000 men.⁵⁴ It was feared that the Soviet Union hoped, by withdrawing its own forces, to induce the United States to withdraw

⁵³ Goodrich, op. cit., 26-29.

⁵⁴ Wedemeyer Report, op. cit.

American forces, leaving south Korea at the mercy of the north Korean army.⁵⁵ The fact that the Korean question was now before the General Assembly gave the United States a convenient reason for rejecting what must have seemed to many to be a sincere, sensible offer from the Soviet Union.

Later the United Nations, with the urging of the United States, established in Korea, albeit in the southern half only, the form of government that the United States wished to see there. An additional gain from this manoeuvre was the Soviet Union's refusal to co-operate with the Temporary Commission on Korea, which gave the impression to world opinion that the Soviet Government preferred to follow its own selfish interests in Korea rather than agree to the supposedly altruistic actions of the United Nations.

On Sep 21, 1949 Secretary of State Acheson told the General Assembly that a United Nations Commission should continue to be stationed in Korea. Among the principal responsibilities of the commission, he said, should be

to observe and report on any developments which might lead to military conflict in Korea, to use the influence of the United Nations to avert the potential threat of internal strife in that troubled land, and to explore further the possibilities of unification. The authority of

⁵⁵ See ibid.

the commission to observe and report on the actual facts may be sufficient to present open hostilities.⁵⁶

This proposal was incorporated in a resolution drawn up by the United States (along with Australia and China), which was accepted by the General Assembly Dec 12, 1948.

The establishment of UNCOK was obviously an attempt by the United States Government to achieve its various conflicting aims in Korea. By this time the United States was anxious to withdraw its troops, but the danger of an attack from north Korea remained. One can see from Mr. Acheson's words above that the Administration hoped that the presence of a United Nations commission in Korea would be a sufficient deterrent to Communist military action. UNCOK was to take over the defensive function of the United States Army in Korea, but in a radically different way. The United States thus hoped to have the independent Republic of Korea which it desired, without the use of American forces which it did not desire.

L.M. Goodrich has pointed out that by submitting the question of Korea to the United Nations in 1947, the United States Government abandoned the idea of a four-Power trusteeship and, in effect, reverted

⁵⁶Text in the New York Times Sep 22, 1949.

to the situation existing before the Moscow agreement.⁵⁷ Taking the Korean question to the General Assembly amounted then to a unilateral repudiation of the Moscow Agreement by the United States, and can be criticized as such. The United States Government felt justified in taking this action because it believed that the procedure agreed upon at Moscow would not work in view of what they considered to be the ulterior motives and deliberate obstruction of the Communists.

Diplomatic ethics and procedure aside, the decision to pass responsibility on to the United Nations was a rational one, which extricated the United States from embarrassments arising from the occupation of Korea, and offered a solution to the dilemma of keeping south Korea independent without American military commitments. In the event, the policy failed, but given the conditions which the American policy-makers imposed on themselves, going to the United Nations was a sensible course to take.

While pursuing its aims through the United Nations, the United States Government also tried to solve its Korean dilemma by building up the Republic of Korea economically and militarily to the point where the presence of United States forces would no longer be required. If economic

⁵⁷Goodrich, op. cit., 29.

and political stability could be established in South Korea, internal Communist subversion and disorder would no longer be a danger, and if the South Korean Army could be made a match for its North Korean counterpart, the external threat would be gone too.

Therefore, the United States kept its troops in Korea while it pumped economic and military aid into its weak ally. Between Sep, 1945 and Aug, 1948 the United States provided, under army auspices, over 250 million dollars of economic assistance. 95 million dollars were appropriated for aid to Korea in the fiscal year 1948-49. When the Republic of Korea was established, the United States Government agreed to help finance a long-range economic rehabilitation programme under the direction of the Economic Cooperation Administration.⁵⁸ A reluctant United States House of Representatives appropriated a total of 120 million dollars for economic aid to Korea for the fiscal year 1949-50.⁵⁹ During this period the Administration repeatedly stressed the necessity of helping the new Republic economically.⁶⁰

In the military sphere, the United States gave equipment and supplies to the Republic, and provided advice through a military training

⁵⁸ McCune, Korea Today, 251-252.

⁵⁹ Economic Assistance to Certain Areas in the Far East, Report of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. 81st Congress, 2nd Session, Feb 1, 1950, textual excerpt ibid., 310-311. Also Report of the United Nations Commission on Korea, Vol. I, U.N. Doc. A/936 1949, 21.

⁶⁰ See, for example, statements by Mr. Acheson Jul, 1949 (in the New York Times Jul 2, 1949) and Mar 7, 1950 (in DOAFR, XII, 508-509).

mission which was replaced in May 1949 by a Korean Military Advisory Group of 500 men.⁶¹

However, the United States did not wait until the Republic of Korea was firmly established economically and militarily before withdrawing its forces. It is true that the first attempt to evacuate the American troops in the fall of 1948 was stopped by the Department of State, on the grounds that the Republic of Korea was not ready to defend itself, and that the State Department wanted the withdrawal to be made following, and in accordance with, a General Assembly resolution.⁶² But when the troop withdrawal was made in the first half of 1949, the Republic could hardly be said to have achieved economic stability; this was not attained to any satisfactory degree until 1950. The South Korean army may have grown to sufficient strength by the spring of 1949 to maintain internal security - General MacArthur thought it had⁶³ - but it was certainly not up to the job of defending the Republic against external attack. The Koreans themselves admitted this; Syngman Rhee said in late Nov, 1948 that removal of United States forces before the South Korean army was prepared to meet a Communist invasion would "result in complete disaster for Korea,"⁶⁴ and in Apr, 1949, faced with the American decision to withdraw, Dr. Rhee said that his country's forces were rapidly

⁶¹Department of State press release Jun 8, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 555-557.

⁶²Goodrich, op. cit., 87.

⁶³HST, II, 329.

⁶⁴Quoted in Goodrich, op. cit., 68.

approaching the point at which the Republic's security could be assured, "provided the Republic of Korea is not called upon to face attack from a foreign force..."⁶⁵

The Republic of Korea never did become capable of stopping Communist expansion in the form of a direct military attack. Why the American Government failed to make the Republic of Korea powerful enough to defeat a state half its size can be explained in several ways. Simple incompetence is one reason; the United States overestimated the strength of the South Korean army. As late as May 1950 the Korean Military Advisory Group insisted that South Koreans could cope with any northern attack,⁶⁶ and the chief of the Advisory Group, General William Roberts, called the South Korean army "the best damn army outside the United States".⁶⁷ Another explanation for the weakness of the South Koreans is that it was feared that if the South Korean army were too strong, the Republic of Korea might attack its northern neighbour.⁶⁸ Ambassador Philip C. Jessup later implied that it was a question of the United States having widespread commitments, limited resources, and insufficient time.⁶⁹ The time factor raises another point; the United States presumably hoped

⁶⁵Quoted in L. Gordenker, The United Nations and the Peaceful Unification of Korea (The Hague, 1959), 191.

⁶⁶Ibid., 208.

⁶⁷Quoted in John C. Caldwell and Lesley Frost, The Korea Story (Chicago, 1952).

⁶⁸Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in the New York Times Jul 10, 1950.

⁶⁹Interview by Eric Sevareid, CBS, Aug 27, 1950, text in Stabul, XXIII: 583 (Sep 4, 1950), 375.

that the presence of the United Nations Commission of Korea would deter a Communist attack until the Republic of Korea could defend itself.

The Administration's decision to withdraw American forces while South Korea was still vulnerable is most interesting when compared with the Administration's decision to intervene militarily in Jun 1950 after the outbreak of hostilities. These contradictory actions will be discussed later.

One other method appears to have been used by the United States to keep the Republic of Korea independent without the use of American forces, although it is difficult to ascertain if the method was a conscious policy of the Administration. Verbal assurances were repeatedly given by the United States Government that the Republic was adequately protected by the United Nations. Thus an official statement of the United States' policy towards Korea Jun 8, 1949 said that the withdrawal of United States troops "in no way indicates a lessening of United States interest in the Republic of Korea, but constitutes rather another step toward the normalization of relations with that republic and a compliance on the part of the United States with the . . . December 12 resolution of the General Assembly." Despite American aid to Korea, the statement continued, the United States Government believed the "Korean problem" to be a matter of international concern. The security and stability of the Republic of Korea in the years to come could only be maintained by continued support of "the entire community of nations to

which that republic owes its existence."⁷⁰

In his speech of Jan 12, 1950, Dean Acheson spoke of military attacks against Asian countries, such as the Republic of Korea, which were outside the United States "defensive perimeter."

Should such an attack occur . . . the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations which so far has not proved a weak reed to lean on by any people who are determined to protect their independence against outside aggression.⁷¹

Whether statements such as these two were supposed to scare away the North Koreans or comfort the South Koreans is difficult to say. In the event, the former were not scared, and the latter were probably not comforted. Indeed, possibly the opposite results were obtained; the North Koreans were likely encouraged, and the South Koreans discouraged, by the United States' refusal to commit itself to the military defence of the Republic of Korea.

We have seen that from 1946 to Jun 1950 the United States wanted to keep South Korea independent as a check to Communist expansion, but

⁷⁰ Department of State press release Jun 8, 1949, text in DOAFR, XI, 555-557.

⁷¹ AFTBD, II, 2318.

wished at the same time to withdraw American troops from the peninsula, although the main Communist threat was clearly military in nature. Various policies were followed in the attempt to achieve these contradictory aims. When direct negotiations with the Soviet Union failed, the United States passed the problem on to the United Nations General Assembly. Leaving American forces in Korea for the time being, the Truman Administration worked to build up the Republic of Korea to the point where it could defend itself; however, the occupation forces were withdrawn before this objective was reached. After the withdrawal, Administration spokesmen seemed at times to try to make their speeches perform the function formerly performed by American troops.

CHAPTER IV

THE ATTACK

1. Who Attacked Whom?

North Americans assumed from the beginning of the Korean War that Korea was the aggressor; our political leaders and newspapers all said that this was so. The Communists, however, have always claimed that the original attack came from South Korea. On Jun 25, 1950 the Interior Ministry of the North Korean Communist regime issued a statement which said that "The puppet National Defense Army of South Korea launched a surprise attack along the entire front of the Thirty-eighth Parallel against North Korea to-day." The statement went on to say that North Korean troops were "resisting the enemy in a fierce defensive battle," and that the South Korean Government would be warned that "decisive countermeasures" would be taken if South Korea did not "halt its adventurous attacks towards areas north of the Thirty-eighth Parallel".¹

Not all non-Communists accepted without question the United States version of how the war began; a friend of mine who was studying in Europe in 1930 says that his Asian fellow-students used to ask "How do you know that North Korea was the attacker? How do you know that it wasn't South Korea?" I believe, therefore, that a study of United States action in the Korean crisis, which was always presented by the American

¹Text in the New York Times Jun 26, 1950.

leaders as a defensive action, should include a review of the available evidence on the identity of the aggressor. Material relevant to the question includes the size and equipment of the South Korean army when hostilities began, the reports of the United Nations Commission on Korea which had field observers along the Thirty-eighth Parallel, and documents captured from the North Korean Army.

Hanson W. Baldwin, the military writer of the New York Times, wrote in Jun, 1950 that the Republic of Korea armed forces had less than 100,000 men. The Republic owned no combat aircraft, and its navy was made up of a few obsolescent coastal vessels, formerly belonging to Japan or the United States. The army, he reported, had no weapons larger than those normally used by a regiment, lacking tanks, heavy weapons, and sufficient anti-tank guns; the supply of ammunition was limited.² By comparison, the North Korean army was estimated by George M. McCune in early 1950 to contain 150,000 men,³ and it possessed more heavy materiel than the South Korean forces.⁴ The relative sizes of the two armies suggest that North Korea was more likely to be an aggressor because its chances of a successful invasion would be greater. One can add to this the actual events of the first month after the attack.

² Ibid., Jun 27, 1950.

³ McCune, Korea Today, 266.

⁴ Gordenker, op. cit., 239.

Within a week of the invasion the South Korean army had been "virtually broken."⁵ By the end of July the South Koreans, and the American troops which had been thrown into the battle piece-meal as allies, had been pushed back to the line Chinju - Kochang - Hwanggan - Hamchang - Yongdok, having given up approximately three-quarters of the Republic of Korea.⁶ Such swift and decisive success suggests a carefully prepared surprise attack, rather than a counter-attack in response to a surprise invasion.

The following cable dated Jun 26, 1950 was sent to Secretary-General Trygve Lie by the United Nations Commission on Korea:

Commission met this morning 1000 hours and considered latest reports on hostilities and results direct observation along parallel by U.N.C.O.K. military observers over period ending forty-eight hours before hostilities began. Commission's present view on basis this evidence is first that judging from actual progress of operations Northern regime is carrying out well-planned, concerted and full-scale invasion of South Korea, second that South Korean forces were deployed on wholly defensive basis in all sectors of the parallel and third that they were taken completely by surprise as they had no reason to believe from intelligence sources that invasion was imminent. Commission is following events and will report further developments.⁷

⁵Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in the New York Times Jul 9, 1950.

⁶Maps in ibid., Jul 30, 1950 and Jul 31, 1950.

⁷Text in ibid., Jun 27, 1950.

UNCOK also reported Jun 26, 1950 that "The commission has no evidence to justify in any respect the northern allegations that the Republic of Korea invaded North Korea. All the evidence continues to point to a calculated coordinated attack prepared and launched with secrecy."⁸

On Jun 29, 1950 the Acting Chairman of UNCOK submitted to the President of the Security Council a report presented to UNCOK by its field observers who had been investigating along the Thirty-eighth Parallel since Jun 9, 1950. The report stated that the South Korean Army had been organized "entirely for defense" and would have been unable to carry out large-scale attacks against North Korea. The report also noted that the South Korean army lacked the heavy equipment, such as armour, air support, and heavy artillery, necessary for an attack. The field observers had seen no troops concentrations in South Korea, and no sign of a building up of supply depots in forward areas, such as would have been necessary had an attack been contemplated. There had been no undue activity or excitement at South Korean divisional and regimental headquarters, and the observers had been allowed to go anywhere, including operations rooms.⁹

These reports provide strong evidence that the attack was launched by the North Koreans. One might perhaps question the objectivity of the field observation team - it was composed of two Australian military men

⁸Text in ibid., Jun 29, 1950.

⁹Text in ibid., Jul 22, 1950.

and an English civilian¹⁰ - but unless their report was a complete, deliberate lie, the conclusion to be drawn from it is clear.

On May 2, 1951 Warren Austin transmitted to the United Nations Security Council two documents which he said were captured from the North Korean army.

The first document was a Reconnaissance Order #1 to the Chief of Staff of the 4th Division from the Chief of Staff, Chief of Army Intelligence Section, North Korean Army, dated Jun 18, 1950. It gave information on the South Korean defence positions and stated that when the division was "set up in an attack position, and prior to the beginning of the attack, through observation and reconnaissance the night before the attack" it would be necessary to determine where the South Korean Main Line of Resistance and minefields were located, what the South Korean plan for the day was, and so forth. "Toward the end of the second day, after assuming an attack position", the division was to work out a target map and a map of enemy engineering installations. Further tasks were to be carried out "as the attack begins." The order concluded with additional directions to be followed as the North Korean army penetrated the South Korean defences.¹¹

¹⁰Gordenker, op. cit., 206-207.

¹¹Text in Stabul, XXIV; 620(May 21, 1951) 828-820.

Mr. Austin's second document was entitled Operation Order No. 1, 1400 hrs. Jun 22, 1950, signed by Lee Kwan Mu Commander 4th Infantry Division and Ho Bong Hak Chief of Staff. It said in part:

1. The 1st Infantry Regiment of the enemy's 7th Infantry Division is standing on the defensive against our attack.
2. The most important objective of our Division in the frontal attack is to penetrate the enemy's defensive line . . . and . . . advance to Uijonbu-Seoul Area. The plan calls for completion of preparations by June 23, 1950.¹²

If these documents are genuine they prove, with their emphasis on attack and advance preparations, that the North Koreans were going to attack South Korea just after Jun 23, 1950. The only alternative to the further conclusion that the Korean War was begun by North Koreans is that the South Koreans launched an attack just before the Communists put their plan into effect, and this possibility is contradicted by the UNCOK report of Jun 29, 1950. As to the authenticity of the documents, all that can be said is that they have not yet been proved fraudulent.

The pieces of evidence cited above, varied in nature and from very different sources, show, when taken together, that the aggressor in Korea was the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea.

¹²Text in ibid., 829-830

2. Warning of the Attack

A basic principle of warfare is to catch the enemy by surprise. Caught unawares, the opponent may be unprepared, he may not have time to put his prepared defences into use, or he may be so shocked psychologically by the surprise that he is unable to act effectively. Every army realizes the advantages of the surprise attack, and the dangers of being surprised by the enemy. This is one reason why the Intelligence Corps of an army collects and interprets information, why a battalion sends out patrols, why a platoon has a listening post out in front of its position - to avoid being surprised by the enemy.

What is true at the tactical level of the armed forces is equally valid at the higher political-strategic international level. If one state can present another with a military or diplomatic fait accompli, the state that has been caught by surprise may be unable to adjust its policies or take action quickly enough to counter its opponent's sudden stroke. If, therefore, we know to what extent the United States Government was surprised by the north Korean attack, we should be better able to judge the subsequent American decisions and policies.

After the outbreak of war in Korea, the Truman Administration maintained that it was not caught by surprise, that it had known for some time that South Korea was a potential target for a Communist attack, but that so were a lot of other places, and that there was no way of knowing

where and when the Communists would strike along the boundary between the Communist and non-Communist parts of the world. The American intelligence services, the official version continued, had noted a steady building-up of North Korean forces, and had informed the Government that North Korea was capable of attacking at any time, but that there was no information available as to whether an attack was certain or on what date it might occur. Therefore, the Administration did its best to build up the Republic of Korea's defences in anticipation of a possible attack.¹³

The Administration fares quite well in this explanation; there is a picture here of necessary precautions taken in the face of unavoidable uncertainty. As far as it goes, the official story is probably true. Certainly no one could have ignored Korea as a potential area of war. The unnatural division of the Korean nation under two hostile regimes, the incessant border raids that took place, the warlike statements of the leaders of the two parts, all were warnings of possible strife, warnings available to the general public and the Government alike. But the evidence suggests that the American Government was not just uncertain whether there would be a north Korean attack in 1950, but believed that there would not be.

¹³ See HST, II, 331 and Ambassador Philip Jessup in radio interview by Eric Sevareid Aug 27, 1950, CBS, text in Stabul, XXIII: 583 (Sep 4, 1950), 275.

Early in May 1950, South Korean Defence Minister Sihm Sun Mo told a press conference that a greatly enlarged North Korean army was moving towards the Thirty-eighth Parallel, and that an attack was imminent. This view was reiterated before UNCOK by the Acting Deputy Chief of Staff and the Chief of Intelligence of the South Korean army. However, at that time, two officers on the staff of Brigadier-General W.L. Roberts, Chief of the United States Military Advisory Group, emphatically disagreed that an invasion was likely to occur soon.¹⁴ Assuming that these officers expressed the view of their commander (and they had been consulted by UNCOK as experts on the question), it would appear that the United States Government was receiving from the unit of its army most concerned with the Korean situation, reports that the North Koreans would not attack.

Also relevant are the remarks of United States Army officers immediately after the attack, a time when their impressions would be most spontaneous and least veiled. Officers in Washington were reported as saying that the attackers had certainly had the tactical advantage of surprise.¹⁵ And Major-General Frank A. Keating, due to be the next commander of the United States' military mission in Korea, referred to the invasion as a "very small Pearl Harbor" and said "Just where our

¹⁴Gordenker, op. cit., 208.

¹⁵Article by Austin Stevens in the New York Times Jun 27, 1950.

military intelligence was prior to the start of hostilities I'm sure I don't know."¹⁶

James Reston reported that until the Korean attack, the Truman Administration had assumed that the Communists would not use force until they had reached the peak of their military strength, sometime between 1952 and 1954.¹⁷ If this is true, and Mr. Reston is famous for his success in gaining access to the offices and views of American leaders, it is another indication that the Government did not expect a North Korean attack in 1950.

The foregoing evidence - the opinion of the United States Military Advisory Group, the remarks of high officers in Washington just after the attack, the Administration's basic assumption that the Communists would not use force until at least 1952 - shows that the United States Government did not expect the North Koreans to attack in 1950, and despite the knowledge that Korea was one of several potential areas of conflict, was caught by surprise in any normal sense of the phrase when the Communist invasion began.

¹⁶Quoted in the New York Times Jun 28, 1950.

¹⁷New York Times Jun 27, 1950.

CHAPTER V

THE UNITED STATES INTERVENES

1. The Decision to Intervene

At 9:26 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time on Saturday Jun 24, 1950 the Department of State received a telegram from its Ambassador in Korea, John J. Muccio, reporting that North Korean forces had begun to invade South Korea and that the attack appeared to be an all-out offensive against the Republic of Korea.¹ This was the first official word of the Korean attack.

President Truman was at home that day, spending the weekend with his family in Independence, Missouri. He was telephoned there, a little after 10:00 P.M., by Dean Acheson who told him of the Korean attack. At that time or in a later telephone conversation at 2:00 A.M. the next morning - there are conflicting accounts of the events of the night² - it was decided to ask the United Nations Security Council to hold a meeting immediately.

At 3:00 A.M. Jun 25, 1950 Secretary-General Trygve Lie was

¹Text of telegram in Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, (July, 1950) 11.

²The conflicting accounts are in HST, I, 332 and Albert L. Warner, "How the Korean Decision Was Made" Harper's Magazine CCII:1213 (June, 1951) 99-106. Mr. Warner writes that in the first telephone conversation the calling of an immediate session of the Security Council was discussed, but not decided on, and that the decision was made in a second conversation at 2:00 A.M. Jun 25, 1950.

telephoned by Ernest A. Gross, Deputy United States Representative on the Security Council, who read a message requesting an immediate meeting of the Security Council; Mr. Lie had earlier been told to expect such a request.³

Later that day the Security Council, with the Russian delegate absent and Yugoslavia abstaining, passed a resolution which called for the immediate cessation of hostilities and instructed the authorities of North Korea to withdraw their forces to the Thirty-eighth Parallel. The resolution also requested UNCOK to make recommendations on the situation, to observe the withdrawal of the North Korean troops, and to keep the Security Council informed on the execution of the resolution. Finally, all United Nations members were "to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean authorities."⁴

On Sunday evening, President Truman, who had flown to Washington from Independence, held a dinner conference at Blair House; those present included Dean Acheson, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, the three service Secretaries, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁵ After a discussion

³ Warner, op. cit., 100.

⁴ Text in the New York Times, Jun 26, 1950.

⁵ HST, II, 333.

in which everyone present was allowed to express his opinion, it was decided to move the United States Seventh Fleet at once from the Philippines towards Japan, to return American airplanes to certain islands near Formosa, to use United States ships and airplanes to evacuate American civilians from South Korea, and to give ammunition and supplies to the South Koreans.⁶

The next morning, Monday Jun 26, 1950, Mr. Truman issued his first official statement on the Korean crisis. The President said that he was pleased with the firmness and speed of the Security Council in issuing its resolution; he pledged American support of the resolution and announced that military aid to Korea was being expedited. Noting that "those responsible for this act of aggression must realize how seriously the Government of the United States views such threats to the peace of the world," Mr. Truman declared that such attempts to break the peace would not be tolerated by the nations which supported the United Nations Charter.⁷

On Monday evening the President held another meeting, attended by almost all of the previous night's conferees.⁸ Secretary Acheson

⁶ Ibid., 334-335 and Warner, op. cit., 102.

⁷ Text in the New York Times, Jun 27, 1950.

⁸ HST, I, 337.

recommended that the South Koreans should be supported by United States air and naval forces operating under United Nations sanction. He also advocated strengthening American military aid to the Philippines and French Indo-China, and using the Seventh Fleet to neutralize Formosa both by defending that island from Communist attack and by preventing Chiang Kai-shek from invading the mainland. Those present were unanimous on the advisability of air and naval support; ground troops were mentioned, but there was no serious discussion of their use.⁹

At noon of the following day, Tuesday Jun 27, 1950, after giving a preview to the congressional leaders of both parties, Mr. Truman read to the press a statement¹⁰ which said in part:

The Security Council of the United Nations called upon the invading troops to cease hostilities and to withdraw to the 38th Parallel. This they have not done, but on the contrary have pressed the attack. The Security Council called upon all members of the United Nations to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution. In these circumstances I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support.

The statement also announced that the Seventh Fleet was to prevent any attack on Formosa; that the Nationalist Government should cease all attacks against the mainland, this also to be enforced by the fleet; that

⁹ Warner, op. cit., 103.

¹⁰ Ibid., 103.

United States forces in the Philippines would be strengthened; and that military assistance to the Philippines and French Indo-China would be accelerated.¹¹

The same day, at 10:45 P.M.,¹² the Security Council passed a resolution recommending

that the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area.¹³

On Wednesday the military news from Korea was very bad,¹⁴ and by Thursday Jun 29, 1950 it was obvious that the Republic of Korea was finished if no new factor was introduced into the military situation. The National Security Council met at 5:00 P.M.; there was an intensive discussion of the use of ground troops, but no decision was made on the matter. Instead, the meeting adjourned to await a report from General MacArthur who was making a personal inspection in Korea.¹⁵

In the early hours of Friday morning President Truman was telephoned by Army Secretary Frank Pace who told him that General MacArthur

¹¹Text in DOAFR, XII, 444-445.

¹²Warner, op. cit., 104.

¹³Text in DOAFR, XII, 445.

¹⁴Warner, op. cit., 104-105.

¹⁵Ibid., 105.

was convinced that only the use of American ground forces could stop the North Koreans. The General had requested permission to put one regimental combat team in the field immediately, and to build up to two divisions as quickly as possible. Mr. Truman immediately approved the use of one regimental combat team.¹⁶

At a meeting later that morning, Mr. Truman, Secretaries Acheson and Johnson, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and others, reviewed the situation. The President made the decision to give General MacArthur full authority to use the ground forces under his command.¹⁷ The congressional leaders of both parties were then called in and briefed, after which a statement was released to the press announcing that General MacArthur had been "authorized to use certain supporting ground units."¹⁸

The series of decision made in the week after the North Korean attack, ending with the commitment of American ground forces in Korea, requires further examination. Why did the United States government decide to intervene? What existing conditions did the policy-makers consider in working out their course of action? What repercussions and implications did they anticipate or fail to foresee? What other factors influenced the decision? How well did intervention fit in with previous

¹⁶HST, II, 342-343.

¹⁷Ibid., 343.

¹⁸Text of press release in Stabul XXIII:575(Jul 10, 1950) 48-49.

policies of the Truman Administration? These are some of the questions that remain to be answered after a factual account has been given of the steps by which American troops became involved in the Korean War.

A major factor in the decision to intervene was the American policy-makers' analysis of the Soviet Union's aim in instigating the North Korean attack (for it was assumed that the direction came from Moscow). In an interesting article in World Politics, Alexander L. George has described the different interpretations that the American leaders placed upon the North Korean attack.¹⁹ There was, he suggests, a Diversionary Move Interpretation which held that the invasion of South Korea was possibly only a feint which would be followed by a major Soviet attack in some other area. This view precluded the use of important American military forces in Korea since they might be needed elsewhere.²⁰ A number of United States officials who were used to dealing with the Russians reportedly subscribed to the Soft-spot Probing Interpretation which conceded that the Russians, by resorting to armed aggression, were consciously adopting a much more risky and defiant policy, but put forth the opinion that the Communists were simply trying for a quick and easy victory in Korea, an apparent soft-spot, rather than

¹⁹Alexander L. George, "American Policy-making and the North Korean Aggression" World Politics, VII:2 (Jan, 1955) 209-232. The author based his article on newspaper reports and the testimony given at the Senate's MacArthur hearings in 1951.

²⁰Ibid., 212.

attempting to get the United States off balance in order to start a major war.²¹ A third approach was the Testing Interpretation which saw the attack as a move intended to test the will of anti-Communist countries to resist open aggression by Communist forces. The implication was that failure to resist in Korea would lead to further aggression; a result that was not implied in the Soft-spot Interpretation. Those who adopted the Testing Interpretation tended to compare the Korean attack to Hitler's early unopposed aggressions; the Alsops quoted one of the men who took part in the crucial policy decision at Blair House as saying "This attack is an event like Hitler's re-occupation of the Rhineland."²² A variant to some versions of the Soft-spot and Testing Interpretations was the Demonstration Interpretation which said that the Communists hoped to make of Korea a demonstration of their own strength and Allied weakness which would have world-wide repercussions.²³

A more subtle analysis of Soviet objectives was contained in the Soviet Far East Strategy Interpretation. According to Mr. George, some United States policy-makers related the motivation of the North Korean attack to the conflict of Soviet and American policies and interests in the Far East. Such interpretations imputed certain defensive calculations to the North Korean aggression, in marked contrast to the preceding

²¹Ibid., 212-213.

²²Ibid., 213.

²³Ibid., 214.

"expansionist" theories which saw the North Korean action as a sign of Soviet initiative in Far Eastern affairs. Thus John Foster Dulles said that the North Korean attack was motivated in part by a desire to block American efforts to make Japan a full member of the free world. More broadly, says Mr. George, this interpretation held that the Communists hoped to dislocate the United States' plans for positive and constructive policies to check Communism in Asia and the Pacific; therefore, the attack was ordered because the Soviet leaders could not tolerate the hopeful attractive Asian experiment in democracy, which they had been unable to destroy by indirect aggression.²⁴

The Diversionary Move Interpretation would have led one to the conclusion that the United States should not intervene in the Korean conflict, certainly not to any great extent, since the available troops would soon be needed to check the expected major offensive elsewhere. The second view, the Soft-spot Probing Interpretation, did not rule out intervention, but it did not demand it either, since it did not believe that failure to resist Communist aggression in Korea would necessarily lead to further Communist military attacks in other parts of the world. The Testing and Demonstration interpretations obviously called for the use of military counterforce by the United States, since they held that successful aggression in Korea would have very undesirable results; the

²⁴Ibid., 214-215.

Communists would be encouraged to carry on with a series of military actions which must eventually be met by the United States with force, perhaps at a more dangerous time, and the vulnerable, non-Communist nations' confidence in the United States would be destroyed, thus weakening these nations' will to resist Communist pressure. The last interpretation, which saw the attack as a defensive move to disrupt the American Far Eastern programme, presumably could have led one to either intervention or non-intervention. Communist success in Korea might upset policies in other parts of Asia, weakening prestige and endangering Japanese security; but involvement in a difficult war in Korea might so tie up American energies and resources that other parts of the Far East would be ignored.

We can now turn to the question of how the actual decisions of the week of Jun 25, 1950 were affected by these different ways of analysing the Communists' motives. By law, the final executive decisions in the Korean crisis had to be made by the President. In practice, of course, a President of weak character might have his decisions made for him by someone else, and then issued in his name. To find the views of the decision-maker in such a case, one would have to know who was the real power in the Administration, l'Eminence Grise. In the case under study, the directing force in the meetings on the Korean invasion apparently came from President Truman himself. Arthur Krock, distinguished political journalist of the New York Times, spoke to some of the officials who had attended the Sunday and Monday meetings after the Korean attack. He

reported that the decision to use force came largely from Mr. Truman who was determined to adopt a forceful policy, and he quoted one of the officials, who said of Mr. Truman's role in the meetings, "He pulled all the conferees together by his show of leadership, and the indisputable facts persuaded everyone that his decisions were both inevitable and right."²⁵ Dean Acheson and Louis Johnson also spoke of the President's leadership and direction during this period.²⁶ Allowing for the natural desire to strengthen the prestige of a national leader at a time of national crisis, we can infer that President Truman, by virtue of his office and his character, was to a large extent responsible for the decision to intervene in Korea. Therefore, to see how this decision was affected by the Americans' analysis of Soviet aims, we must find what Mr. Truman believed were the Communists' motives in attacking the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Truman writes in his Memoirs that as he flew from Independence to Washington to deal with the Korean emergency, he had time to think.

I recalled some earlier instances: Manchuria, Ethiopia, 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

²⁵ New York Times, Jun 28, 1950.

²⁶ Ibid., Jun 29, 1950.

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 neighbours. 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.²⁷

We can see that the thoughts that Mr. Truman was turning over in his mind were the arguments of an exponent of the Testing interpretation of Soviet aims: the comparison with Hitler and his allies, the belief that failure to resist would lead to further aggression, the conviction that the series of aggressions would ultimately have to be stopped by force, and that the results would be much less cataclysmic if action were taken now, rather than later. There is evidence also of the Demonstration interpretation in Mr. Truman's reference to the small nations' loss of courage on seeing that the Western allies would or could not oppose the Communists' invasion.

There is other evidence of President Truman's belief that the Communists were testing the West. At the Sunday night meeting at Blair House, General Omar Bradley said that the Russians were testing the United States and that the line should be drawn now; Mr. Truman agreed

²⁷HST, II, 333.

emphatically that the line would have to be drawn.²⁸

The diplomatic representatives of the United States were instructed to inform the governments to which they were accredited that the United States Government believed that firmness in Korea was the only way to deter further aggression, and that American failure to act would adversely affect the confidence of peoples in countries next to the Soviet Union.²⁹ Here once again we perceive the Testing and Demonstration interpretations respectively.

President Truman made two remarks during the crucial week of Jun 25, 1950 which indicate a certain adherence on his part to the Soft-spot Probing theory of Soviet aims. At the Sunday evening meeting he said that in his opinion the Russians hoped to get Korea by default, gambling that the United States would be too afraid of starting a third world war to resist;³⁰ on Monday he told his advisers that the Communists appeared to be probing for weaknesses in the American armour.³¹ However, while believing that the Communists were probing a weak-spot, Mr. Truman does not seem to have agreed with the other main part of the theory, viz., that success would not necessarily tempt the Soviet Union into further

²⁸Ibid., II, 335.

²⁹Ibid., II, 339.

³⁰Ibid., II, 335.

³¹Ibid., II, 337.

adventures.

Mr. Truman mentions in his memoirs that he wanted to be sure that the United States did not become so deeply involved in Korea that it could not take care of such other situations as might develop;³² at his conference on Friday Jun 30, 1950 he asked his advisers to consider carefully other places where the Communists might cause trouble.³³ Except for these two instances, there is no evidence that the President believed that the Korean attack was a feint in advance of a major Soviet offensive. He had no reason to attach weight to the Diversion theory since his expert advisers, General Bradley and Dean Acheson, both told him that they believed that Russia did not want to go to war.³⁴ The idea that the Communist attack was a defensive move does not appear to have been seriously considered by the President.

Faced with the fact of Communist aggression in Korea, the United States Government had to decide either to intervene or not to intervene.³⁵ Various factors had to be weighed in arriving at the decision,

³² Ibid., II, 341.

³³ Ibid., II, 343.

³⁴ Ibid., II, 335 and Warner, op. cit., 102.

³⁵ Obviously there were many other courses of action that the Government had to decide to take or not to take, e.g., to condemn Russia in the United Nations or not to condemn her; to put American forces on special alert or not; and many more. But the main decision related to intervention since only American military force could alter the outcome of the invasion.

one of the most important being the motives behind the attack. The fact that the American Government decided to take military action can be explained to a large extent by the fact that the person who played the greatest part in making the decision, President Truman, subscribed to the Testing and Demonstration interpretations of Soviet aims, the only two theories of the five described that demanded military resistance by the United States.

It should also be mentioned that Dean Acheson, the man who probably occupied the second position in the hierarchy of American policymakers, interpreted the communist action in the same way. At the Sunday conference Mr. Acheson said that if North Korea was not stopped, other Moscow puppets would move, thinking that they would meet no resistance [the Testing Interpretation]; the Secretary of State also said that failure to stop the aggression would have a disastrous world-wide effect.³⁶ [the Demonstration Interpretation].

The American policy-makers, before arriving at their decision on intervention, had to consider other factors besides the Communists' motivation, although that seems to have been the most important one. Also to be studied were the existing unalterable conditions in the situation, the limitations that had to be taken as given. In this regard, the

³⁶ Warner, op. cit., 102.

military strength of the United States in the Far East was given the most consideration at the meetings held by the President during the first week after the attack, and the facts were not favourable to military intervention. The service leaders outlined the skimpy American military dispositions in the Far East, based on four undersized divisions in Japan.³⁷ The air forces in the area were small,³⁸ but the United States had overwhelming naval superiority.³⁹ There were no war plans ready for a campaign in Korea and no detailed estimates of the forces which might be needed, because Korea had actually not been in the area which the United States had indicated it would defend.⁴⁰ The American policy-makers also had to face the fact that only two of the four divisions in Japan could be sent to Korea if Japanese security were to be maintained.⁴¹ Moreover, the prospects of sending reinforcements from other areas, if such proved necessary, were severely limited; the United States had a comparatively small number of active reserves,⁴² consequently if more troops were needed they would have to be obtained by reducing the number of soldiers based in the United States - thereby taking a rather dangerous calculated risk in other parts of the world - or by shutting service

³⁷ Ibid., 102.

³⁸ Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in the New York Times, Jul 4, 1950.

³⁹ Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in ibid., Jul 9, 1950.

⁴⁰ Warner, op. cit., 102 and 105.

⁴¹ Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in the New York Times, Jul 3, 1950.

⁴² Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in ibid., Jul 9, 1950.

schools and stopping normal peacetime activities, or possibly by carrying out a partial mobilization.⁴³

Despite the unfavourable military conditions, President Truman decided to intervene. One explanation for this is that the Administration's analysis of the Communists' motives, and the resulting conclusion that a line must be drawn immediately, overrode all other considerations; President Truman told the conferees at the beginning of the Blair House meeting on Jun 25, that it was a time for courage, even boldness and calculated risk.⁴⁴ The President and his Secretary of State may also have been influenced by the opinions expressed at the Sunday night meeting by General Hoyt Vandenberg and Admiral Forrest Sherman. On the basis of the sketchy information available at that time, these Chiefs of Staff thought that air and naval support to the Republic of Korea might be sufficient to check the North Korean invasion.⁴⁵ The next day Mr. Acheson brought in his recommendation, which was approved, that such aid be given to the South Koreans. Once this original military commitment had been made and found inadequate for the task, the Administration may have felt obliged to take the next step of using ground forces, despite the conditions militating against such an action. There would exist the

⁴³ Article by Hanson W. Baldwin in ibid., Jul 2, 1950.

⁴⁴ Article by Arthur Krock in ibid., Jun 28, 1950.

⁴⁵ HST, II, 335.

psychological pressure to continue and complete a project undertaken, and the fear of damaging American prestige by suddenly admitting defeat after an initial resistance.

What other considerations were taken into account by the American leaders before they decided to intervene? Perhaps the most important, in the light of later events, was the possibility of intervention by the Soviet Union or Communist China. There was some discussion on this point, with the emphasis on Soviet action, for little thought was given to what the Chinese might do. There was a general consensus at the Blair House meetings that Russia would not use its own troops in Korea,⁴⁶ though to cover such an eventuality the directive sent to General MacArthur included some instructions on the action he should take in the event of Soviet intervention.⁴⁷ It is interesting to note that at this time, Monday Jun 26, 1950, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson said that if Russia or China intervened the United States would have to withdraw since Korea was not a place to fight a major war.⁴⁸

A factor which Mr. Truman says influenced his thinking was the effect on the United Nations of United States action in the crisis.

⁴⁶Warner, op. cit., 103.

⁴⁷HST, II, 341.

⁴⁸Warner, op. cit., 103.

According to Mr. Truman, he and his advisers believed that the prestige of the United Nations and the principle of collective security would be seriously damaged if the aggression in Korea was not successfully resisted.⁴⁹

The Administration was fortunate that its initial steps towards resisting the Communists were supported by both political parties, although the unanimity was not surprising in view of the fact that many Republicans had been calling for a stronger anti-Communist policy in the Far East. The President realized that such united support probably would not last,⁵⁰ but this does not seem to have had much effect on his decisions. Hoping no doubt to stave off the inevitable criticism, he did take the precaution of specifically directing that the Congressional leaders invited to attend briefing sessions should be chosen on a strictly bi-partisan basis.⁵¹

The United States almost certainly would have intervened in Korea whether or not it had known that its allies would subsequently collaborate in the Korea operation. At the first Blair House conference after the attack, President Truman told the conferees that risks must be borne

⁴⁹HST, II, 333-334.

⁵⁰Ibid., 340.

⁵¹Ibid., 341.

which other members of the United Nations could share or not share as they wished.⁵² Nonetheless, the President realized the advantages of making the intervention a multi-national one. Whether the United States Government instructed its ambassadors to request offers of aid is not know, but by Thursday Jun 29, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Nationalist China had all offered assistance.⁵³ Thus these promises of help were given before the crucial decision was made to use ground troops in Korea. Without the prospect of allied participation the Administration would probably have still made the decision which firmly committed the United States to deep involvement in the Korean conflict. The offers of assistance, however, may have been one more influence which helped to bring about the ultimate decision, since the Administration now knew that it could more convincingly present the intervention as a United Nations, rather than a United States, operation.

Separate from the decision to intervene in Korea, but related to it, was the interposition of the Seventh Fleet between China and Formosa. This action was criticized by many observers, some considering it to be unduly provocative towards the Chinese Communists, while others saw it as simply a political move by President Truman to allay the heavy domestic

⁵²Article by Arthur Krock in the New York Times, Jun 28, 1950.

⁵³HST, II, 340 and 342.

criticism of the Administration's China policy. The real motivation behind the neutralization of Formosa was perhaps less perverse than the critics have suggested.

In Dec, 1949 the military leaders had advocated continuing aid to the Chinese Nationalists, but had not favoured defending Formosa with American troops; at that time, however, the commitment of American forces in Korea was not envisaged. Professor L.M. Goodrich of Columbia University suggests that:

It is quite possible that the neutralization of Formosa was a condition set by the Joint Chiefs for their consent to the State Department's proposal to come to the assistance of the Republic of Korea with armed force. On the assumption that the North Korean attack was a part of the carefully planned strategy of the Communist leaders, to which the Peking government had subscribed, the 'neutralization' of Formosa might have seemed to be a necessary countermove.⁵⁴

There is evidence to support this hypothesis. Immediately after the Korean invasion the Joint Chiefs of Staff emphasized that Formosa should not fall into Communist hands.⁵⁵ The Joint Chiefs also had reason to believe that a Chinese Communist attack on Formosa was imminent; by June all preparations for an invasion were completed, and Peking's exhortations to the troops stationed opposite the island resembled the

⁵⁴ Goodrich, op. cit., 111.

⁵⁵ Warner, op. cit., 102.

broadcasts which had been made as D-Day approached prior to the attack on Hainan.⁵⁶ The Joint Chiefs had always thought that Formosa was more important to American security in the Far East than President Truman and Dean Acheson believed it was. Now, with a Communist invasion of the island expected at any time, and the United States quite possibly about to commit a large proportion of its scanty Pacific forces to war in Korea, the Joint Chiefs may well have insisted that Formosa be protected.

As for provoking the Chinese, the dispatching of the Seventh Fleet to the Formosa Strait may indeed have done so. When the decision to move the fleet was made, however, it was decided to stop attacks from both China and Formosa, rather than from the former only, because it was felt that such a course would be less galling to the Chinese.⁵⁷ This is not to say that the action was not provocative, but simply to show that the Administration tried to minimize the provocation, while maintaining its military security as it saw it.

When the decision to intervene is examined against the background of the Truman Administration's previous policies, both continuity and inconsistency can be seen. There was no change of course in the United States' desire to prevent the Republic of Korea from being overrun by

⁵⁶ A.S. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, the Decision to Enter the Korean War (New York, 1960) 22.

⁵⁷ Warner, op. cit., 103.

the Communists. For some years the American Government had been working to keep South Korea independent, partly in conformity with the overall policy of containment, and partly because the peculiar political conditions made the Republic of Korea a showcase of democratic capitalism vis-a-vis Communist North Korea. There was a certain consistency, too, in the decision early in the crisis to work through the United Nations. The implications of this decision will be discussed later; it is sufficient at this point to recall that since 1947 the American Government had been using the United Nations as a handy tool for pursuing United States' policy in Korea.

The most striking contradiction between the Administration's former policy and its action in the Korean crisis was, of course, the change of opinion on the question of using American troops in Korea. We have seen that in 1947 the Joint Chiefs of Staff advised the State Department that Korea was not strategically important to American security, and that the occupation troops should be withdrawn as soon as possible. The Administration accepted this view as one of the foundations of its Korea policy; the troops were withdrawn even before the new Republic had stabilized itself economically and militarily. Dean Acheson excluded Korea from the United States' "defensive perimeter" in his Jan 12, 1950 speech; the United States made no commitment to come to South Korea's aid in the event of an attack, although such guarantees had been given by the United States in other parts of the world. For three years, then, the Truman Administration had clearly not intended to involve

American forces in a war on the Korean peninsula. Communist possession of all Korea was supposedly not a threat to United States' security, there was a shortage of troops, and the world-wide military situation had to be given top priority. Nonetheless, at the end of Jun 1950, with troops still scarce and the world-wide situation no less dangerous than before, the Administration reversed its decision and ordered American forces into the Korean war. The neutralization, and hence protection, of Formosa was also a change of policy; in Jan, 1950 President Truman had announced that no further aid would be given to the Chinese Nationalists, and the Administration had tacitly accepted the fall of Formosa to the Communists within the year.

It is always interesting to study how important decisions are made in times of crisis. The policy conferences of the top-level American officials during the week of Jun 25, 1950 are especially noteworthy because the course of action which arose from them was completely contrary to previous United States' policy. While the Truman Administration had hoped to have its cake and eat it too in Korea - that is, had wanted South Korea independent without any American military commitment there - up to the Korean attack the Administration had clearly shown that if a choice had to be made, strategic considerations must come first and South Korea would not be supported militarily. The withdrawal of American troops while the Republic of Korea was still weak, the exclusion of Korea from Mr. Acheson's "defensive perimeter", the lack of plans for a campaign

in Korea, all show that prior to Jun 25, 1950 the United States did not intend to commit its troops should an invasion by North Korea occur.

The decision to intervene, therefore, was an ad hoc decision made, relatively speaking, on the spur of the moment. By their attack the North Koreans had taken the initiative and forced the Administration to act in haste. Whatever steps were to be taken had to be taken quickly: otherwise the United States would have been faced with a fait accompli, a completely Communist Korea. In these circumstances the American policy-makers did not have time fully to evaluate all the factors in the situation; they did not, for example, give consideration to possible intervention by Communist China, nor did they foresee the size of the force that would eventually be required to throw back the Communists.⁵⁸ The preceding remarks would not be applicable if the Administration had continued along the lines of policy which it had followed since 1948. Had it done so the North Koreans would have conquered all Korea, and the United States would have taken some action short of military intervention. The reason why the American leaders had to make their decisions under such unfavourable conditions was that they were making new policy.

This brings us to the basic question; why did the United States

⁵⁸ George, op. cit., 225.

Government change its course at this point? Such questions cannot ever be fully answered, perhaps, since much of the explanation must lie in the individual psychologies of the important policy-makers. It may be that out-right aggression created a special impetus to reaction on the part of the American leaders. That is, the United States or anyone else was more likely to react strongly to aggression than, say, to the election of a Communist government, not just because aggression provides more obvious means of retaliation, but also because of the moral revulsion it causes, possibly a result of World War II. Certainly the desire to prevent further Communist aggression seems to have overridden all other considerations in the discussions of the American policy-makers after the attack. It is even possible that President Truman had his mind made up the first day; he told the conferees at the beginning of the meeting of Jun 25 that the United States had to draw a line in the Far East at once, that it was a time for boldness and calculated risk, and that it was not a time to give the slightest thought to previous policies.⁵⁹

These remarks indicate that the President was already thinking in terms of military action, since it is difficult to see any political or economic policy that would have satisfied the requirements thus laid down. The sudden Communist attack, therefore, apparently caused an equally sudden reaction in the minds of the American leaders; the aggression had to be stopped, and to this determination were subordinated all the

⁵⁹Article by Arthur Krock in the New York Times, Jun 28, 1950.

contrary factors which had hitherto governed the Administration's policy towards Korea. The American leaders now accepted the supreme importance in American foreign policy of containment and the prestige of the United States.

The decision to intervene may or may not have been the right one, but in any case it is an object lesson on how not to make policy. If it was right to send American troops to Korea to stop the invasion, then it was wrong to have withdrawn American troops earlier and to have virtually abandoned South Korea, thereby inviting the invasion. If the original policy was right - and it was arrived at with the possibility of a Communist attack in mind - then the United States should not have intervened. To formulate a policy while taking into account possible future events and then to reverse that policy when one of the foreseen events occurs is the quintessence of incompetence in the making of foreign policy.

2. The Question of Legality

The legality of the Security Council's resolutions on Korea after the attack, and the action taken under their authority, was challenged by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union made four basic charges; the Security Council resolution of Jun 25, 1950 had no legal force because the representative of the Chinese Nationalists had no right to vote for China; the United Nations Charter states that a decision of substance

requires unanimity of the Security Council's permanent members, and two permanent members, the Soviet Union and Communist China, were absent when the vote was taken Jun 25;⁶⁰ the Korean conflict was internal and therefore no interference by the United Nations was allowed; President Truman sent armed forces to Korea without the authority of the Security Council.⁶¹

The first charge, that the voting of the Nationalist Chinese delegate was illegal, conformed to the position taken by the Soviet Union for some time, that the representatives of China on the Security Council should be appointed by the Peking Government. On Jan 13, 1950 the Soviet delegate on the Security Council, Yakov A. Malik, had walked out of the Council chamber after declaring that the Soviet Union would not participate in the Security Council and would not recognize the legality of its decision until the Nationalist Chinese representatives had been removed.⁶² He did not return until Aug 1, 1950, and his absence provided the Soviet Union with the basis for another charge of illegality. The United States, in rebutting the Soviet Union's view that the voting of the Nationalist Chinese delegate was illegal, asserted that under the rules of the Security Council the representative of Nationalist China had to be voted out before the representative of Communist China could take

⁶⁰ Note from the Soviet Union to Trygve Lie Jun 29, 1950, text in the New York Times, Jun 29, 1950.

⁶¹ Article by Thomas J. Hamilton in ibid., Jul 7, 1950.

⁶² TUSIWA 1950, 40-41

his place, a condition not yet fulfilled.⁶³

The Soviet Union's second accusation, that the absence of permanent members rendered any Security Council resolution on a matter of substance illegal, was also rejected by the United States, although less convincingly. The United States argued that the Security Council, by established practice, did not consider an abstention by a permanent member on a question of substance to be a veto. The American Government was able to cite a number of precedents in which the Soviet Union had not challenged the legality of resolutions passed with the abstention of a permanent member. However, in order to fit the precedents to the present case, the United States had to claim that a boycott of the Security Council by a permanent member was equivalent to an abstention. The United States did make this claim, but was unable to support it with precedents,⁶⁴ and L.M. Goodrich states that the legal arguments against such an interpretation are weighty. He believes that the United States was on firmer ground in attacking the Soviet boycott of the Security Council.⁶⁵ The American Government said that no member could change the Security Council's rules of procedure or paralyze the Council by simply

⁶³Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Jul 30, 1950.

⁶⁴State Department press release, Jun 30, 1950, text in Stabul XXXIII: 575 (Jul 10, 1950) 48-49.

⁶⁵L.M. Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Measures Against Aggression" International Conciliation No. 494 (Oct, 1953) 141.

not attending. Quoting Article 28 of the Charter - "The Security Council shall be so organized as to be able to function continuously" - the United States maintained that this alone denied the Soviet Union's right to prevent the Security Council from functioning. The United States also contended that by boycotting the Council meetings the Soviet Union had violated Article 2 which states in part that "all members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the present Charter." Since the Soviet Union had not fulfilled "in good faith" the primary obligation to attend the meetings of the Security Council since Jan, 1950, it could not claim in absentia all the rights and benefits of the veto.⁶⁶ It can be seen that by appealing to some of the more general clauses of the Charter the United States was able to weaken the basis of the Soviet Union's second allegation of illegality, although discussion limited strictly to the point of whether an absence was an abstention favoured the Soviet view.

The Soviet argument that the United Nations could not intervene because the Korean conflict was internal referred to Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter:

Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement

⁶⁶Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Jun 30, 1950.

under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.

The United States replied that since the Security Council's resolutions were under Chapter VII and were an "application of enforcement measures" against an obvious aggressor, therefore the Soviet argument was not valid.⁶⁷ In further refutation of this charge, it was asserted that even if one accepted the Soviet contention that the Korean conflict was a civil war, the United States' intervention was still legal. According to this view, it is legal by international law to intervene in a civil struggle on the side of and with the consent of the recognized government; since the Republic of Korea was recognized by the United States and most members of the United Nations, the intervention was legal.⁶⁸

The accusation that Mr. Truman dispatched American troops to Korea without the Security Council's authorization was valid. The order instructing General MacArthur to use air and naval forces to support the South Koreans was sent Monday night Jun 26, 1950.⁶⁹ The Security Council resolution specifically recommending that armed assistance should be furnished to the Republic of Korea was passed at 10:45 P.M. the next night, Tuesday Jun 27, 1950.⁷⁰ When Mr. Truman publicly announced

⁶⁷Article by Thomas J. Hamilton in ibid., Jul 7, 1950.

⁶⁸Letter to the New York Times from John H. Herz, Professor of Political Science, Howard University, dated Aug 6, 1950, published Aug 13, 1950.

⁶⁹HST, II, 337.

⁷⁰Warner, op. cit., 104.

at noon Jun 27, that military aid was being sent, he noted that the North Koreans had not obeyed the Security Council's order to withdraw, and that the Council in its Sunday resolution had called upon all members of the United Nations to provide every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of the resolution. "In these circumstances", the President continued, "I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support."⁷¹ Mr. Truman was obviously trying to make the Sunday resolution the legal basis for his action, but it seems just as obvious that he failed. The resolution had noted the conflict in Korea, called for an end to hostilities, instructed the North Koreans to withdraw to the Thirty-eighth Parallel, requested certain actions by the Commission on Korea, and asked for assistance for the United Nations from the members of the organization. There was no mention or suggestion of military assistance; the only possible justification for force might have been to end the hostilities, (in compliance with the first part of the resolution) but in fact it was more likely to prolong them. Precedent was also against the United States; as the diplomats of various countries at the United Nations pointed out, the phrase "every assistance" had been used before but the idea of armed force had never been entertained. ⁷²

⁷¹Text of statement in HST, II, 339.

⁷²Article by Thomas J. Hamilton in the New York Times, Jul 7, 1950.

Another argument put forth by the United States in defence of its use of force was that Article 51 of the Charter, even with no Security Council resolution, allows collective self-defence, requiring only that an immediate report be made to the Council which can then take whatever steps it deems necessary to restore peace. Almost all the United Nations delegates, except for those from Communist countries, felt that this second line of reasoning was irrefutable, that it was not even necessary for the United States to have a formal peace treaty with the Republic of Korea.⁷³ However, Article 51 allows self-defence "if an attack occurs against a member [my italics] of the United Nations"; since the Republic of Korea was not a member it is hard to see why this argument was so readily accepted.

Perhaps the true significance of the debate on the legality of the intervention was illustrated in an editorial cartoon in the Minneapolis Tribune. Entitled "Academic Argument", it pictured two United States soldiers huddled in a slit-trench in a desolate Korean landscape, undergoing heavy shell-fire, one soldier remarking to the other, "In Moscow and some parts of America they're still arguing about whether this is legal!"⁷⁴

However, despite the fact that the United States would undoubtedly

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Reprinted in ibid., Jul 16, 1950.

have continued to fight even if its legal arguments had been strongly refuted, the legal implications of the intervention were important for two reasons. First, for purposes of propaganda it was necessary that the United States' action be demonstrated to be based on sound legal grounds. Only by proving the moral rightness of American policy could the support of other governments and their peoples be won, and an appeal to law is one of the traditional and most effective methods of showing the correctness of one's actions to an impartial third party. The second reason why the question of legality was important is that the procedure followed in the Korean crisis established precedents for the future. This was particularly vital in the case of the United Nations Organization and its Charter, both new and relatively untested instruments of collective security, which were reshaped by the Korean crisis. The statesmen who had drawn up the Charter had created a system which gave the Security Council directing control, and which provided for military action by members in accordance with Council decisions, within the limits established by special agreements under Article 43. Since no such agreements existed, the Council was unable to operate in this way. To circumvent this obstacle, the Charter provisions were interpreted in much wider terms, and a broader, more flexible basis for collective action was established. To achieve this result, special emphasis was laid upon the commitment of members under Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the Charter which declares a purpose of the United Nations to be "to take effective collective measures . . . for the suppression of acts of aggression or other

breaches of the peace."⁷⁵ By stressing in the Korean crisis the general rather than the specific Charter provisions on combatting aggression, the way was paved for later broad interpretations which further adapted the United Nations Organization to the peculiar bi-polar characteristics of the post-war world.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Measures etc.", op.cit., 142.

⁷⁶ Another question of legality pertaining to the decision to intervene, but of more academic interest than the previous one, was raised by Senator Robert A. Taft. He first presented his view on Jun 28, 1950 in the United States Senate, when he charged that President Truman had usurped the powers of Congress in ordering armed intervention in South Korea, New York Times Jun 29, 1950. His protest and his determination to press the point seem to have been drowned in the great tide of events following the Korean attack and the American intervention. However, Senator Taft returned to the matter in a major foreign policy address in the Senate Jan 5, 1951, in which he stated that President Truman:

. . . had no authority whatever to commit American troops to Korea without consulting Congress and without Congressional approval . . .

The President simply usurped authority, in violation of the laws and the Constitution, when he sent troops to Korea to carry out the resolution of the United Nations in an undeclared war. (New York Times Jun 29, 1950 .

These remarks resulted in a small controversy in the columns of the New York Times, where Senator Taft's legal interpretation was challenged by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Henry Steele Commager.

Professor Schlesinger attacked Senator Taft's "demonstrably irresponsible" statements, declaring that from 1812 to 1912 there were at least forty-eight separate occasions on which American armed forces were used abroad without formal declaration of war. The present United States intervention in Korea was not the first, he noted, but the fourth, "having been preceded by similar 'unauthorized' intervention in 1871, 1888 and 1894." Letter to the New York Times, published Jan 9, 1951.

3. The Course of Events from June to November 1950

After the United States Government decided to engage its ground troops in the Korean conflict, steps were taken to give more form to the arrangement whereby the United States fought in Korea in the name of the

⁷⁶ Professor Commager also cited various historical examples of American Presidents involving the United States in war without Congressional approval. His precedents included President Polk's order to General Taylor to cross the Nueces, thus precipitating the Mexican War, and the dispatching of troops by William McKinley to China in the Boxer Rebellion. In the many historical examples, wrote Professor Commager, Congressmen protested from time to time, but never did Congress repudiate the President's power or refuse to grant appropriations for the sustaining of the President's actions.

Professor Commager examined, too, the attitude of the United States courts on the question. Among the different cases to which he referred was the Curtiss-Wright Case in which the court said that in the area of foreign affairs:

. . . with its important, complicated, delicate and manifold problems, the President alone has the power to speak or listen as a representative of the nation . . . It is quite apparent that if in the maintenance of our international relations, embarrassment - perhaps even serious embarrassment - is to be avoided and success for our aims achieved, Congressional legislation must often accord to the President a degree of discretion and freedom from statutory restriction which would not be admissable were domestic affairs alone involved. Moreover, he, not Congress, had the better opportunity of knowing the conditions which prevail in foreign countries, and especially is this true in time of war.

Henry S. Commager, "Presidential Power: The Issue Analyzed", The New York Times Magazine, Jan 14, 1951 .

Other evidence was adduced against Senator Taft's charge, but enough has been shown I think, to demonstrate that President Truman had sound constitutional justification for his decision to send American troops to Korea.

United Nations. It was necessary to make the military action appear as a United Nations undertaking, rather than a purely American one. On Jul 7, 1950, therefore, the Security Council passed a resolution recommending that all members of the United Nations providing military and other assistance for the Republic of Korea should place their forces and other aid under a unified command under the United States. The United States was asked to designate the commander of such forces, and to provide the Security Council with appropriate reports on the action taken under the unified command. The Council also authorized the unified command to use the United Nations flag in Korea.⁷⁷ The next day President Truman announced that in response to the Security Council's resolution, he had designated General Douglas MacArthur as the Commanding General of the military forces placed by United Nations members under the unified command.⁷⁸ The United Nations flag was rushed to Tokyo for presentation to the new commander.⁷⁹ Although the Council's resolution was not sponsored by the United States, that country's diplomats had been working for some time to get such a resolution adopted.⁸⁰

Another move to broaden the participation in intervention was made

⁷⁷Text in AFPBD, II, 2250.

⁷⁸Text in ibid., II, 2250-2251.

⁷⁹TUSIWA 1950, 216.

⁸⁰New York Times, Jul 9, 1950.

by Secretary-General Trygve Lie, who sent telegrams to each of the member governments calling attention to the Security Council's resolution of Jun 27, and asking each to notify him as to what type of assistance, if any, they would provide. By Jul 10, forty-seven states had informed him that they supported the Council's action on Korea,⁸¹ although they were not so quick to provide material assistance.⁸²

While the United States and other countries opposed to the North Korean aggression had some success in presenting the resistance to the attack as a United Nations action, they made less progress on other parts of the diplomatic front during the summer. On Jul 27, 1950 Jacob A. Malik, permanent representative of the Soviet Union to the United Nations, announced that in accordance with established procedure he would assume the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of August. Mr. Malik had been absent from the Council since his celebrated exit on Jan 13, 1950. The day before his return, Jul 31, 1950, the Security Council passed a resolution which established the beginnings of a system of relief for the civilian population of Korea.⁸³ This was the last matter of substance acted upon by the Security Council until after Mr. Malik's Presidency of Aug, 1950.

⁸¹Stabul, XXIII:575: (Jul 10, 1950), 78.

⁸²Survey 1949-1950, 482.

⁸³Text in U.N. Security Council, Official Records, 1950 #21, 479th meeting, Jul 31, 1950, 3.

As soon as the meeting of Aug 1, began, Mr. Malik ruled that "the representative of the Kuomintang group seated in the Security Council does not represent China and cannot therefore take part in the meetings of the Security Council."⁸⁴ After considerable discussion the ruling was rejected by the Council.⁸⁵

This was the first of a series of manoeuvres by the astute Mr. Malik which kept the debates of the Security Council confined to procedural matters during the whole month of August.⁸⁶ The Council reached the nadir of effective operation on Aug 25, when almost the whole of the meeting was devoted to the translation into French of three speeches made at the previous meeting. The Security Council accomplished nothing worthwhile that month, owing largely to the manoeuvres and verbosity of President Malik. The Western spokesmen were not entirely blameless, however; they also never proved short of words in their fight to win the parliamentary and propaganda battle.

During that summer the world's attention was held by the military struggle in the Korean peninsula. The basic question at first was whether the United States could move enough troops and equipment into Korea to stop the North Koreans, before the Communist army could drive

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1950 #22, 480th meeting, Aug 1, 1950, 1.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 1950 #22, 480th meeting, Aug 1, 1950, 1-9.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 1950 #22, 480th meeting, Aug 1, 1950, 22-35.

the American and South Korean forces off the peninsula. Accordingly General MacArthur adopted a strategy when the first American ground troops entered Korea, of committing them to battle piecemeal as they arrived. On coming into contact with the Americans, the North Koreans stopped to deploy in conventional line of battle, a manoeuvre which took ten days and gave the Americans time to ship large quantities of men and equipment into Korea. By Jul 19, 1950 General MacArthur was able to report that the enemy had failed to achieve his aim of over-running the whole of South Korea, and that the United Nations forces now had a secure base on the southern part of Korea.⁸⁷

The first phase of the operations, the prevention of total Communist victory, gave way to the second phase during which the North Koreans continued to push forward, but at a slower pace, until by the end of August the United Nations forces were confined to a rectangular area measuring approximately 80 miles from north to south and 60 miles from east to west. In early September the United Nations were able to undertake limited offensives and to increase their air attacks on the enemy's concentrations and communication lines. On Sep 1, the North Koreans began a general offensive, but within a few days this was thrown back, the United Nations regaining most of the territory temporarily lost.

⁸⁷ Partial text of report in Charles A. Willoughby and John Chamberlain, MacArthur 1941-1951 (New York, 1954), 361.

The next phase of the campaign began on Sep 15, 1950 when General MacArthur carried out his spectacular amphibious operation against the port of Inchon. Both General J. Lawton Collins, the Army Chief of Staff, and Admiral Forrest P. Sherman, the Navy Chief of Staff, had attempted to dissuade General MacArthur from landing at Inchon because of the many geographical handicaps existing there.⁸⁸ Reluctant approval was finally given to the plan, however, and, whatever its theoretical merits, it worked, resulting, when combined with pressure from the Pusan stronghold, in the swift collapse of the North Korean forces. By Sep 30, 1950 organized enemy resistance had virtually ceased in South Korea, and United Nations troops had reached the Thirty-eighth Parallel.⁸⁹

The sudden turn of events and the rapidity of the advance of the United Nations forces created political problems. The most immediate of these concerned the crossing of the Thirty-eighth Parallel by the United Nations. When the Korean conflict began it had not been foreseen that the United Nations forces would be able eventually to march with ease into North Korea. The collapse of the Communist forces suddenly

⁸⁸ Admiral James T. Doyle, General MacArthur's amphibious expert examined the technical details of a landing at Inchon. Admiral Doyle later said: "Our research listed every known geographical and naval handicap -- Inchon had 'em all." The worst obstacle was the very unfavourable tidal conditions. Ibid., 368-369.

⁸⁹ This account of military operations is based on the following sources: Survey 1949-1950, 483-486; Courtney Whitney, MacArthur: His Rendezvous With History (New York, 1956), 322-367; Willoughby and Chamberlain, op. cit., 350-377; daily situation maps in the New York Times.

presented the opportunity not only to show the futility of aggression, but also to bring a permanent settlement of the Korean problem by occupying all Korea.

The members of the United Nations who had supported the original intervention were not so concerned about the legality of crossing the Parallel as about the political wisdom of such an action. They were uncertain of what the reaction of Moscow and Peking would be in the face of military action in Communist territory.⁹⁰ Robert Schuman, the French Foreign Minister, said that the Parallel should be crossed only if military necessity demanded such a move, and that politically it seemed better to remain in the pre-war situation.⁹¹ Pandit Nehru expressed the view that the Parallel should not be crossed "until all other means of settlement have been explored".⁹²

Initially there was considerable confusion as to who should decide whether or not the United Nations would cross the Parallel. Mr. Truman was reported in the New York Herald Tribune of Sep 22, 1950 to have said that the decision should be taken by the United Nations. Less than a week later the New York Times reported that "a State Department spokesman" took the position that the resolutions of the Security Council

⁹⁰TUSIWA 1950, 358-359.

⁹¹New York Times, Sep 29, 1950.

⁹²Ibid., Sep 30, 1950.

gave the authorization necessary to cross into North Korea. This latter view was held by General MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and seems to have been the considered position of the United States; other members of the United Nations did not seriously dispute this interpretation.⁹³

Domestic reasons helped to drive the Truman Administration to demand the crossing of the Parallel. Failure to push forward would have brought charges of appeasement,⁹⁴ and there was the danger that a "limited" victory in Korea would put the United Nations out of favour in the United States.⁹⁵

Apparently the United States Government believed that it should wait until it had received some sanction from the United Nations before crossing, for the United Nations troops paused in Korea close to the Parallel, only Republic of Korea units moving across before the General Assembly passed its resolution of Oct 7, 1950. This resolution recommended, among other things, that "all appropriate steps be taken to ensure conditions of stability throughout Korea" and that "all constituent acts be taken, including the holding of elections . . . for the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Government in the

⁹³ Goodrich, Korea: a Study etc., op. cit., 127.

⁹⁴ Reitzel, Kaplan, Coblenz, op. cit., 271.

⁹⁵ Article by Arthur Krock in the New York Times, Oct 5, 1950.

sovereign State of Korea". United Nations forces were not to remain in any part of Korea except as was necessary to achieve the preceding objectives.⁹⁶ Two days later the United Nations forces crossed the Parallel in strength in the Western sector and headed for the Communist capital of Pyongyang.⁹⁷ That city fell on Oct 20, 1950, and the northward drive continued. Hopes were high for a speedy end to the war and a final solution of "the Korean problem, but as the United Nations forces neared the Yalu River in early Nov, 1950, General MacArthur reported that Chinese military units were in contact with his troops. On Nov 25, the United Nations began a new advance; on Nov 26, the Chinese counter-attacked, and the United Nations forces were obliged to withdraw steadily for the rest of the year.⁹⁸

⁹⁶Text in DOAFR, XII, 459-461.

⁹⁷TUSIWA 1950, 361.

⁹⁸Survey 1949-1950, 488-489.

CHAPTER VI

CHINA INTERVENES

The entry of Communist China into the Korean conflict created, as General MacArthur said, "an entirely new war".¹ The complete victory which had seemed so near was snatched away and never again seemed attainable. The effects of the intervention, both on the Korean war and on the foreign policy of the United States, were momentous. The action of the Chinese, therefore, deserves careful study.

1. Warning of the Intervention.

Communist China's intervention was not unheralded. Quite the contrary; for two months before the first units of the People's Liberation Army moved into Korea, a number of warnings were given by the Peking Government that it would use force to prevent the United Nations from occupying Korea right up to the Yalu River border.

In the second half of Aug, 1950 the Chinese Government indicated that it intended to involve itself more deeply in the Korean conflict than it had up to that time.² In a cable to the United Nations dated Aug 20, 1950, Chou En-lai said, "Korea is China's neighbor. The Chinese people cannot but be concerned about solution of the Korean

¹Special Communique by the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, Nov 28, 1950, text in AFPBD, II, 2585.

²Whiting, op. cit., 84.

question . . . It must and can be settled permanently". This was the first sign of Peking's active interest in the war.³

World Culture, a Peking weekly journal closely associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,⁴ in its issue of Aug 26, 1950 tightly tied the interests of Communist China to the fortunes of the North Korean regime. Stating that the American "invasion" of Korea threatened the security of China, the article said that to obtain a peaceful solution of the Korean problem the opinions of both the Korean and the Chinese people would have to be heard. It was "impossible" to solve the Korean problem without the participation of Korea's closest neighbour, China, the article continued; "North Korea's friends are our friends. North Korea's enemy is our enemy. North Korea's defense is our defense. North Korea's victory is our victory". By implication, it has been pointed out, North Korea's defeat would also be Red China's defeat.⁵

The Chinese Government was thus making two important claims: that its military security was connected to events in Korea, and that it was entitled to a voice in the ultimate settlement of the Korean war. Since the complete defeat of the North Koreans would obviously be at variance with these claims, it was reasonable to suppose that China might take action to prevent a total United Nations victory.

³Ibid., 79-80.

⁴Ibid., 52.

⁵Ibid., 84-85.

On Sep 25, 1950 during an informal dinner conversation with Indian Ambassador K. M. Panikkar, the acting Chief of Staff of the People's Liberation Army said that China would not "sit back with folded hands and let the Americans come to the Sino-Korean border". He admitted the risk of a general war but continued, "We know what we are in for, but at all costs American aggression has to be stopped".⁶

Five days later, in an official speech to the Central People's Government Council, Chou En-lai said that "The Chinese people absolutely will not tolerate foreign aggression, nor will they supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by the imperialists".⁷ On Oct 2, the Chinese premier formally summoned Ambassador Panikkar "to a dramatic midnight meeting" at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he told the Indian that China would enter the Korean war if the United States invaded the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.⁸ In the next few days the American Government received further reports of Premier Chou's warning through Allied and neutral channels, and through United States embassies in Moscow, Stockholm, London, and New Delhi.⁹

On Oct 10, 1950 the Chinese Government gave further notice of its concern with the advance of the United Nations armies, and of its

⁶Quoted in ibid., 107.

⁷Quoted in ibid., 108.

⁸Ibid., 108.

⁹Ibid., 108-109.

intention to act, when its Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued the following statement:

Now that the American forces are attempting to cross the thirty-eighth parallel on a large scale, the Chinese people cannot stand idly by with regard to such a serious situation created by the invasion of Korea . . . and to the dangerous trend towards extending the war. The American war of invasion in Korea has been a serious menace to the security of China from its very start.¹⁰

Less than a week later Chinese forces began to cross the Yalu River.

As China entered the war, General MacArthur was telling President Truman that the likelihood of Chinese intervention was very slight,¹¹ and this assessment was accepted by the President. Since this opinion was held by the American Government - despite the repeated Chinese cautioning outlined above - the credibility of Peking's warnings must be questioned. In his excellent study of China's decision to intervene, Allen S. Whiting examines the credibility of the Communist warnings. He notes that communicating a threat is a formidable problem, and that it was especially difficult in the context of the Korean War. Peking had failed to make good its threat after using belligerent language with

¹⁰Quoted in ibid., 115.

¹¹HST, II, 366.

respect to the Seventh Fleet's opposition, and Korea was apparently less important militarily and politically than Formosa. Moreover, the Chinese had not taken any action in Korea when it might have been expected, either during the six-week stalemate at Pusan or in the two weeks following the Inchon landing. Despite these indications that Peking was possibly bluffing, there were other factors affecting the credibility of the Chinese warning; Dr. Whiting records and examines three.

There was, first of all, the content of the threat and its means of communication. One cannot say that there was no element of bluff in Chinese statements up to Oct 7, 1950, but Peking's successive statements from Aug 20, 1950 to Oct 2, 1950 steadily increased the Chinese Government's commitment to the North Korean regime. By the end of this period Peking had clearly defined the casus belli as the entry of United States forces into North Korea, and its own response as military intervention in support of the North Koreans. As these conditions which Peking had laid down as cause for its entry into the war came nearer, the Chinese Government became increasingly explicit in communicating its intent. There was a feeling in the United States that the use of Indian channels for communication made the warnings less credible, that the Chinese threats were designed to increase neutralist pressure upon the United States' position in the United Nations. Dr. Whiting believes, however, for a variety of reasons, that India was a likely link between the two

blocs.¹²

A second factor considered by Dr. Whiting is the means which the Chinese had available for implementing this threat. He notes that before Sep, 1950 Peking had already stationed 180,000 of its best troops in Manchuria, and that this was widely known.¹³ The American Government knew it; at the end of Jun, 1950 Secretary of the Army Frank Pace said that United States intelligence agencies estimated that the Chinese had 200,000 troops in Manchuria.¹⁴ In mid-September these forces were strengthened by a massive redeployment of troops; the armies in Manchuria increased in size to at least 320,000 soldiers.¹⁵ This was also known.¹⁶ It is clear, then, that the Communist warnings were materially underlined by military dispositions.¹⁷

Finally, Dr. Whiting suggests that the credibility of the threat must be weighed in terms of its rationality, balancing risks against goals, and he decides that the Chinese strategy was logically conceived within the Communist frame of reference.¹⁸

¹²Whiting, op. cit., 109-111.

¹³Ibid., 111.

¹⁴HST, II, 344.

¹⁵Whiting, op. cit., 111.

¹⁶Willoughby and Chamberlain, op. cit., 382.

¹⁷Whiting, op. cit., 111.

¹⁸Ibid., 111.

Concluding his study of the credibility of the Chinese warnings,

Dr. Whiting writes:

By October 2, 1950, the Chinese leadership could logically believe its position clearly understood; if U.S. forces pursued the goals enunciated by Austin and MacArthur, namely the complete defeat of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Peking would resist with force.¹⁹

Dr. Whiting is concerned in his book with the question of whether the Chinese could actually believe that their threats were achieving their purpose; he deals more indirectly with the opinions and interpretations of the American policy-makers. We must now turn, therefore, to the United States Government's view of the possibility of Chinese intervention.

2. The American View of Chinese Intervention.

When the United States Government first decided to intervene in the Korean war, little consideration was given, in the excitement of the moment, to the possibility of participation in the struggle by Chinese Communist forces. As time went on, more thought was given to the dangers of enlarging the war, and steps were taken to keep hostilities restricted to Korea, and to prevent intervention by either the Soviet Union or China. Thus all naval and air crews under General MacArthur's command were warned not to violate territory or territorial waters of the Soviet Union or China.²⁰ After the Inchon landing, as the United Nations troops

¹⁹ Ibid., 111.

²⁰ Article by James Reston, in the New York Times, Jul 6, 1950.

approached the Thirty-eighth Parallel, permission was given to General MacArthur to cross the Parallel provided that no large Soviet or Communist Chinese forces had entered the war or threatened to do so. The General was further ordered to use only Korean forces in the provinces bordering Russia and China, and he was forbidden to support any of his operations with air or naval attacks on Chinese or Russian territory.²¹ These instructions show that the American Government had no desire to become embroiled in a war with Communist China in Korea; all provocations except the greatest one - conquering North Korea - were to be avoided.

Why did the United States continue to move towards a conflict with Communist China which it wanted to avoid, in the face of repeated warnings that the Chinese had fully expected to be heeded with the same earnestness with which they were issued? Obviously, the American Government did not believe that China would intervene, despite what Peking was saying. The American interpretation of what China would probably do proved to be wrong. Since the results of the misinterpretation were so important, some explanation of the American view is necessary.

²¹HST, II, 360.

There were a number of reasons why the United States Government believed that China would not intervene. There was the military factor; President Truman was told by General MacArthur Oct 15, 1950 that although one could only speculate, it seemed to the General that there was very little chance of Chinese action. With the United Nations' superiority in air and naval forces, he did not believe that the Chinese commanders would wish to commit large forces to the war since they would be too open to complete destruction through lack of supply.²² It seems quite possible that General MacArthur gave this appreciation on the assumption that should China intervene he would be able to bomb targets in China; both his apologists, Generals Willoughby and Whitney, make this point.²³ Even Mr. Truman writes that General MacArthur said that the Chinese would be able to get fifty or sixty thousand men into Korea;²⁴ this relatively small estimate suggests that the General thought that the bridges over the Yalu River would be destroyed by bombing. Another military factor which the Truman Administration believed weighed against Chinese intervention was the number of well-trained troops the Chinese Government would have to commit.²⁵

There were also diplomatic and political considerations which,

²²Willoughby and Chamberlain, op. cit., 382-383.

²³Ibid., 383, and Whitney, op. cit., 393.

²⁴HST, II, 366.

²⁵Testimony by Dean Acheson before Sencom Jun 7, 1951, text in the New York Times, Jun 8, 1951.

the Americans felt, made Chinese action unlikely. There was the possibility that an adventure in Korea would weaken the Peking Government at home.²⁶ The lack of any real advantage to the Chinese seemed to preclude intervention; the Administration believed that while the Peking regime might be under Soviet pressure, there was little chance that they would succumb because there was "nothing in it for them".²⁷ It was felt that the Chinese would probably lose ground internationally if they entered the war, and the Administration could not see why the Chinese would sacrifice a seat in the United Nations, which seemed within reach, in order to engage in the Korean conflict.²⁸

The warning from the Chinese which was imparted to Indian Ambassador K. M. Panikkar on Oct 2, 1950 was weakened because the American Government believed that Mr. Panikkar was not impartial and that he might simply be furthering Communist propaganda. They were strengthened in this view by the fact that there was a key vote due the next day in the General Assembly's Political and Security Committee on a resolution which would give General MacArthur clear authorization to cross the Thirty-eighth Parallel. The Americans saw Chou En-lai's message as an

²⁶ Ibid., Jun 8, 1951.

²⁷ Dean Acheson in a CBS television interview Sep 10, 1950, text in Stabul, XXIII:585 (Sep 18, 1950), 463.

²⁸ Testimony of Dean Acheson before Sencom Jun 7, 1951, text in the New York Times, Jun 8, 1951.

attempt to influence the vote by threatening intervention.²⁹

Considering the Administration's interpretation of China's intentions in relation to the three factors used by Allen Whiting in assessing the credibility of Peking's warnings, we find that while the threats may logically have seemed real to the Chinese, they logically did not to the Americans. While the content of the threat was clear enough, the use of Mr. Panikkar and the issuance of Premier Chou's message on the eve of a key vote in the United Nations weakened the effect of the warning on the United States Government. The American Government realized that the Chinese had the means of implementing the threat, but felt, as we have seen, that there were strong military reasons for believing that those means would not be used. As for the rationality of intervention, it will be recalled that Dr. Whiting concluded that within the Chinese frame of reference intervention made sense. We have seen that within the American frame of reference, intervention by the Chinese appeared to the United States Government to be illogical.

On Nov 6, 1950 General MacArthur issued a special communique which stated that "elements of alien Communist forces" had moved across the Yalu River into North Korea in order to lay surreptitiously "a possible trap . . . to encompass the destruction of the United Nations

²⁹HST, II, 362.

forces".³⁰ The next day General MacArthur repeated that Chinese Communists now opposed the United Nations armies in Korea; he substantiated his charge with various intelligence reports of anti-aircraft fire from the Chinese side of the Yalu River, and with information based on interrogation of captured Chinese soldiers.³¹

When its original assessment of Chinese intentions proved wrong, the Truman Administration attempted to reassure the Chinese that the United Nations would not cross the Yalu River. It was hoped that in this way the Peking Government could be induced to withdraw its forces.

Dean Acheson said Nov 15, 1950 that one of the first things to be done was to remove any misunderstanding that might exist in the minds of the Chinese. It was not true, he said, that the United Nations or the United States had any ulterior designs in Manchuria. The Secretary pointed to the United States' border agreements with Mexico and Canada as examples of successful arrangements of nations' rights on boundary rivers. Mr. Acheson said that China should have no doubt that the American Government would use its influence in the United Nations to "bring about a constructive adjustment of Chinese-Korean interests in the Yalu River. We, of course, would do it. That is what we want them

³⁰Text in the New York Times, Nov 6, 1950.

³¹Text in ibid., Nov 7, 1950.

to understand".³²

The next day President Truman added his assurances.

Speaking for the United States Government and people, I can give assurance that we support and are acting within the limits of United Nations policy in Korea, and that we have never at any time entertained any intention to carry hostilities into China.

. . . I wish to state unequivocally that . . . we will take every honourable step to prevent any extension of the hostilities in the Far East.³³

One day later Omar Bradley told The Associated Press Managing Editors Association that the United States had no desire to fight China. "We want to do everything we can to avoid going to war with China". General Bradley expressed the hope that the United States could meet the Chinese and find out what they wanted. He finished his very conciliatory remarks by stating, "If given a chance, I am sure we could work out something with them on a satisfactory basis".³⁴

In three days then, the Chief Executive of the United States, his senior foreign affairs adviser, and his senior military adviser had all

³²Ibid., Nov 16, 1950.

³³Text in ibid., Nov 17, 1950.

³⁴Ibid., Nov 18, 1950.

publicly proclaimed that the United States had no intention of extending the war beyond the borders of Korea. It was an impressive attempt by the Administration to communicate its intention to the Chinese. But just as the Americans doubted the reality of Peking's threats, so the Chinese refused to trust the sincerity of Washington's placations. A Peking broadcast Nov 17, 1950 stated that no one in Peking was being convinced by the American spokesmen's attempts to appear innocent of any aggressive intentions towards China. The broadcast pointed to instances of American news stories which initially said one thing, only to reverse what they had said. One example cited was a United Press report from Washington Jun 27, 1950 which said that American ground troops would not be committed in Korea. The next day, the broadcast continued, the United Press was saying from Tokyo that the first American ground troops had been ordered into the war. The Peking broadcast accused the United States of using such tactics to confuse and paralyze the Communist forces, with the eventual aim of invading China. The broadcast concluded that the "Chinese people are not deceived by what they see through this curtain of lies and bellicosity".³⁵

The Chinese Government apparently retained this view, for its troops remained in Korea, and General MacArthur's offensive of Nov 27, 1950 was thrown back by the Chinese who proceeded to push the United

³⁵Text in ibid., Nov 18, 1950.

Nations forces back down the peninsula.

3. American Responsibility for the Chinese Intervention.

Any study of the Chinese intervention must inevitably arrive at the question of why the Chinese entered the Korean war. That question is relevant to the present work only insofar as the decision to intervene was influenced by the United States. We can assume that the Truman Administration did not want China to enter the conflict. Obviously, if China stayed out then the United States would be free to conquer and occupy North Korea, and thus solve the annoying and long-standing Korean problem. However, the American Government's opposition to Chinese intervention was based on stronger reasons than the desire for a free hand in North Korea, for the directive sent to General MacArthur Sep 27, 1950 forbade him to cross the Thirty-eighth Parallel if large Chinese forces had entered North Korea.³⁶ In other words, the Administration was ready to forego a unified Korea in order to avoid a clash with Communist China. The Administration believed such a conflict could lead to wide-spread, perhaps eventually world-wide, war; at best it would involve the United States heavily in Asia, and give Russia a free hand in Europe.³⁷ Since the United States did not want China to intervene, to the extent that American action caused the intervention

³⁶HST, II, 360.

³⁷Ibid., II, 378 and 383.

American policy was a failure.

Shortly after the first report of Chinese participation in the Korea war, Mr. Dean Rusk suggested some possible reasons for the Chinese decision to intervene. The Chinese, he said, may have been backing up their statement of some weeks ago - that they would not stand idly by if United Nations troops entered North Korea - in order to avoid being caught bluffing. What Mr. Rusk was really saying was that the Chinese were not bluffing in their earlier warnings, and one can proceed from that point to the conclusion that the Americans brought on the intervention by calling what they thought was a Chinese bluff.

A second suggestion of Mr. Rusk's was that the Chinese might have moved to protect power installations on the Yalu River, although, he said, military occupation was no way to protect installations vulnerable to air attack. It was nonetheless true, he continued, that the Yalu River installations supplied a significant amount of electric power to Manchuria and that the United States "might expect the Chinese to be sensitive to that point". Once again we must compare this analysis of Chinese motives for intervention made after the act with American policies and actions before the act. The initial disposition of the Chinese troops after they crossed the Yalu River indicated that the Peking regime wanted to protect the hydroelectric installations. On

Oct 16, 1950 one Chinese regiment crossed the border and moved to the area of the Chosan (Changjin) and Fusan (Fujon) dams. Four days later 5,000 troops entered Korea and deployed south of the Sulho dam.³⁸ However, General MacArthur did not believe that the Chinese forces were sent into Korea primarily to protect the power facilities.³⁹ This perhaps explains the provocative attacks made by his forces in the vicinity of the dams. I. F. Stone has shown that United States Marines began a general attack towards the Changjin Reservoir after their Corps commander, Major-General Edward M. Almond knew that a Chinese regiment had entered the area.⁴⁰ If the Chinese had been sent into Korea because the Peking government was concerned about its power supply, the American advance could only confirm their fears and lead them to further military involvement. The same point could be made about the general United Nations advance up to Nov 26, 1950.

Another possible reason for the intervention, said Mr. Rusk, was that the Chinese Government was trying to create a buffer zone in North Korea between China and the United Nations forces. It seems that the idea of a buffer zone was not distasteful to the American Government. Mr. Rusk himself said that if Peking's purpose was to demilitarize the

³⁸ Report of General Douglas MacArthur to the United Nations Security Council Nov 6, 1950, text in the New York Times, Nov 7, 1950.

³⁹ Whitney, op. cit., 409-410.

⁴⁰ Stone, op. cit., 164.

Sino-Korean frontier to remove threats to China then negotiations were possible. An article in the London Times reported that the State Department had hoped that the Chinese would accept the idea of a buffer zone as a basis for negotiation. The State Department, however, had wished to negotiate from strength, and had therefore wanted the United Nations to secure the south bank of the Yalu River. They felt that the Americans could then prove that they meant it when they said that they would not interfere with the supply of power to Manchuria.⁴¹ It was natural for the United States to want to occupy the south side of the Yalu River before dealing with the Chinese; in bargaining one sets forth one's maximum demands and then gradually withdraws from them in return for concessions by the opposing party. If the American and other United Nations forces could have held all Korea at the beginning of negotiations, they could gradually have withdrawn their troops southward in return for Chinese concessions. However, the final aim of the proposed negotiations and buffer zone was presumably to prevent conflict with the Chinese. But by moving up to the Yalu River to improve their bargaining position the Americans increased the risk of such conflict. One must question the wisdom of a course of action which jeopardized the attainment of a final aim in order to improve the means to that aim.

In his analysis of the possible reasons for China's intervention,

⁴¹London Times, Nov 28, 1950.

Dean Rusk included the Peking Government's fear that the United Nations forces would not stop at the Yalu River. The Chinese, he said, might not have believed the United Nations on this point. While suggesting to his listeners that if they put themselves in the Communists' place they might also have such misgivings, Mr. Rusk added that he was "not suggesting that they would be misgivings in good faith, but that, if conduct on the part of the Communists themselves can be expected to bring about reaction in the rest of the world, at least, they would be fearful of that reaction".⁴²

The last sentence is typical of so many leaders of the Western bloc who are unable to admit, at least publicly, that the Communists can be honest in any way, not even to the extent of having honest fears. In this particular case, however, there was considerable grounds for Chinese apprehension about the intentions of the United States. In a speech on Aug 25, 1950 Secretary of the Navy Francis Matthews advocated "instituting a war to compel cooperation for peace . . . We would become the first aggressors for peace".⁴³ In a statement addressed to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Aug 26, 1950 General MacArthur stressed the

⁴²Mr. Rusk's analysis of the possible reasons for the Chinese intervention was made during his extemporaneous remarks before a National Conference on Foreign Policy at Washington, Nov 15, 1950, text in Stabul, XXIII:596 (Dec 4, 1950), 890-891.

⁴³Quoted in Whiting, op. cit., 96.

"island chain . . . from the Aleutians to the Mariannas . . . from which we can dominate with air power every Asiatic port from Vladivostok to Singapore." He referred to Formosa as "an unsinkable aircraft carrier and submarine tender" possessing "a concentration of operational air and naval bases potentially greater than any similar concentration on the Asiatic mainland between the Yellow Sea and the Strait of Malacca".⁴⁴ General MacArthur withdrew this statement on the order of President Truman, but it was too late to prevent publication. On Aug 28, 1950 the Peking Government protested to the United Nations that American and British planes had strafed airports and railways near Antung, on the Chinese side of the Yalu River. A month later the raid was officially acknowledged as a mistake.⁴⁵

On Sep 1, 1950 President Truman made a statement in which he said that the United States did not want the fighting in Korea to spread into a general war. Hostilities would not spread, he continued, "unless Communist imperialism draws other armies and governments into the fight of the aggressors against the United Nations". It was hoped, said the President, that the people of China would not be forced or misled into fighting against the United Nations or against the American people who had always been the friends of the Chinese.⁴⁶ Allen Whiting comments

⁴⁴Quoted in ibid., 96.

⁴⁵Stone, op. cit., 90-91.

⁴⁶Quoted in Whiting, op. cit., 97-98.

that although President Truman's statement was meant to reassure Peking, it may have had the opposite effect. The President's warning against "other armies and governments" becoming involved in Korea, lest the fighting spread into a general war, may well have been interpreted, thinks Dr. Whiting, as a thinly veiled threat against the Peking regime:

Against the background of the Matthews and MacArthur statements and the alleged air attacks along the Yalu River, Truman's 'general war' warning was susceptible of more than one interpretation, the more so since Peking had already announced its interest in the Korean conflict.⁴⁷

The Chinese Communists were also concerned about General MacArthur's visit to Formosa at the end of Jul, 1950 which resulted in a joint communique issued by the General and Chiang Kai-shek. The statement implied complete harmony of aims, and the Communists feared that the MacArthur-Kai-shek accord might mean renewed attacks on the Chinese mainland; such fears were given credibility by reports in American news publications of General MacArthur's great power and prestige.⁴⁸

Another possible explanation of the Chinese decision to intervene, not mentioned by Dean Rusk, has been suggested by Dr. Whiting. Traditional influences, he writes, may have affected China's position; as a great Asian power China had a right to be heard on the Korean question which

⁴⁷Ibid., 98.

⁴⁸Ibid., 69, 81, 88.

was right on China's borders.⁴⁹ This was largely a matter of prestige; an American victory in Korea, and a settlement of the Korean question without Chinese participation, would have damaged the Peking Government's influence in Asia; and would perhaps have set the Asian revolutionary movement back a number of years.⁵⁰

Here again the American Government, by being more sensitive to the outlook and aspirations of the Chinese Government, might have been able to formulate a policy which would have given the Peking regime a greater choice than that of intervening or standing by and watching Communist influence wane in Asia. After all, the chief architect of the Administration's containment policy had written, while describing that policy:

While the Kremlin is basically flexible in its reaction to political realities, it is by no means unamenable to considerations of prestige. Like almost any other government, it can be placed by tactless and threatening gestures in a position where it cannot afford to yield even though this might be dictated by its sense of realism.⁵¹

Had the Administration been able to read "Peking Government" for "Kremlin" and then held to this original guideline of the containment theory, a

⁴⁹ Ibid., 89.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 88-89.

⁵¹ Kennan, op. cit., 117. It was reported in the New York Times, Nov 16, 1950, that G.F. Kennan consistently opposed the crossing of the Thirty-eighth Parallel in Oct, 1950 as a risk which greatly outweighed the advantages, if any.

Korean settlement might have been made much sooner than it was.

In choosing the possible motives for Chinese intervention I have chosen only those in which American policies and action were, or could have been, a factor. It was obviously not beyond the ability of the State Department experts to think of these hypothetical motives, for most of them were mentioned at the time by Dean Rusk, then Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs. The one that was not, the factor of prestige, was a basic part of the containment theory which was the basis of the Administration's whole anti-Communist policy. While these speculative explanations of the intervention were made after the event, they could just as easily have been hypothesized by the American policy-makers before the intervention, when the possibility of Chinese action was being considered. Perhaps they were, but if so, it is difficult to understand why in each case where American actions and policies may have influenced the Chinese, the effect was to bring about the intervention rather than to prevent it. If Peking had decided not to bluff then moving to the Yalu River forced the Chinese to intervene. If the Communists were worried about their electric power supply, the attacks on Changjin and the general United Nations advance towards the dams could only confirm these fears. If the idea of a buffer zone was acceptable to both Communists and Americans, why seriously jeopardize the attainment of such a zone in order to improve one's bargaining position? If China was concerned the United Nations forces might cross

the Yalu, the Administration's failure to curb the remarks and actions of its more belligerent subordinates would only add to the impression of an aggressive American intent. If prestige was important to the Communists, they should have been given more choice than that of intervening or accepting a Korea under United Nations control.

I do not wish to suggest that had the American Government followed a different policy the Chinese would definitely not have intervened. There were other possible reasons for the intervention which the United States could not influence. But where American actions and policies may have influenced the Chinese decision, they seem to have done so in a way contrary to the Administration's desire to avoid conflict with China.

4. The Reaction to the Chinese Intervention.

The United States was indignant that the United Nations "victory drive" had been stopped by massive Chinese intervention, estimated at the end of Nov, 1950 as involving 200,000 Chinese troops.⁵² In the United Nations, the United States delegate, Warren Austin, accused the Chinese Communists of "aggression, outright and naked" in Korea.⁵³ President Truman said that the Chinese attack came despite great effort to make it clear that China was not threatened by the United Nations forces. The United States, the President promised, would continue to

⁵² New York Times, Nov 29, 1950.

⁵³ Text of speech in ibid., Nov 29, 1950.

support the United Nations mission in Korea. The new situation would be met by continued work in the United Nations to gain concerted action to stop aggression in Korea, by intensified efforts to help other free nations to strengthen their defence, and by a rapid increase in American military strength.⁵⁴

The firm stand taken by the United States was not matched by the other members of the United Nations. When attempts to take action in the Security Council against the Chinese intervention were frustrated by the Soviet Union's veto, the United States moved to bring the matter before the General Assembly. It soon became clear, however, that a large part of the total membership of the Assembly was not willing to act against China as it had against North Korea in Jun, 1950. There were a number of reasons for this attitude. One that weighed most heavily with certain states which had fully supported common action in Korea was the danger that a finding of aggression, followed by collective measures against China, might lead to an extension of the conflict into a major war among the Great Powers, a war which it might not be possible to limit to the Far East. As late as October these states had accepted American assurances that China had the Soviet Union were unlikely to intervene in the war in Korea. Now that the United States was shown to have been wrong, these states were much more insistent on a policy of caution and

⁵⁴Text in ibid., Dec 1, 1950.

restraint.

The American conduct of the military operations in Korea, and particularly the actions of General MacArthur, also weakened confidence in the United States Government's intention and ability to use wisdom and restraint in matters involving the Communists. Many members of the United Nations had regarded the sending of the Seventh Fleet to Formosa as unnecessarily provocative to China, and now the current domestic political attacks on the Truman Administration's policy towards China suggested that powerful groups in the United States were trying to force that country into a war with China. There was also a widely held suspicion that the Administration was not controlling General MacArthur as closely as was required by its responsibility for the Unified Command.

The United States found its efforts to obtain collective action against China hampered by a general feeling in the United Nations that although the Chinese entry into the war was aggression under the Charter, in the long run the international situation would not be helped by dealing only with the question of Chinese aggression. Some believed that Peking might have an honest and understandable fear of American occupation of the whole of Korea. The view was widely held, therefore, that before branding China as an aggressor and taking additional collective measures, the United Nations should try to ascertain the attitude of the Chinese Communist Government, and discover if it was possible to end the war and achieve a peaceful settlement on terms consistent with

the United Nation's basic purposes and principles.⁵⁵

Amongst the European allies of the United States there was the fear that resources would be diverted from Europe to the Far East.⁵⁶ They were opposed to a commitment in Korea that would have this effect.

Reservations such as these about condemning Communist China resulted in the appointment of a three-man commission which was to find the basis upon which a successful cease-fire could be attained. The cease-fire committee was established by the General Assembly Dec 14, 1950, and was made up of Nasrollah Entezam of Iran, Lester B. Pearson of Canada, and Sir Benegal N. Rau of India.⁵⁷ The committee suffered a setback almost immediately after its formation when the Chinese Communist delegation which was at the United Nations at the time rejected the United Nations' plan for a cease-fire, calling it a trap.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, Mr. Entezam sent two telegrams to the Peking Government, the first requesting a meeting at which the committee could ascertain the conditions which the Chinese might accept as the basis for a cease-fire,⁵⁹

⁵⁵Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Measures etc.", op. cit., 148-149.

⁵⁶Reitzel et. al., op. cit., 276.

⁵⁷New York Times, Dec 13-15, 1950.

⁵⁸Ibid., Dec 17, 1950.

⁵⁹Text in ibid., Dec 19, 1950.

the second telegram attempting to assure the Peking regime that a cease-fire in Korea would lead to discussion of other Far Eastern disagreements.⁶⁰ China had insisted that the question of Korea be linked to other Far Eastern problems such as the status of Formosa; the United States demanded that the Korean war be kept separate from other controversies. The committee's efforts to meet with the Chinese were unsuccessful; on Dec 22, 1950 Chou En-lai denounced the truce team as illegal and declared that his Government would not negotiate with the committee.⁶¹ As a result the committee reported Jan 2, 1951 that it could make no recommendation with regard to a cease-fire at the present time.⁶²

However, the cease-fire committee continued its attempts to end the fighting in Korea. On Jan 11, 1951 the committee presented a plan consisting of five principles which, it was hoped, would bring peace in Korea and throughout the Far East. These principles were; an immediate cease-fire; further steps to restore peace as soon as a cease-fire occurred; phased withdrawal of foreign troops and arrangements for popular elections in Korea; interim arrangements for the administration and security of Korea until the election of a Korean Government; after

⁶⁰Text in AFPPD, II, 2600.

⁶¹New York Times, Dec 23, 1950.

⁶²AFPPD, II, 2601.

agreement on a cease-fire, a body to be established to settle other Far Eastern problems, including the questions of Formosa and Chinese representation in the United Nations. This latter group was to include representatives of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Communist China.⁶³

The five-step plan was supported by the United States, to the surprise of a number of delegations at the United Nations. The American Government apparently expected that Communist China would reject the proposals, and that the United States could then demand stronger action against China in the face of the Chinese Government's refusal to accept a compromise peace plan. It was hoped that the delegations that had been working for a peaceful settlement would realize the futility of their attempts and support the firmer American policy towards China.⁶⁴

The cease-fire commission's statement of principles was approved by the Political and Security Committee of the General Assembly and dispatched by cable to Peking Jan 13, 1951.⁶⁵ Four days later, Jan 17, 1951, the Chinese Government replied that the peace plan was unacceptable; the idea of a cease-fire first, the Chinese charged, was an attempt to give the American troops a breathing space. The Chinese Government did

⁶³ Text in the New York Times, Jan 12, 1951.

⁶⁴ Ibid., Jan 12, 1951.

⁶⁵ Ibid., Jan 14, 1951.

make counter-proposals: to hold talks before a cease-fire and recognize the Communist government's right to represent China in the United Nations. These counter-proposals were rejected by the United States.⁶⁶

The American Government immediately prepared to present a resolution branding Communist China an aggressor. It was the Administration's intention to press vigorously to have such a resolution accepted by the General Assembly.⁶⁷ On Jan 20, 1951 the United States introduced its resolution in the Political and Security Committee. The resolution charged the Communist Chinese with engaging in aggression in Korea, and called upon the Peking Government to withdraw its forces from Korea. All states and authorities were told to aid the United Nation's actions in Korea and to refrain from helping the aggressors. A committee was to be set up to consider additional measures to be used to meet the aggression. Finally, the President of the General Assembly was asked to appoint two persons to work with him by using their good offices to bring about a cease-fire in Korea and a peaceful attainment of the United Nations' objectives in Korea.⁶⁸

The American Government's concerted determination to label Communist China an aggressor, and the pressure of an American public

⁶⁶ Ibid., Jan 18, 1951.

⁶⁷ Ibid., Jan 19, 1951.

⁶⁸ Text in ibid., Jan 21, 1951.

opinion angered by high casualties,⁶⁹ was demonstrated by resolutions passed by the House of Representatives Jan 19, 1951 and by the Senate Jan 23, 1951 calling upon the United Nations to declare Communist China an aggressor in Korea.⁷⁰ In the United Nations, however, the American stand was viewed with an impressive lack of enthusiasm. Many of the delegations were willing to support a moral condemnation of the Peking Government, but they objected to the part of the American resolution calling for an investigation of additional measures to be taken against China, presumably economic and military sanctions. Most of the United Nations members felt that such sanctions might lead to an extension of the war in Asia. There was a general willingness to pass a simple resolution condemning the aggressor, but the United States would not accept such a move, even though its representatives were telling the other members that if the pending resolution were passed sanctions of force would be considered only after careful study. The Truman Administration wanted to get a strong anti-Communist resolution passed in order to placate extremist elements in the United States, but intended to apply the resolution in a moderate way. The other delegations sympathized with this policy and recognized the need for it, but they were resentful, nonetheless, that in the process they were being made to appear to condone aggression because they opposed parts of the American resolution.

⁶⁹Survey, 1951, 339.

⁷⁰New York Times, Jan 20, 1951 and Jan 24, 1951.

They were also concerned that once the resolution was passed the Truman Administration might not be able to exercise suitable restraint in its execution because of extremist domestic pressure.⁷¹ The most influential non-Communist country opposed to the whole idea of condemning China was India. As the time grew near for a vote on the American resolution, the Indian delegate warned that his government had been informed by Mao-Tsetung that there would be no hope for a peaceful settlement if the condemnatory resolution were passed.⁷²

Despite the misgivings of the majority of the delegations at the United Nations, when the American resolution was voted on in the Political and Security Committee Jan 30, 1951 it passed by a vote of 44 to 7 with 8 abstentions. In an attempt to calm the apprehensions of those who feared that hasty military sanctions against China might follow, an amendment was passed which allowed the committee studying additional measures to defer its recommendations if the good offices committee reported "satisfactory progress in its efforts".⁷³ Two days later the resolution was adopted by the General Assembly by the same vote of 44 to 7 with 9 abstentions.⁷⁴

⁷¹Article by James Reston in ibid., Jan 28, 1951.

⁷²Ibid., Jan 30, 1951.

⁷³Ibid., Jan 31, 1951.

⁷⁴Ibid., Feb 2, 1951. Saudi Arabia had not voted in the Political and Security Committee and was listed as abstaining in the General Assembly's vote.

The United States Government had to apply very strong pressure to get its resolution passed.⁷⁵ The traditional allies of the United States voted in favour of the resolution mainly to preserve the appearance of Western unity.⁷⁶ The Western European countries, Canada, and one or two other members of the British Commonwealth were opposed to any move to apply sanctions against China at that particular time. Most of the other countries that had voted for the resolution also believed that sanctions should not be considered until it was clear that there was no hope of a peaceful settlement. The Arab-Asian group in the United Nations abstained on or voted against the American resolution, marking a weakening of American leadership in that important bloc.⁷⁷ The American victory in the United Nations was thus won at some cost, and it was felt at the time that the United States had gone as far as it could in obtaining United Nations action against Communist China.⁷⁸ The Peking Government's intransigence, however, soon permitted the United States to demand and receive additional measures against China.

Immediately after the adoption of the resolution condemning Chinese aggression, Premier Chou En-lai issued a statement denouncing the resolution; his Government, he said, would "absolutely pay no attention

⁷⁵ Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Measures etc.", op. cit., 150.

⁷⁶ New York Times, Jan 21, 1951.

⁷⁷ Article by Thomas J. Hamilton in ibid., Feb 4, 1951.

⁷⁸ Ibid., Feb 4, 1951.

to" the overtures of the Good Offices Committee which was supposed to continue its efforts to bring about a cease-fire, in Korea.⁷⁹ The Peking Government meant what it said; on Mar 6, 1951 the Committee's head, Mr. Nasrollah Entezam, reported that two attempts to make contact with the Chinese authorities through the Swedish Government had been unsuccessful.⁸⁰ The American Government began once again to exert pressure on the other delegations.⁸¹ Once more the efforts of the Administration were reinforced by Congress, both houses of which passed unanimously resolutions urging the United Nations to place an embargo on the shipment of all war supplies to Communist China.⁸² Further leverage was afforded the Truman Administration, against its wishes, by the Ken Amendment which became law and forbade economic or financial assistance, excluding military aid, to countries which knowingly permitted the export of strategic materials to Communist countries.⁸³ As before, most of the United Nations delegations bowed to the American pressure, albeit somewhat reluctantly, and on May 18, 1951 the General Assembly adopted a resolution recommending that every State prevent the shipment of strategic goods to Communist China and North Korea. The Additional Measures Committee was to report on the effectiveness of the embargo and to consider further measures; once again, however, the

⁷⁹Ibid., Feb 3, 1951.

⁸⁰Survey, 1951, 343.

⁸¹TUSIWA 1951, 121.

⁸²New York Times, May 16, 1951.

⁸³Survey, 1951, 356 and 362.

the committee's report could be deferred if the Good Offices Committee reported progress in its efforts.⁸⁴

With the passage of the embargo resolution, the question of sanctions against China faded into the background.

By intervening in the war, the Chinese, militarily, had succeeded in throwing the United Nations forces back south of the Thirty-eighth Parallel, and, diplomatically, had split the relatively united opposition of the non-Communist world against North Korean aggression. Nonetheless, the cost had been high: two condemnatory resolutions had been passed in the General Assembly; the possibility of Peking representing China in the United Nations was much more remote, since a condemned aggressor could not very well be invited, immediately after condemnation, to join the judges as their peer; and United States policy towards China, Formosa, and the Chinese Nationalists was changed in a manner unfavourable to the Communists.

⁸⁴Text in AFPBD, II, 2614-2615.

CHAPTER VII

TRUCE ATTEMPTS

After the General Assembly resolution of May 18, 1951, the question of sanctions was replaced in the foreground of the Korean scene by attempts to negotiate a truce.

The first attempt had been made earlier by Prime Minister Pandit Nehru of India. On Jul 13, 1950 he sent identical notes to Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Marshal Stalin. In his message Mr. Nehru said that India's purpose was to localize the conflict and to hasten a peaceful settlement by ending the deadlock in the Security Council. Then, he said, the representatives of Communist China could be seated in the Council, the Soviet Union could return to it, and the United States, the Soviet Union and China could find a basis for bringing the war to a close and permanently solving the Korean question.¹

The Indian statement was welcomed by Marshal Stalin in his reply of Jul, 16. The Soviet leader said that peace in Korea could be achieved through the Security Council, with Communist China as a member. He added that representatives of the Korean people would have to be heard.²

¹Text in Stabul, XXIII:578 (Jul 31, 1950), 170.

²Text in the New York Times, Jul 18, 1950.

Mr. Acheson's reply was made Jul 18, 1950. The Secretary of State rejected the proposals which he felt were implied in Mr. Nehru's note. Peace could be obtained in Korea immediately, the Secretary said, if a small minority of the United Nations would accept their obligations. Ending the aggression could not "be contingent in any way upon the determination of other questions which are currently before the United Nations". The only obstacle preventing the Soviet Union from participating in the United Nations was the decision of the Soviet Union itself. The Communist claim that China should be represented on the Security Council by the Peking Government must be settled on its merits by the United Nations. "I know you will agree", Mr. Acheson told the Indian Premier, "that the decision on China's seat on the Council should not be dictated by an unlawful aggression or by any other conduct which would subject the United Nations to coercion and duress".³ This part of the note reflected the annoyance of the Truman Administration over Mr. Nehru's message. The American Government believed that it was being asked to buy off a Communist aggression.⁴ The United States therefore took the position, as Mr. Acheson's note shows, that there must be no connection between the question of China's seat on the Council and the problem of bringing peace to Korea. To do otherwise, the Government believed, would be to reward aggression.

³Text in Stabul, XXIII:578 (Jul 31, 1950), 170-171.

⁴TUSTWA 1950, 227.

Acknowledging Mr. Acheson's note, Mr. Nehru sent a message Jul 19 in which he said that his proposals concerning the admission of Communist China to the United Nations had been made on its merits and also in the hope that it would improve the chances of a peaceful solution of the Korean problem. "I do not think", he added tartly, "that the admission of China now would be an encouragement of aggression".⁵ This note marked the end of the unsuccessful Indian attempt at mediation.

The next important effort to achieve a peaceful settlement was made, as we have seen, by the three-man cease-fire committee led by Mr. Entezam, President of the United Nations General Assembly. When Peking rejected this committee's five principles for peace in Korea, the cease-fire team was no longer of any use. It was followed by another three-man body, also headed by Mr. Entezam, the Good Offices Committee established by the resolution condemning Communist China as an aggressor. Once more, the Chinese Government's refusal to deal with the United Nations committee, aggravated this time by the fact that the body was created by the condemnatory resolution, prevented any chance of a successful ceasefire. During this period other countries of the Arab-Asian group worked to achieve a settlement, but without success.

The first real break in the situation began in early Jun, 1951.

⁵Text in Stabul, XXIII;578 (Jul 31, 1950), 171.

In Ottawa, Canada, on Jun 1, 1951, United Nations Secretary General Trygve Lie announced his belief that the time had come for a new effort to stop the fighting in Korea. Noting that the aggression had been repelled and the aggressor thrown back beyond the Thirty-eighth Parallel, Mr. Lie said, in a significant passage: "If a cease fire could be arranged approximately along the Thirty-eighth Parallel then the main purpose of the Security Council resolutions of June 25 and July 7 will be fulfilled, provided that the cease fire is followed by the restoration of peace and security in the area". If there was no cease fire in the near future, added Mr. Lie, it would be the duty of all United Nations members to reconsider the situation and to contribute additional forces.⁶ The Secretary General thus offered the Communists a settlement in Korea based roughly on a return to the status quo ante bellum. To influence them to accept this not unattractive bid he simultaneously hinted that a rejection of his offer might lead to intensified military efforts by the United Nations forces in Korea.

The next morning, Jun 2, Secretary of State Acheson reinforced Mr. Lie's words in his testimony before the Senate committees investigating the dismissal of General MacArthur. In reply to a question asking if there was a possibility of a cease fire at or near the Thirty-eighth

⁶New York Times, Jun 2, 1951.

Parallel, Mr. Acheson said:

If you could have a real settlement, that would accomplish the military purposes in Korea. That is if the aggression would end and you had reliable assurances that it would not be resumed, then you could return to a peacetime status . . .⁷

These suggestions that the United Nations and, more importantly, the United States would welcome or at least consider a truce which left Korea divided brought forth an important offer from the Communist side. On a United Nations radio broadcast Jun 23, 1951, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Jacob A. Malik attacked United States policies and contrasted them with Russia's peaceful aims and actions. However, at the end of his address he suddenly stated the belief that the Korean problem could be settled. As a first step he suggested that discussions should be started "between the belligerents for a cease fire and an armistice providing for the mutual withdrawal of forces from the Thirty-eighth Parallel".⁸ There was no mention of tying a cease-fire in Korea to other Far Eastern problems, a demand which had previously been made by the Communists.

The first American reaction was skeptical, but did not close the door to further Soviet offers. In an official statement the United

⁷Text in ibid., Jun 3, 1951.

⁸Text in ibid., Jun 24, 1951.

States Government questioned whether Mr. Malik's speech was not simply propaganda, but expressed the Government's willingness to help bring an end to the war in Korea if the Communists now wanted "to end the aggression in Korea".⁹

Other governments were more willing to accept Mr. Malik's remarks as a serious truce offer. While the American Government maintained an attitude of "determined skepticism", the British and other governments instructed their missions in Moscow and Peking to ask for clarification of Mr. Malik's proposals.¹⁰ Trygve Lie quickly issued a message, Jun 24, 1951, urging that negotiations for a military ceasefire be started as soon as possible. If a ceasefire could be attained, he said, the political peace and security in Korea could be discussed in the appropriate organs of the United Nations.¹¹

Further encouragement was given to those seeking an end to the Korean conflict by an editorial in the official Peking Government newspaper, The People's Daily, broadcast by China Jun 25. While most of the editorial, like Mr. Malik's statement, was devoted to an attack on the United States, the paper did "fully endorse" the Soviet peace proposals. The Peking broadcast gave the impression that the views of China and the

⁹Text in ibid.

¹⁰Article by James Reston in ibid., Jun 25, 1951.

¹¹Text in ibid., Jun 25, 1951.

Soviet Union on peace negotiations were not identical, but this very divergence increased the desire of the American officials to seek clarification of the Communists' attitude.¹² The American Ambassador in Moscow, Alan G. Kirk, was therefore instructed to ask the Soviet Union to clarify its ceasefire proposals.¹³ In a meeting with Mr. Kirk Jun 27, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko said that the armistice should be negotiated by military representatives of the United Nations Unified Command, the Korean Republic Command, the North Korean Command, and the Chinese "volunteer units". He said that the armistice would include a ceasefire and would be limited to strictly military matters without involving any political or territorial questions. He also indicated that it would be up to the parties in Korea to decide what arrangement would be made later for a political and territorial settlement.¹⁴

After a number of conferences in the State Department and between officials of the Department of State and Defense, an order was sent to General Matthew B. Ridgway, the United Nations Commander, instructing him to broadcast a message of Jun 30, 1951 to the Commander in Chief Communist Forces in Korea, offering to name a representative if the Communists wished a meeting to discuss an armistice.¹⁵ In a radio broad-

¹² Ibid., Jun 26, 1951.

¹³ Ibid., Jun 27, 1951.

¹⁴ Statement by The Department of State, text in AFRBD, II, 2636-2637.

¹⁵ HST, II, 458.

cast from Peking on Jul 1, the Communist commander agreed to meet for "talks concerning cessation of military activities and establishment of peace". On Jul 7, liaison officers met for the first time, and on Jul 10, the first meeting of the delegations occurred.¹⁶

The aims of the United States Government in entering negotiation for an armistice were laid down in a directive from the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent to General Ridgway at the end of Jun, 1951. The United States' main military interest in the armistice was to end the hostilities in Korea, to ensure that fighting was not resumed, and to protect the security of the United Nations forces. It was stressed that the armistice arrangements must be such as to be acceptable to the United States over a long period of time, since it was not known how long a period would elapse before a permanent settlement in Korea was achieved. The discussions between the military commanders were to be limited strictly to military matters and were to exclude such issues as Formosa or China's seat in the United Nations. World opinion was not to be ignored, and General Ridgway was therefore instructed not to allow the negotiations to stop except for failure to obtain agreement on the United States' minimum terms. It was appreciated that these terms would be difficult for the Chinese to accept.¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid., II, 459.

¹⁷Text of directive in ibid., II, 458-459.

The talks accordingly began, and although progress was slow and interruptions many, agreement was reached on a number of matters. The first item of business was the agenda. The Communists initially proposed an agenda which was unacceptable to the United States because it mentioned the Thirty-eighth Parallel as being the line of demarcation for the ceasefire, and because it included an item on the withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea. The United States did not want the Thirty-eighth Parallel to be the line of demarcation because it was less defensible militarily than the line which they held at the time. The question of the withdrawal of foreign forces was considered to be beyond the purely military scope of the armistice talks. Sixteen days after the Communists first proposed their agenda, a period interrupted by disputes over the neutrality of the conference site, an agenda was agreed upon.¹⁸ It consisted of five items:

- (1) Adoption of agenda.
- (2) Fixing a military demarcation line between both sides so as to establish a demilitarized zone.
- (3) Concrete arrangements for a ceasefire and an armistice, including the composition, authority, and functions of a supervising organization for carrying out the terms of a ceasefire and armistice.
- (4) Arrangements relating to prisoners of war.
- (5) Recommendations to the governments concerned on both sides.¹⁹

¹⁸Survey, 1951, 442-444.

¹⁹Text in AFPBD, II, 2637-2638.

Further hard bargaining, adjournments, protests, and counter-protests culminated eventually in an agreement on the second item on the agenda. On Nov 23, 1951 it was accepted by both sides that the actual line of contact between the opposing forces would be made the military demarcation line, and that after an armistice was signed both sides would withdraw their forces two kilometers from the line in order to establish a demilitarized zone for the duration of the armistice.²⁰

The next item on the agenda to be completed was the fifth one. Discussion in sub-committees on points 3 and 4 was being undertaken but without complete success. However, On Feb 16, 1952 the Communists proposed that, in regard to agenda item 5, the military commanders of both sides should recommend to the governments concerned on both sides that within three months after an armistice became effective a high-level political conference of both sides should be held to settle by negotiation "the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korea question, et cetera".²¹ These proposals were accepted by the United Nations Command on the condition that the recommendation would be made to the United Nations as well as to the Republic of Korea, that the term "foreign forces" means non-Korean forces, and that the word et cetera" did not refer to matters outside of Korea.²² These conditions were accepted by the Communists

²⁰Text of agreement in ibid., II, 2641.

²¹Text in Documents (R.I.I.A.) for 1952, 428.

²²Text in ibid., for 1952, 428.

and final agreement on agenda item 5 was made on Feb 19, 1952.²³

By the first week of May 1952 both sides had made enough concessions to provide the basis for an agreement on item 3 of the agenda, concrete arrangements for a ceasefire and armistice.²⁴ It was agreed that there should be a ceasefire within twelve hours of signing the armistice, and that within seventy-two hours of the signing all forces should be withdrawn from the demilitarized zone. Within five days all military forces were to be withdrawn from rear areas and the coastal islands and waters of Korea. No additions were to be made to existing strength in troops and material, but replacement would be permitted. A Military Armistice Commission made up of officers from both sides was to supervise the armistice and deal with violations. A Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission was to supervise the carrying out of the agreements on reinforcing troops and equipment.²⁵

Only the question of exchanging prisoners of war now remained to be settled, but the delegations were hopelessly dead-locked on this issue. The United Nations maintained that prisoners of war who did not wish to be repatriated should not be forced to return to their native land. The Communists insisted that all prisoners must be exchanged, even

²³ Survey, 1952, 309.

²⁴ Ibid., 313-316.

²⁵ Special Report of the United Nations Command to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Aug 7, 1953, text in AFPBD, II, 2630-2631.

if force were required. The difficulties of compromise on this obstacle were very great, for it involved the strongest convictions on the part of both sides.²⁶ To recognize officially that some 50,000 men out of approximately 130,000 did not want, and would forcibly resist, repatriation was apparently considered by the Communists to be too damaging to their prestige.²⁷ The United Nations' view on the matter was partially explained by Mr. Anthony Eden in the House of Commons. There was, first of all, the practical difficulty of forcing such large numbers of men to do something which they were determined not to do. Furthermore, it was against the sense of values of the nations of the non-Communist world. Finally, there was the effect of forceful repatriation on world opinion. "It would", he said, "make a deplorable impression on fair and liberal-minded opinion all over the world and would go far to cancel out the effect made on world opinion by the evident firmness of purpose underlying the United Nations resistance to aggression in Korea".²⁸ It was also believed that in the twentieth century when some of the conscripted soldiers of a totalitarian regime might not want to be repatriated, the Western world stood to gain in both the Korean and any future conflict by the general acceptance of the principle of voluntary repatriation.²⁹

²⁶ TUSIWA 1952, 183.

²⁷ Ibid., 182-183.

²⁸ Quoted in Survey, 1952, 316.

²⁹ Ibid., 319.

The weakness of the United Nations position on the question of repatriation was that the Geneva Convention and past custom did not provide for the unwillingness of prisoners of war to return to their own country. The relevant article of the Geneva Convention of Aug 12, 1949 stated that "Prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities".³⁰ While there was no reference to forced repatriation the article nonetheless did say that the prisoners should be repatriated. In defending the United Nations Command's position on the question, Mr. Dean Acheson argued that the Geneva Convention had been drawn up on the presumption that the prisoner would want to go home. There was nothing in the Convention, he said, to suggest that prisoners must be forced to go, if necessary, at bayonet point. Mr. Acheson appears to me to have weakened his stand by pointing out that when the 1949 Geneva Convention was being negotiated certain delegates had claimed that the existing international practice should be enlarged to give the prisoners of war the absolute right to stay. After discussion, said Mr. Acheson, the new proposal was rejected, and the existing international practice was maintained, that is, the detaining State retained discretion to grant or not grant asylum.³¹ In other words, Mr. Acheson justified the decision not

³⁰ Quoted in TUSIWA 1952, 182 n.

³¹ Address of Secretary Dean Acheson to the First Committee of the General Assembly Oct 24, 1952, U.N. General Assembly Official Records, Seventh Session, First Committee, 26.

to repatriate unwilling prisoners on the grounds that the international legal concept of political asylum gave the detaining State this right; he implied that the delegates at Geneva in 1949 had accepted this principle. But surely, if the views of the majority of the delegates at Geneva were to be used as an authority, a less tortured interpretation of their refusal to specifically include an article against forced repatriation in the Convention would be that they either approved or at least accepted forced repatriation, rather than that they believed that the question was already adequately covered by the right of political asylum.

Mr. Acheson also countered Communist charges that refusal to repatriate the prisoners was illegal by pointing to a number of treaties and declarations made by the Soviet Union after World War I and during World War II in which the Soviet Union supported the principle of repatriating only those prisoners who desired to go home.³²

Whatever the legal merits of the two opposing arguments, the practical result of the disagreement on the repatriation of prisoners of war was the failure of the truce talks during the presidency of Harry Truman. With all other matters on the agenda settled, it proved

³²Ibid., 26.

impossible to complete an armistice agreement because of the repatriation question. Accordingly, on Oct 8, 1952 the United Nations Command Delegation recessed the talks pending constructive proposals by the Communists. They remained recessed until some time after Mr. Truman had retired from office.

The preceding account of the armistice negotiations does not convey the atmosphere in which these talks were conducted, the accusations and counter accusations, the propaganda, the tactical adjournments and appeals to world opinion.³³ I hope, however, that it does show that, despite the suspicions and fencing of the delegations of both sides, very real progress was made on a very important and difficult matter involving sharply conflicting attitudes and objectives. By the spring of 1952 the United Nations Command had obtained Communist agreement to a settlement which pretty well satisfied the directive sent to General Ridgway at the end of Jun, 1951. An acceptable ceasefire had been negotiated; the security of the United Nations forces was protected by the choice of the demarcation line and by the supervised restriction of reinforcements. This security was endangered to a certain extent by an important United Nations concession which allowed repair and new construction of airfields during the armistice period; presumably the Communists could have used this right to build up their inferior air strength and then resume

³³For a fuller account of the negotiations, see Survey, 1951 and 1952. An American description of the difficulties of negotiating with the Communists is given in William H. Vatcher Jr., Panmunjom, The Story of the Korean Military Armistice Negotiations (New York, 1958).

hostilities. However, the concession was made conditional on the Communist acceptance of voluntary repatriation, and had they accepted this exchange of concessions the United Nations would have made an important gain in return for some lessening of military security.

What prevented a final settlement when the terms of the original directive had so nearly been met was the introduction of a new issue not mentioned in the directive and not contemplated at the time it was drawn up, viz., the forced repatriation of prisoners of war. Opposition to forced repatriation became as much one of the minimum terms of the United Nations Command as were those conditions outlined in the Joint Chiefs' directive to General Ridgway. The United States and its allies made the question a basic condition for an armistice partly, as we have seen, on principle, and partly for reasons of prestige and propaganda in both the Korean War and possible future conflicts. Because of the damage that would be caused to their prestige, the Communists could not accept, at least in 1952, the principle of voluntary repatriation. The armistice talks thus broke down because both sides had reached their minimum terms and could go no further; as the guiding directive to General Ridgway put it, the United Nations delegation could make greater demands than necessary at first, for bargaining purposes, and then retreat, but "Our minimum position is essential to us".³⁴

³⁴Text in HST, II, 459.

CHAPTER VIII

WORKING THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS

An interesting aspect of the Korean conflict was that one of the main Powers in the struggle chose to channel its policies through an international organization made up of many nations, not all of whom were in agreement with that Power's objectives and methods. Sovereign states are notoriously reluctant to restrict their freedom of action by co-ordinating their policies with those of an external international body, even one made up of friendly nations. It was particularly striking that a state as powerful as the United States should associate itself so closely with an organization which contained enemies and neutral nations.

Why did the United States make the remarkable decision to work through the United Nations? In the first place, working through the United Nations was a logical continuation of previous American policies. Support of the United Nations was one of the basic features of the Truman Administration's general foreign policy. And in its policy towards Korea before the war broke out, the United States, as we have seen, had shifted much of its responsibility for Korean affairs on to the United Nations.

Aside from the desirability of continuity, which had not bothered the Truman Administration unduly in other parts of its Korea policy, there were certain definite advantages for the Administration in

combatting the Communist aggression in concert with the other members of the United Nations rather than alone. One of these advantages concerned the reaction of other nations to American intervention in the Korea War. By presenting its action as one taken on behalf of the United Nations, and by operating in response to the resolutions of United Nations organs, the United States placed its resistance to the North Korean aggression on a moral plane higher than that of national self-interest. As a result, the United States got both moral and material support for its policies and actions in Korea that would not otherwise have been provided.¹ Moreover, by making its effort in Korea under the United Nations flag, the American Government was able to refute the charge of imperialism which was made by the Communists and which in other instances found ready acceptance in those nations just emerging from colonial rule.

Conversely, the United States Government believed that by keeping the Korean question before the United Nations, the self-interested basis of Communist policies would be revealed. Considerable emphasis was laid upon the value of the international body as a forum where each State had to express its views on the important issues of world peace; in the words of Mr. Truman, in the United Nations "no country can escape the judgement of mankind". It was the hope of the American Government that

¹Goodrich, Korea, U.S. Policy etc., 211, and Benjamin V. Cohen, "The Impact of the United Nations on United States Foreign Policy", International Organization, V (1951), 279.

most of the world's nations would compare the American and Communist aims in Korea, as revealed in the debates and voting in the United Nations, and would support the American cause as more in accordance with the principles of that organization. There was also the possibility that the Soviet Union would then feel obliged by the force of world opinion to modify its policies to make them more presentable to the rest of the world.²

One other advantage of working through the United Nations Organization was perhaps not perceived in Jun, 1950, but proved to be valuable later on. The Truman Administration was able to use the connection with the United Nations to protect itself from domestic political criticism and pressures. Frequently during the first Congressional debate on the Korean crisis Mr. Truman was criticized for committing American ships and planes into battle without asking for specific authority from Congress, but each time the criticism was stopped by an observation that the President was acting in response to an appeal from the United Nations, which the United States was obliged by treaty to support. The Administration was thus able to take quick action and at the same time avoid serious political division at home.³

² Goodrich, Korea, U.S. Policy etc., 40, and Letter from President Truman to the Congress Transmitting the Report on the Participation of the United States in the United Nations for the Year 1951, text in DOAFR, XIII, 202-203.

³ Article by James Reston, New York Times, May 4, 1951.

Later on, the United States Government was strengthened in its resistance to domestic demands for stronger action against Communist China, such as bombing Chinese bases, by the views expressed by its allies in the United Nations and by the need of taking these views sympathetically into account in order to preserve the collective character of the Korea action.⁴ These very considerable domestic pressures might well have proved irresistible had they not been counter-balanced by the necessity of coordinating American policies with those of the other countries participating in the Korean war.

The advantages of operating under the authority of the United Nations, rather than under the United States' own authority as a sovereign State and Great Power, seem greatly to have outweighed the disadvantages. A priori, one might have thought that the need to consider other nations' opinions would have been a severe hindrance, but in practice the United States does not appear to have been much more hampered than it would have been if it had acted unilaterally in Korea. During the first few months of the war the aims of the United States and the other non-Communist countries were identical: all desired to see the aggression repelled. When the United Nations forces approached the Thirty-Eighth Parallel for the first time there was some disagreement concerning the wisdom of

⁴Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Measures etc.", 166.

crossing the boundary, but the issue was a minor one. It is true that when the Chinese entered the war, most members of the United Nations disagreed with the United States on the action that should be taken; as a result of this opposition the American Government was forced to accept a less forceful policy towards the Chinese than it would otherwise have adopted. But what was the strong action that the United States wanted? This would have involved a condemnatory resolution by the General Assembly and sanctions against the Chinese Government. These would have been no easier to obtain if the United States had been fighting alone in Korea. The American Government's allies imposed some restraint on military action against the Chinese, but these were usually restrictions that the Administration rather agreed with, and found useful to control the more militant members of the government. Military decisions do not appear to have been made more slowly because of the United Nations character of the Korean operation, and while political decisions may have been held up somewhat because of the need to debate them within the United Nations, the characteristics of the American legislative system are such as to forbid the easy assumption that the American Government would have moved much faster on its own.

Realizing that working through the United Nations could be a hindrance, the United States worked to make the arrangements as efficient as possible. A number of methods were used to make the United Nations an

effective instrument of American policy. Although fighting as a United Nations force, the troops in Korea were under American command which was in turn free from real control by the United Nations. General MacArthur testified before the Senate committees investigating his dismissal that his connection with the United Nations was "largely nominal". The entire control of his command and his actions came from the American Chiefs of Staff. He had no direct connection with the United Nations at all, he said, and the controls over him were exactly the same as they would have been had the forces under him been American.⁵ Thus the United States was able to have the advantage of the United Nations name for its military action in Korea, without giving up any of the essential command functions.

Another way in which the United States tried to minimize the possible drawbacks of the United Nations connection was by persuading the other delegations to support policies desired by the United States. The American Government was able to use its great political power to bring pressure to bear on reluctant delegations. This use of political power was demonstrated in early 1951 when the American delegation successfully brought most of the United Nations members into line on the resolution condemning the Chinese aggression, although most of the delegations had serious reservations about the resolution.

⁵ Testimony before SENCOM, May 3, 1951, text in New York Times, May 4, 1951.

Perhaps the greatest potential obstacles to pursuing American policies successfully through the United Nations were the presence of the Communist delegations in the organization and the fact that the greatest power in dealing with international disputes was given by the Charter to the Security Council where the Soviet Union could use its veto power to prevent action which it opposed. This latter barrier, however, was successfully circumvented by stressing the provisions of the Charter which allow the General Assembly to discuss and make recommendations on matters concerning international peace and security. When the first decisions were made in Jun and Jul, 1950, committing forces to Korea and establishing the legal form and basis of the intervention, it was not necessary to bypass the Security Council because the Soviet delegate was boycotting it at the time. The United States was ready, however, to bring the matter up before the General Assembly should Mr. Malik return.⁶

⁶The way in which this was to be done is instructive, for it not only illustrates one of the methods by which the United States made the United Nations an adequate implement of American foreign policy, but also shows how written rules, supposedly inflexible, can be twisted and shaped by interpretation if they prove inconvenient. Before the important Security Council meeting of Jun 27, 1950 in which military intervention was authorized, the possibility of Mr. Malik's return to the Council table, and a subsequent Soviet veto, was discussed. In anticipation of such a turn of events, the American delegation planned to ask Secretary-General Trygve Lie to call a special session of the General Assembly immediately, and to transfer the Korean question to that body. At that time the Assembly's by-laws required two weeks notice and the approval of a majority of members to call a special session. Obviously, such a procedure would take too long, and Mr. Lie therefore provided the American delegation that he would overcome delay in the following manner. He proposed to call the member governments, not to ask approval for a special session but to tell them that the Korean situation made one necessary.

With the return of the Soviet delegate to the Council on Aug 1, it became necessary to provide some means by which important matters could be brought before the General Assembly without delay. The solution was found in a procedure first suggested by the United States and embodied in the General Assembly's famous "Uniting for Peace" resolution of Nov 3, 1950.⁷ The Assembly resolved that if the Security Council was unable, because of disagreement among its permanent members, to carry out its responsibilities to maintain international security when the peace was being threatened or broken, then the matter was to be considered immediately by the General Assembly. The Assembly would be able to make recommendations to the Members for collective measures, including military force if necessary. It was provided that if the Assembly was not in session at the time of such a crisis, it could meet at an emergency session within twenty-four hours of a request therefor; the vote of seven members of the Security Council or of a majority of

⁶ He would then arrange for the permanent United Nations representatives at Lake Success to represent their governments, rather than waiting for special delegates to arrive; thus a special session could meet in 24 or 48 hours. When these representatives were assembled, Mr. Lie planned to rule officially that since they were the representatives of the member governments of the United Nations they constituted a legally called special session, even though the procedure followed did not accord with the Assembly's by-laws. Article by Thomas J. Hamilton, *ibid.*, Sep 27, 1952. In the event, such manoeuvres proved unnecessary, but the episode illustrates that the apparent difficulties of working through the United Nations could be overcome if one had the will and ingenuity, and the support of most of the organisation's members.

⁷ TUSIWA, 1950, 369-370.

the General Assembly was sufficient to call a special session.⁸ With the establishment of this procedure, the Soviet power of veto in the Security Council was no longer an important barrier to quick action by the United Nations. While the General Assembly could only recommend collective measures, States taking action in response to such a recommendation would enjoy the prestige of United Nations sanction, probably as much as if the authorization had come from the Security Council. The United Nations could thus continue to be used by the United States as an effective instrument of American policy, for as long as the action proposed by the United States was supported by a majority, the United States could obtain the valuable approval of the United Nations, and without any great delay.

Although working in various ways to solve the problems created by pursuing American policy within a United Nations framework, the United States Government was careful to preserve the United Nations window dressing for its operations in Korea. One simple way of doing this was by obtaining multiple United Nations sponsorship of resolutions originally drafted by the Department of State. The initiative for action would therefore remain with the United States, but the facade of co-operation would be maintained. A good example of the use of this device was the

⁸Text in DOAFR, XII, 182-186.

resolution passed by the General Assembly Oct 7, 1950. This resolution was largely drafted by the United States, but was sponsored by Australia, Brazil, Cuba, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom.⁹

The Security Council's resolution of Jul 7, 1950 was another attempt by the United States to give its action in Korea a more clearly United Nations character. With almost all the military forces coming from the United States, particularly at that time, the Department of State felt strongly that the intervention must be made to appear the collective act of the United Nations, rather than that of one nation operating under a United Nations resolution.¹⁰ Accordingly, the United States had Britain and France introduce a resolution which asked the United States to designate a commander of the United Nations forces and authorized the use of the United Nations flag by the commander.¹¹ In this way General MacArthur was made a United Nations commander rather than an American one, and military operations were conducted under the banner of the international organization rather than under the Stars and Stripes.

⁹Goodrich, Korea, U.S. Policy etc., 129.

¹⁰New York Times, Jul 2, 1950.

¹¹Ibid., Jul 8, 1950.

In their public addresses the members of the American executive stressed the collective nature of the action in Korea; this, too, helped to strengthen the impression that the opposition to the aggression came not just from the United States, but from almost all the United Nations. In a radio address Sep 1, 1950 President Truman said that the "peace-loving nations" faced two possible courses when North Korea launched its attack. One course was that of appeasement; the other was:

"the one which the free world chose. The United Nations made its historic decision to meet military aggression with armed force. The effects of that decision will be felt far beyond Korea. The firm action taken by the United Nations is our best hope of achieving world peace.

It is your liberty and mine which is involved. What is at stake is the free way of life . . . All these are bound up in the present action of the United Nations to put down aggression in Korea."¹²

¹²Text in DOAFR, XII, 9-12. Similarly, in a letter to the Congress in Jul, 1951, Mr. Truman spoke of the

". . . solidarity among United Nations members against aggression.

The struggle of the United Nations against Communist aggression in 1950 has a deep significance . . . This significance lies in the simple fact that the United Nations acted promptly and resolutely, and with success, against deliberate . . . aggression."

The President did speak of the important part played by the United States in these events, but he then went on to

". . . pay special tribute to the gallant fighting men of the other countries who defended the cause of the United Nations in battle . . .

We have seen that the United States gained real advantages by operating through the United Nations, and that the disadvantages of such a course were few. I have also tried to show how the United States attempted to make its association with the United Nations even more fruitful by reducing the ability of opponents of American policies to obstruct these policies in the United Nations, while at the same time strengthening the image of collective rather than American action in Korea. However, despite the considerable success resulting from the decision to operate under the authority of the United Nations, certain criticisms can be made of the United States Government's relationship with the United Nations during the Korean war. When the North Koreans first attacked, the United States reacted quickly, first dispatching air and naval support to the South Koreans, and then providing ground troops. The air and naval forces were committed before the Security Council had authorized the use of military assistance. Although it was vital that the decision be made quickly, it should have been possible to have a closer correlation between the actions of the United States and the United Nations, given the speed of modern communications and the accessibility of the representatives of the member states. Greater coordination was desirable not only to establish the United Nations

¹²United Nations action in Korea has been truly collective action. Concrete aid . . . has been made available by thirty-nine members of the United Nations; political support, by no less than fifty-three members".

Text in New York Times, Jul 27, 1951.

character of the intervention, but also to give the Security Council an opportunity to decide for itself whether there were any new developments which merited attempts to find a peaceful solution, or whether the attitude of the North Korean authorities precluded any course of action except military resistance.

Ordering the Seventh Fleet to the Strait of Formosa also damaged the image of collective action. It may well be that the Administration's military advisers insisted that Formosa must be safeguarded if American troops were to be committed in Korea, but the move had nothing to do with the United Nations' recommendations, was directed against China rather than North Korea, and involved Members of the United Nations in an undertaking which they disapproved and which they would have opposed had they been consulted. If Mr. Truman was advised that Formosa had to be protected then he may have decided that an intervention which appeared less collective than was perhaps desirable was nevertheless preferable to no intervention at all. If this was the case, he might have at least delayed moving the fleet into the Strait until the intervention in Korea was well under way, until the plans of the Chinese Communists for Formosa had been more fully ascertained, and until efforts had been made to persuade the non-Communist Members of the United Nations that such action was necessary.

A serious weakness of the United Nations intervention in Korea,

arising from the unique position of the United States in the Korean action, was failure to create organs and procedures for providing adequate political guidance to the military measures taken against the Communists. The Security Council had been established to provide such direction, but the opposition of the Soviet Union to the Korean operation rendered the Council completely ineffective. The General Assembly was asked to assume the responsibilities abandoned by the Security Council, and did so. But the Assembly was not equipped to provide continuous political guidance, and after the Thirty-eighth Parallel was crossed in Oct, 1950 such guidance became increasingly necessary. Most Members of the United Nations were insisting that all reasonable steps must be taken to prevent Russian or Chinese intervention; under these circumstances, the manner in which military operations were conducted could have important political results. However, apart from the resolution of Oct 7, 1950, which in effect authorized the United Nations forces to occupy North Korea for political as well as military reasons, the primary function exercised by the General Assembly was to exert a restraining influence at crucial times. This was not done so much by formal resolution as by providing a forum for discussion and an opportunity for informal contacts. In the absence of any strong initiative from the organs of the United Nations, the task of providing political guidance for the military action in Korea fell upon the United States Government. There were, however, two important weaknesses in this system.

There was, in the first place, no adequate participation by other nations, especially those whose troops were fighting in Korea, in decisions which had political as well as military repercussions. Conventional diplomatic channels were not adequate for this task for they did not give other States enough information about what was being done and planned and neither afforded adequate opportunity for the expression of other nations' views nor gave sufficient assurance that such views would be taken into account. While a valid argument might be made against giving the power of political guidance to a United Nations body, because of the inequality of the contributions made to the war effort by the Members, it was only fitting that more effective participation in important decisions be given to those nations whose sacrifices were substantial and who were likely to suffer materially from the consequences of a wrong decision. This right was recognized by the United States in the matter of "hot pursuit." When "hot pursuit" was being considered Secretary of State Acheson sent a telegram to each of the countries with troops in Korea saying that it might be necessary to permit hot pursuit of enemy planes across the Yalu River. The telegram did not request the approval of these States, saying that the matter was one of "military necessity". The fact is, however, that hot pursuit was opposed by these States, and the United States did not put it into effect. Usually the United States was less willing to consider the views of its allies. Perhaps the best example of the American reluctance to include other nations in the important decisions of the Korea conflict was the United

States' failure to include on the truce negotiation team representatives of its allies in Korea, with the exception of South Korea.

Some attempts were made to increase the participation of the States fighting in Korea. In late Nov, 1950 the American Government began the practice of holding regular weekly conferences in Washington, attended by representatives of United Nations Members that had armed forces in Korea. At these meetings the representatives were briefed on the military and political developments of the past week and were given an estimate of the current situation. Little information was given on future operations, largely for security reasons. These consultations did not satisfy the need for collective political guidance, however, because they did not provide the other governments with enough information or time before an event for them to formulate a position and have their views considered. In Jun, 1952 Mr. Emmanuel Shinwell, the former British Minister of Defence, said that his Government was "never satisfied with the consultation and co-operation that had been going on. We always pressed for more consultation but for some reason or other the United States Administration resisted the pressure and we never received that satisfaction we desired".¹³ The United States consented in Jul, 1952 to have a British Commonwealth representative attached to the United Nations Commander's staff to express opinions or give warnings

¹³ Quoted in Survey, 1952, 323.

of the possible consequences of actions planned by the Unified Command. This officer, however, was responsible directly to the Commander, rather than to his own government,¹⁴ and there is no evidence that his presence on the staff altered the Commander's decisions appreciably.

The second major weakness in the system by which political guidance was provided by the United States was the failure to implement effectively policies and understandings that had been adopted. The Truman Administration failed to establish sufficient control over the United Nations Commander until General MacArthur was dismissed in the spring of 1951. There were a number of reasons for this failure: the American tradition of giving wide scope in military operations to the commander in the field; the great prestige of General MacArthur; domestic attacks on the Administration's Far Eastern policy, and the identification of General MacArthur with a more positive approach to Far Eastern policy; all of which made the Administration hesitate to do anything which might raise a political storm at home and perhaps jeopardize the success of the collective action. This lack of control had serious results, particularly when the United States Government sought to implement a policy of caution and restraint to which it had committed itself in the General Assembly. For example, the Government advised General MacArthur not to send United Nations forces to the Yalu River, but the

¹⁴Ibid., 324.

General, for reasons of "military necessity" acted contrary to this advice, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff reluctantly accepted his decision. The United Nations Members regarded this as a serious provocation to the Communist Chinese - the kind of action they had hoped to avoid and had reason to believe would be avoided. The result was that their confidence in United States leadership was badly shaken, and the American Government found it much more difficult to get its policies accepted by the other Members.¹⁵

Once more reservation about the American decision to work through the United Nations might be suggested. A thorough discussion of this point is beyond the scope of this work, but it should perhaps at least be raised here. Was the usefulness of the United Nations in international affairs increased or decreased when the United States persuaded a majority of the Members to adopt American policies as United Nations policies, and then acted as the chief agent in the execution of those policies? The aggressor in Korea was forced to retreat, and perhaps the United Nations gained prestige from this victory, but on the other hand, how many nations and people, realising the American predominance in the war effort, accepted the Communist charge that the United Nations was the catspaw of the United States? Can an international organization made up of all the "peace-loving nations" of the world associate itself

¹⁵The preceding critique is based largely on L.M. Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Measures etc.", 164-169.

strongly with one of its powerful members, against another powerful member, and still remain an effective influence in world affairs?

CHAPTER IX

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

During the Korean conflict the Truman Administration faced certain problems which did not arise directly from the military effort to defeat the enemy, but which were created or aggravated by the war in Korea. An examination of these problems is necessary because they in turn naturally affected the Administration's foreign policy in general, and its Korea policy in particular.

One problem arose from the fact that the United States' Supreme Commander in the Far East was General Douglas MacArthur. It is not surprising that the Truman Administration found it difficult to control General MacArthur. The General held America's highest rank short of Commander in Chief. He had a brilliant military career behind him. He was used to having absolute authority over the area under his command. And he was surrounded by an adoring staff of worshippers who never permitted the General to appear to the public as anything less than perfect. General MacArthur had served in the Far East for a very long time -- when he finally returned to the United States it was for the first time in fourteen years -- and he considered himself an authority on that part of the world, as, no doubt, he was. Finally, there was the MacArthur personality, a magnificent blend of will, egoism, patriotism, religion, and historical awareness. Thus there were added to the normal

difficulties of guiding and controlling a distant commander, who after all has a war to fight and win, the formidable qualifications and personality of this particular officer.

President Truman's announcement of Apr 11, 1951 declared that he was relieving General MacArthur of all his commands because the General was "unable to give his wholehearted support to the policies of the United States Government and of the United Nations in matters pertaining to his special duties", and because it was "fundamental . . . that military commanders must be governed by the policies and directives issued to them in the manner provided by our laws and constitution".¹ The background of these charges was a series of acts and public pronouncements by General MacArthur, beginning in the summer of 1950, which had repeatedly embarrassed the Administration in its attempts to formulate and execute American foreign policy, particularly Far Eastern policy.

Uneasiness was first aroused in Washington after General MacArthur made a trip to Formosa at the end of Jul, 1950, at the suggestion of his superiors, to talk to Chiang Kai-shek about military matters. In a statement made after the talks General MacArthur praised the Nationalist leader, whose "indomitable determination arouses my sincere admiration. His determination parallels the common interests and purpose of

¹Text in HST, II, 449.

Americans, that all people in the Pacific should be free - not slaves".² These remarks disturbed the Administration, especially when compared with the declaration made by Generalissimo Chiang after the discussions. His conversations with General MacArthur, he said, had laid the foundation for the joint defence of Formosa and "Sino-American military cooperation . . . Now that we can again work closely together with our old comrade in arms", victory was certain.³ The Administration was particularly concerned that the impression should not be given that the United States would support any attempt by the Nationalists to reconquer China, and Mr. Truman's trusted adviser, Averell Harriman, was sent to Tokyo to explain to General MacArthur that Chiang Kai-shek was a liability to the United States, that there was a basic conflict between the interests of the Generalissimo and those of the United States, that the Generalissimo must not be allowed to start a war with the Chinese Communists on the mainland, and that the whole question of Formosa must be handled with care in order to preserve unity in the United Nations. Although in Mr. Harriman's opinion, General MacArthur was not convinced that the Administration's views were right, the General promised to support Mr. Truman's policies.⁴

The Administration's hope that General MacArthur would accept its

²Quoted in J.W. Spanier, The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War (Cambridge, Mass, 1959) 71.

³Quoted in ibid., 71.

⁴Harriman to Truman, Aug, 1951, text in HST, II, 349-353.

Formosa policy was soon disappointed. The General sent a message to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, at their request, to be read to their annual encampment. His statement was a discourse on the strategic value of Formosa to the United States. His apologist, Courtney Whitney, has written that General MacArthur believed that the message supported Mr. Truman's policy as the President enunciated it on Jun 27, 1950 when he said that the Seventh Fleet was being sent to Formosa because, in the circumstances, "the occupation of Formosa by Communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in that area".⁵ The message to the VFW did support this statement of the President, but there were other elements in the Administration's policy towards Formosa which had been explained to General MacArthur by Mr. Harriman, and which were contradicted by the General's emphasis on defending Formosa from possible Communist attack.

The whole message implied that the United States should increase its support of Chiang Kai-shek, whereas the Administration wished to avoid committing itself more fully to the Generalissimo. Moreover, the Administration believed that General MacArthur was indirectly suggesting that the United States wholeheartedly acknowledge Communist China as its

⁵ Whitney, op. cit., 377.

enemy. He referred several times to a "power unfriendly to the United States" and a "military power hostile to the United States", obviously meaning Communist China. The Administration and its allies opposed this view since they believed that China was potentially hostile to the Soviet Union, and that to oppose China openly would only drive that country closer to Russia. The Administration was also dismayed because it had been attempting to convince other nations, including Communist China, that the United States had no designs on Formosa and that the defence of the island would end with the restoration of the status quo ante in Korea; General MacArthur's message aroused the suspicion of other States that the United States intended to keep control of Formosa for security reasons.⁶

President Truman considered relieving General MacArthur of his command responsibilities for Korea and Formosa, but decided against it. Instead, the General was ordered to withdraw his message (although it was too late to prevent publication), and was sent a directive outlining United States policy towards Formosa.⁷

The next important divergence between Administration policy and MacArthur's actions came as the United Nations forces approached the Yalu

⁶Spanier, op. cit., 74-76.

⁷HST, II, 355-356.

River. The Administration wanted only Korean troops to be used in the area along the border between Korea and the territory of Russia and China. General MacArthur ordered his field commanders to employ both Korean and non-Korean forces up to the Yalu River. General J. Lawton Collins later testified that no directive had been sent to General MacArthur forbidding the use of American troops near the Yalu River because a commander so far away could not be so tightly restricted. General Collins went on to say, however, that there was time to consult the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the question before ordering non-Koreans into the danger area, and that General MacArthur's failure to do so showed his lack of sympathy with basic United States policy, and led the Administration to fear that General MacArthur might violate some other policy with more serious consequences.⁸

In early Dec, 1950 General MacArthur once more displeased the Administration. After the failure of his "final" offensive, stopped by the Chinese intervention, the General issued a series of statements to the press.⁹ In a copywrited interview with the magazine U.S. News and World Report, General MacArthur declared that the orders forbidding attack by air or land against the Communists in Manchuria were "An enormous handicap, without precedent in military history". He said that the Communists' "Sanctuary of neutrality behind the battle area"

⁸ Spanier, op. cit., 128-129.

⁹ Ibid., 149.

gave them a great advantage because their lines of supply were protected from air attack, and they could move troops forward under cover of darkness and rugged terrain.¹⁰ Mr. Truman objected to the opinions expressed by the General, believing that General MacArthur was simply trying to pass off the blame for his military defeat on to the Administration. Apparently the President considered dismissing General MacArthur at that time, but he did not want to appear to be firing the General for suffering a military defeat.¹¹ In order, however, to prevent a recurrence of this type of open criticism of the Administration, two directives were sent to General MacArthur on Dec 6, 1950. These orders were addressed to all executive officials, but were intended for General MacArthur. The first directive said that all speeches, press releases, and other statements concerning foreign or military policy were to be cleared with the Department of State or Defense before being released.¹² The second directive ordered that "Officials overseas, including military commanders and diplomatic representatives, should be ordered to exercise extreme caution in public statements, to clear all but routine statements with their departments, and to refrain from direct communication on military or foreign policy with newspapers, magazines or other publicity media

¹⁰New York Times, Dec 2, 1950.

¹¹HST, II, 382-384.

¹²Spanier, op. cit., 150.

in the United States".¹³

A comparative lull settled upon relations between General MacArthur and his superiors until Mar, 1951. On Mar 20, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a message to General MacArthur which said, in part: "State Department planning a Presidential announcement shortly that, with clearing of bulk of South Korea of aggressors, United Nations now preparing to discuss conditions of settlement in Korea".¹⁴ The draft of the Presidential announcement pointed out that the Chinese had been driven back to the approximate starting line of the Communist aggression, but that the problem of restoring peace and security to the area remained. It also contained the following paragraphs:

"The Unified Command is prepared to enter into arrangements which would conclude the fighting and ensure against its resumption. Such arrangements would open the way for a broader settlement for Korea, including the withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea . . .

"A prompt settlement of the Korea problem would greatly reduce international tension in the Far East and would open the way for the consideration of other problems in that area by the process of peaceful settlement envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations".¹⁵

The draft of this forthcoming statement was sent to the United

¹³Text in ibid., 150-151.

¹⁴Quoted in HST, II, 438.

¹⁵Text in ibid., II, 439-440.

States' allies for approval. Before the President's announcement was ready for publication, however, General MacArthur on Mar 24, 1951 issued a statement of his own which, Mr. Truman felt, "was so entirely at cross-purposes with the one I was to have delivered that it would only have confused the world if my carefully prepared statement had been made".¹⁶ General MacArthur, in his announcement, cited the military inadequacy of the Chinese army and stressed the failure of their forces to attain their objective of completely controlling Korea. "The enemy", he continued:

"must by now be painfully aware that a decision of the United Nations to depart from its tolerant effort to contain the war to the area of Korea through expansion of our military operations to his coastal areas and interior bases would doom Red China to the risk of imminent military collapse.

"These basic facts being established, there should be no insuperable difficulty arriving at decisions on the Korean problem if the issues are resolved on their own merits without being burdened by extraneous matters not directly related to Korea, such as Formosa and China's seat in the United Nations".

"Within the area of my authority . . . I stand ready at any time to confer in the field with the commander in chief of the enemy forces in an earnest attempt to find any political means whereby the realization of the political objectives of the United Nations in Korea, to which no nations may justly take exceptions, might be accomplished without further bloodshed".¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid., II, 440.

¹⁷ Quoted in New York Times, Mar 24, 1951.

The difference between the two statements, Mr. Truman's and General MacArthur's, can easily be seen. The former intimated that the United States was willing to discuss a peace settlement on the basis of restoration of the status quo ante; that was implied at the beginning of the statement when it was noted that the Communist forces were almost at the same place as that from which they had started in Jun, 1950. Other parts of Mr. Truman's stillborn announcement reiterated the American stand that discussion of such topics as Formosa would not be discussed in connection with a Korea settlement, but did imply that these other matters would be discussed after there was peace in Korea. The President's message did, then contain an offer which the Communists could have accepted without great sacrifice.

On the other hand, General MacArthur's offer to discuss a settlement was unacceptable to the Chinese since it stated that it was the Chinese' military failure that made possible a settlement of the Korean problem. The General's statement that the Chinese had been saved from complete destruction only by the tolerance of the United Nations made the proposals even more unattractive. To have accepted this offer would have been to admit the truth of these assertions, and this no Great Power could do, particularly one as sensitive to prestige considerations as was China. While the General's announcement said, as Mr. Truman's did, that a Korean settlement must not be tied to other Far Eastern problems, the General did not, unlike Mr. Truman, imply that discussions on these matters would come later.

In addition, it was felt by the Administration and its allies that General MacArthur's statement contained an implied threat that the United Nations was considering removing its restrictions on operations against China.¹⁸

The immediate action taken by the Administration was unspectacular. A public statement was issued which said that General MacArthur was conducting military operations for the United Nations under directives issued through the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that these directives were adequate for the present situation, and that the political issues were being dealt with in the United Nations and by inter-governmental consultations.¹⁹ Presumably this was meant to tell the world that General MacArthur was under control and that his political statements did not represent official United States policy. A directive was sent to General MacArthur drawing his attention to the President's order transmitted Dec 6, 1950 which restricted public statements by executive officers.²⁰

Mr. Truman writes in his memoirs that he was convinced by this act of General MacArthur that the officer must be removed.²¹ Whether or not he had, as he says, definitely made up his mind before Apr 5, 1951, the

¹⁸HST, II, 442.

¹⁹Text in New York Times, Mar 25, 1951.

²⁰Text in HST, II, 443.

²¹Ibid., II, 445.

event of that day certainly strengthened his resolve and impelled him to act. On that date, Joseph W. Martin, the Republican House minority leader, read a letter in the House which General MacArthur had sent him in reply to a letter from Mr. Martin. In his letter Mr. Martin had said that it was foolish not to use Nationalist Chinese troops in Korea, and had asked if his views were similar to those of General MacArthur. The General's reply, dated Mar 20, 1951, said in part:

"My views and recommendations with respect to the situation created by Red China's entry into war against us in Korea . . . generally . . . are well known and generally understood, as they follow the conventional pattern of meeting force with maximum counter-force as we have never failed to do in the past. Your view with respect to the utilization of the Chinese forces on Formosa is in conflict with neither logic nor this tradition.

It seems strangely difficult for some to realize that here in Asia is where the Communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest, and 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 this 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".²²

Mr. Truman considered the letter "a challenge to existing national policy. MacArthur had been fully informed as to the reason why the

²²Text in ibid., II, 445-446.

employment of Chinese Nationalist forces was ruled out", and "in praising Mr. Martin's logic and traditional attitude, he was in effect saying that my policy was without logic and violated tradition". President Truman seems to have been particularly incensed by General MacArthur's claim that Asia was the area that the Communists had chosen for their main effort.²³

President Truman had several meetings with his senior political and military advisers during the next three days. Their unanimous opinion was that General MacArthur should be relieved of his position. Public announcement of this decision was to have been delayed until General MacArthur had received the order of dismissal personally from Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, who was in the Far East at the time. Mr. Truman was told, however, that the story of General MacArthur's dismissal had leaked out and would be printed Apr 11, 1951; the President

²³ "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. Perhaps he did not know just how much effort and how much sacrifice had been required to stem the Communist tide in Iran -- in Greece -- at Berlin. Perhaps he did not know how strenuously the Kremlin wished to block the emergence of a united front in western Europe. Actually, of course, my letter of January 13 had made it clear that Communist was capable of attacking not only in Asia but also in Europe and this was one reason why we could not afford to extend the conflict in Korea".

HST, II, 446.

therefore announced his decision to the press at 1:00 A.M., Apr 11, 1951, and General MacArthur did not receive the courtesy of a personal delivery of his orders.²⁴

The order of relief informed General MacArthur that he was relieved of his different commands and instructed him to turn over his authority to Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway.²⁵ The Administration considered relieving General MacArthur only of his responsibility for the Korean theatre, leaving him with his Japanese and other commands. It was decided, however, that this would create unusually severe difficulties for the new commander. Since General Ridgway's main base of operations would be Japan, to leave General MacArthur in command of Japan would entail divided authority which could greatly hamper General Ridgway's conduct of affairs.²⁶

The reasons given by President Truman for General MacArthur's dismissal were that the General could not give wholehearted support to the Government's policies, and that (and this charge was implied rather than directly stated) General MacArthur had not completely followed the

²⁴Ibid., II, 447-449.

²⁵Ibid., II, 449-450.

²⁶Testimony by George C. Marshall before SENCOM, May 8-9, 1951, text in New York Times, May 9-10, 1951.

directives and policies laid down by the Government. The basis for these charges was the events which I have outlined above. The disagreements between the Administration and General MacArthur can be divided into two groups, those preceding China's intervention in the war, and those following China's action. The former collection of differences centered upon the status of Formosa in the eyes of the United States, and the attitude of the United States towards Communist China. The Administration at that time did not want Formosa to fall to the Communists while the Korean war was on, but did not want a strong long-term American commitment to support Chiang Kai-shek. The American Government also wished to avoid excessive hostility towards the Peking regime in the hope that China might be wooed away from the Soviet Union. The meeting with Generalissimo Chiang and the subsequent statements, and the letter to the Veterans of Foreign Wars gave, in the opinion of the Administration, an impression quite different from that which the American Government was trying to present, and showed General MacArthur's unwillingness to support Administration policy. In using non-Korean troops near the Yalu River, General MacArthur violated at least the spirit of Administration policy, and did so without prior consultation with his superiors although, in General Collins' opinion, there had been time to discuss the matter with the Joint Chiefs.

After the Chinese intervention, the Administration and General MacArthur differed mainly on the measures which should be taken against

Communist China, and certainly General MacArthur's disagreement with the Government's view is clear; his talk of unprecedented handicaps, and his letter to Mr. Martin show that. But did the General, as Mr. Truman charged, fail to support these policies with which he disagreed, and disobey his directives? The answer would seem to be "yes". To say, after a serious defeat, that the enemy was being given an enormous advantage because of the restrictions laid down by one's own government, was plainly to imply that the defeat rested upon the government; and, furthermore, such statements coming from the commander, were bound to undermine the government's policies of restriction. To take what his apologist admits was, under the circumstances, the "unusual procedure"²⁷ of issuing a statement on the military situation - a statement which contained an unacceptable offer for an armistice at a time when the President was about to make an acceptable offer - was to sabotage the Administration's efforts. To support views diametrically opposed to Administration policy, in a letter which General MacArthur must have known would be published, since Mr. Martin was the Republican House leader, was to oppose publicly the Administration. And both the statement to the enemy of Mar 24, 1951, and the Martin letter, could be construed as a breach of the directives transmitted Dec 5, 1950 which ordered all but routine statements to be cleared with higher authority.

²⁷Whitney, op. cit., 465.

More was involved in General MacArthur's dismissal, however, than simply disciplining an uncooperative officer or preserving the President's constitutional authority. The Administration feared the effect on international affairs of General MacArthur's words and actions. In his resistance to the Administration's policies, General MacArthur showed that he believed that Mr. Truman and his advisers were wrong in their ideas on the Far East, and that the General's programme of action was better than the Administration's. The MacArthur plan for ending the conflict in Korea, and restoring stability in the Far East, was based upon a series of strong measures to be taken against China. These included a blockade of the coast of China, destruction of China's industry by air and naval bombardment, use of Nationalist Chinese troops in Korea and removal of restrictions on Nationalist Chinese attacks against the mainland of China. General MacArthur believed "that by the foregoing measures we could severely cripple and largely neutralize China's capability to wage aggressive war and thus save Asia from the engulfment otherwise facing it".²⁸

The Joint Chiefs of Staff questioned the effectiveness of General MacArthur's proposals,²⁹ but the Administration's main concern was with the damage which might be done to United States security and foreign

²⁸ MacArthur to Joint Chiefs of Staff, Dec 30, 1950, text in ibid., 432-434.

²⁹ See Spanier, op. cit., 240-247.

policy if General MacArthur's plan were put into operation. It was feared that attacks on Chinese territory might cause the Soviet Union to intervene in the war,³⁰ although General MacArthur said that this was unlikely.³¹ A conflict in which Soviet and American forces were directly opposed could easily expand into a general war. There was a grave danger, too, that attacks on China would cost the United States its allies, most of whom strongly opposed the extension of hostilities. Thus one of the Administration cardinal foreign policy objectives -- collective defence -- would be lost.³² Even if General MacArthur could be restrained from putting his ideas into military operation -- and the record showed that perhaps he could not -- his public pronouncements confused the rest of the world as to what United States policy was,³³ and this confusion in itself could bring about some of the consequences feared by the Administration, particularly those affecting collective defence.

One must wonder why, if the Administration had so many reasons for firing General MacArthur, the General was not fired sooner, or at least put under tighter rein. One reason was that the effect of General MacArthur's resistance to Administration policies was cumulative. No

³⁰ Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Apr 20, 1951.

³¹ General MacArthur's speech to the United States Congress in Washington, Apr 19, 1951, text in New York Times, Apr 20, 1951.

³² Testimony of George C. Marshall before SENCOM, May 7, 1951, text in New York Times, May 8, 1951.

³³ HST, II, 442 and 444.

single incident of those mentioned above really justified removal. But taken as a series of provocations, they finally broke the patience of the Government. There was, also, the tradition of granting considerable freedom to the commander in the field, and this reluctance to restrict General MacArthur was heightened by the General's brilliant record, and the success of the Inchon attack despite the apprehensions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Finally, there was a political explanation. General MacArthur's political prestige at home had grown immensely as a result of his army's victorious march back up the Korean peninsula; conversely, as a result of the 1950 election campaign and results, the Administration's political support, especially in Congress, had fallen very low. Under these circumstances, President Truman was reluctant to invite an open breach with General MacArthur, especially in support of a policy which would lay the Administration open to charges of being "soft" in its policy towards Communist China.³⁴

This brings us to a second problem which faced Mr. Truman: the opposition of the American political right wing to his Administration's foreign policy. The reasons for the conservatives' hostility, and the forms it took, merit attention because of the restrictions that were thereby placed on the Administration's freedom of action in foreign affairs.

³⁴Spanier, op. cit., 133-134.

During his first term, as far as foreign affairs were concerned, President Truman was spared the heavy blows that a determined political opposition can give. This freedom from heavy criticism resulted from the acceptance by a substantial number of Republicans of the concept of bipartisanship in foreign affairs. Many writers have attempted to define "bipartisanship". While there is no agreement on an exact meaning, perhaps because the concept is a fluid and changing one, certain basic characteristics can be found in most of the definitions. There is the idea that politics should "end at the water's edge", that the country should present a united front to other countries. To obtain this, there must be collaboration between the government and opposition parties to lay down the basic foreign policy objectives that the nation should seek. Once agreement has been reached upon the primary aims, all parties should close ranks, the opposition abstaining from severe criticism of the government's foreign policy. The actual practice of bipartisanship is much more difficult to establish than the above definition suggests; there are always differences over the methods to be used in moving towards objectives, problems of liaison between government and opposition, personality problems, misunderstandings, and so on. Nonetheless, the idea of bipartisanship definitely existed in the United States and had a real effect upon American politics and foreign policy. The leading advocate and living symbol of the principle was Republican Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan.

Under Senator Vandenberg's guidance, a number of important government policies were put into effect without excessive obstruction from the Republican Party; the United Nations Charter, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty were all products of bipartisan consultation. But before the outbreak of war in Korea, a rift began to appear in the united front. Senator Vandenberg appears to have felt that the attitude of the State Department towards him changed when Dean Acheson became Secretary.³⁵ Bipartisanship continued to function -- the North Atlantic Treaty, and the appointment of John Foster Dulles as Consultant to the Secretary of State, are illustrations -- but a new emphasis on political opposition was beginning to appear.

The break-down of bipartisanship may have been due partly to lack of support by the Administration, but much of it arose from a feeling of profound dissatisfaction on the part of many Americans with the Administration's foreign policy, in particular with the Government's foreign policy in the Far East and its consequences. For many years Americans had had a special place in their emotions for China.³⁶ It was widely believed that the United States had a mission to feed and educate the Chinese, and to convert them to Christianity and the American way of

³⁵ Arthur H. Vandenberg Jr., (ed.), The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg, (London, 1953), 472.

³⁶ The American attitude towards China is analysed in E.F. Goldman, The Crucial Decade, (New York, 1956), 116-117.

life "With God's help", Senator Kenneth Wherry told a wildly cheering crowd in 1940, "we will lift Shanghai up and up, ever up, until it is just like Kansas City".³⁷ As a result, the "loss" of China to the Communists was a particularly severe shock for many Americans. They found it hard to reconcile themselves to the idea of China developing without American guidance; they found it intolerable that the guidance should come from Communism.

Those who disagreed with the Administration's foreign policy found in Senator Robert Taft a well-known public figure who was eager to lead the forces of opposition. Since the presidential election of 1948, Mr. Taft and other leading conservative Republicans had felt that the Republican party's failure was due largely to its failure to oppose the Administration. They believed that the electorate associated governmental policies with the President's party; therefore, if the policies were popular with the electorate the opposition which had supported the administration would get no credit, whereas if the policies were unpopular the opposition party which supported bipartisanship would not be able to put this public discontent to political use.

From this analysis of the American political scene Senator Taft and his associates moved logically to a policy of vehement and vocal

³⁷Quoted in ibid., 116-117.

criticism of the Truman Administration's foreign policies. Political expediency was not the only motive which led the Taft Republicans to move to the attack; they were convinced that the New Deal Democrats were undermining the very foundations of American political, social, and economic life.³⁸ The New Deal threat at home was much more dangerous than any foreign enemy.³⁹ This conviction can be seen in Senator Hugh Butler's scream of hatred against Dean Acheson: "I look at that fellow, I watch his smart-aleck manner and his British clothes and that New Dealism, everlasting New Dealism in everything he says and does, and I want to shout, Get out, Get out. You stand for everything that has been wrong with the United States for years".⁴⁰

The Congressional election of 1950 provided a good opportunity for the Republicans to tell the American people of the faults of the Administration's foreign policy. The Far Eastern policy of the Truman Government was a particularly convenient target since it had not been at all successful and had been made without the participation of the Republicans.⁴¹ As early as mid-August 1950 four Republican members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee⁴² issued a joint statement which

³⁸Spanier, op. cit., 46.

³⁹Goldman, op. cit., 126.

⁴⁰Quoted in ibid., 125.

⁴¹Spanier, op. cit., 47.

⁴²Alexander Wiley, H.Alexander Smith, Bourke B. Hickenlooper, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr.

noted that the good parts of American foreign policy in recent years had been the products of bipartisanship. The Senators then went on to criticize severely the Administration's Far East policies, especially those concerning the Chinese Communists.

Throughout the autumn the Republicans, led by the party's conservative wing, continued their attacks upon President Truman's foreign policy.⁴³ By the eve of the election, they were not mincing words. On Nov 4, 1950 Harold E. Stassen spoke on a radio broadcast in reply to the only important campaign speech made by President Truman. After a few perfunctory, introductory remarks, Mr. Stassen launched his attack:

"Tonight, as we meet, thousand of young Americans are facing in bloody battle one hundred thousand Chinese Communists in the rugged mountains of North Korea. During this week American casualties have been higher than any week since the Korean war began.

My fellow-citizens, I solemnly charge that this is the direct and terrible result of five years of building up Chinese Communist strength through the blinded, blundering, bewildering American-Asiatic policy under the present national Administration.

It has been five years of coddling Chinese Communists, five years of undermining General MacArthur, five years of snubbing friendly freedom-loving Asiatics, and five years of appeasing the arch-Communist Mao-Tse-tung.

⁴³Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Nov 4, 1950.

How can it be that five short years after winning a sweeping victory in World War II, so much of what we fought for has been lost . . . I submit that . . . this bad news tragically dramatizes the terrible results of the unbelievable errors in American-Asiatic policy since the end of World War II.⁴⁴

The Taft strategy worked. The election was a victory for those who had advocated strong criticism of the Administration's foreign policy; it was a defeat for Mr. Truman and his foreign policy. Most of the leading Democrats who had vigorously defended Administration foreign policy in their campaigns were defeated by Republicans who had made an attack upon that policy one of the main features of their campaigns.⁴⁵

The 1950 Congressional election had an adverse effect upon the Administration's implementation of its foreign policy. At this time, a significant victory for the supporters of Mr. Truman would have reassured the United States' allies that the American leadership was stable, and shown the Communist governments that American foreign policy had the support of the great majority of the American people. In fact, the election results proved no such thing - quite the contrary. It was now clear that the severe criticisms made of the Truman Administration's foreign policy represented the doubts and suspicions of a large section of the

⁴⁴Text in ibid., Nov 5, 1950.

⁴⁵Articles by James Reston and Arthur Krock in ibid., Nov 9, 1950.

American people.⁴⁶ This hardly strengthened the position of the United States Government in its dealings with other countries.

Senator Robert Taft was convinced by the results of the election that he had been right in advocating a fierce attack upon Mr. Truman's policies, including foreign policies. As a result, the Republicans continued to hammer away at their political opponents. They asserted that the foreign policy of the Government was wrong, and suggested allegedly correct alternatives.⁴⁷

Thus on Dec 6, 1950 Harold Stassen proposed a plan for dealing with the Chinese Communists. He said that a deadline should be set for a cease-fire, and that the United Nations should appoint an outstanding man from a disinterested Member State to mediate. If no settlement could be reached the United Nations should attack the Chinese forces by striking military targets in both Korea and China; this would include a naval blockade of China and heavy bombing attacks on Chinese industrial centres.⁴⁸ The Stassen plan was, of course, completely at odds with the Administration's policy of limiting military conflict to the Korean peninsula.

⁴⁶TUSIWA 1950, 411-412.

⁴⁷Spanier, op. cit., 152-153.

⁴⁸New York Times, Dec 6, 1950.

On Dec 20, 1950, and again on Feb 9, 1951, Herbert Hoover presented his programme of American foreign policy. Mr. Hoover wanted to base United States defence upon the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, relying mainly on sea and air power because the West could not engage in land war against the Communists. Formosa, the Philippines, and Japan were to be defended (this could be done using only air and naval forces) and the other frontier of American defence could rest upon Britain if she agreed. No more American troops were to be sent to Europe until the European states had shown more will to fight and until they had done more to resolve the differences among themselves.⁴⁹

In Jan, 1951 Senator Taft presented his views on foreign policy and defence, which largely supported the ideas of Mr. Hoover, particularly the emphasis upon air and naval power. Mr. Taft said that "Nobody is going to abandon Europe . . . if Russia attacks Europe, we would go to war with Russia", but he also stated that the land defence of Western Europe was largely the responsibility of Western Europe, so that large numbers of American troops should not be stationed on the European continent. Instead, the United States must fight such a war where it could win; on the sea and in the air.⁵⁰

⁴⁹Texts in ibid., Dec 21, 1950 and Feb 10, 1951.

⁵⁰Ibid., Jul 22, 1951.

In Jul, 1951 Senator Taft described the Korean War as a "useless and expensive" operation that only postponed the ultimate showdown with Russia. "As far as we can see", he declared, "there is no plan to bring to the world that permanent peace for which all of us yearn The net result of the whole proceeding is the loss of 30,000 American casualties and billions of dollars and the destruction of the very country which we undertook to defend".⁵¹

And so it went, the violent discussion of American foreign policy that came to be called the Great Debate, raging on through the winter, spring, and summer of 1951, centering upon policy towards Europe, but ranging over the Far Eastern field as well.

The dismissal of General MacArthur stirred the Republicans to a new frenzy. A short while after the news had been broken that General MacArthur had been dismissed, Robert Taft, Kenneth Wherry, Joseph Martin, and other leading Republicans met to discuss what they should do. Afterwards, Mr. Martin told reporters that the group had agreed that Congress should investigate the Administration's foreign and military policy "in the light of the latest tragic development", and that General MacArthur should be invited to present his full opinions before Congress. "In

⁵¹Quoted in the New York Times, Jul 22, 1951.

addition", said Mr. Martin, "the question of possible impeachments was discussed".⁵²

Senator William Jenner charged "that this country today is in the hands of a secret coterie which is directed by agents of the Soviet Union, We must cut this whole cancerous conspiracy out of our Government at once. Our only choice is to impeach President Truman and find out who is the secret invisible government which has so cleverly led our country down the road to destruction".⁵³ The Republican Policy Committee issued a unanimously approved declaration which asked whether "the Truman-Acheson-Marshall triumvirate" was preparing for a "super-Munich" in Asia.⁵⁴

Much of the weight of the Republican's assault upon the Administration during the Korean War was directed upon Dean Acheson. Senator Hugh Butler's outburst, quoted above, indicates just how passionately Republicans were aroused by the cool and competent Secretary of State. The Republicans associated him with the failures of United States policy in the Far East, and, because he had supported the idea of co-operating with the Soviet Union after World War II, charged that he was an appeaser.

⁵²Spanier, op. cit., 212.

⁵³Quoted in ibid., 212.

⁵⁴Ibid., 213.

His ability "to decapitate a Senator with a phrase" did not win him any support in the Congress, for, as James Reston pointed out, "Senators can dish it out but they bleed easily".⁵⁵

Although Mr. Acheson sustained heavy criticism until he ceased to be Secretary of State, the most dramatic and perhaps most serious single act of Republican opposition occurred towards the end of 1950. On Dec 15, 1950, just before the Secretary of State was to leave for an important meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organization foreign ministers in Brussels, the Republican caucuses of both Houses of Congress approved by a great majority^a resolution which declared that Mr. Acheson and the State Department had lost the confidence of Congress and the American people, and demanded that the Secretary resign.⁵⁶ The resolution was supported by all the Republican leaders present.⁵⁷ The incident illustrates the sort of pressure under which Mr. Acheson worked during his term of office, and shows "the handicaps imposed by the political" opposition upon the Truman Administration as it attempted to carry out its foreign policy.

Finally, one must mention Senator Joe McCarthy, the crude,

⁵⁵ Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Nov 26, 1950.

⁵⁶ New York Times, Dec 16, 1950.

⁵⁷ Senators Arthur H. Vandenberg, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., and Alexander Wiley were absent when the vote was taken, an interesting fact when one recalls that these men were the principal foreign policy spokesmen for the Republicans.

demagogic, opportunist with the heavy whisker stubble and not unattractive smile, making his unsubstantiated charges and waving his "evidence" which no one ever got to see. It is difficult to assess Senator McCarthy's influence upon the Truman Administration because an Administration action was rarely taken in obvious response to some move of the Senator's.⁵⁸ Moreover, President Truman's policies were affected by the opposition not only of Senator McCarthy but also of the Taft Republicans, and it is virtually impossible to isolate the effects of either. One phenomenon that can clearly be traced to the Wisconsin senator, however, was the pervading atmosphere of suspicion and fear which descended on Washington and the whole apparatus of government. The situation was described at the time by William S. White, the highly experienced Washington correspondent of the New York Times:

"The Age of Accusation and the Era of Profound Ill-feeling now grimly enwrap the capital of the greatest power in the world, the home of a lost tolerance and the center of a compassion that now is receding in memory. The square, massive, sad memorial to Abraham Lincoln, the rounded, softer, and more pleasing pile that commemorates Thomas Jefferson -- physically these remain, white and cold and lifeless . . .

Washington is not alone the seat of Western power. It is the seat also of a kind of trial by fire . . . Men in the State Department trim their reports and their views in fear of the present, or of another, Senator McCarthy.

⁵⁸ However, the Administration was unable to obtain the services of able and experienced Philip C. Jessup as a member of the United States delegation to the United Nations because Senator McCarthy's attacks on Mr. Jessup gained such widespread public support that a Senate Foreign Relations sub-committee refused to grant the necessary authorization.

Men in other bureaus, who ordinarily would
be dealing hard-headedly in hard goods
(like munitions), trim their activities . . . "59

The fall of morale and the appearance of a new reticence in the State Department suggested by Mr. White and attested to by many others, was perhaps the most obvious result in foreign affairs of Senator McCarthy's efforts. The Truman Administration could not but lose by this development, since good foreign policy can be formulated only upon the basis of complete and honest reports by the president's foreign service officers.

The other effects of Senator McCarthy's witch-hunting are less tangible and less clearly attributable to the Senator; one or two might, however, be suggested. It has been pointed out that Dean Acheson:

"spent a large part of 1950 and the ensuing years explaining to Elks, Moose, Women Voters, Legionnaires, Steel Workers, and the rest that he was not corrupt, that he was opposed to Communism, and that he did not hire traitors . . . When Acheson was not fending off blows he was conducting American foreign policy, which became largely a matter of assuring allies and potential allies that McCarthy really wasn't running the show in Washington despite contrary appearances".⁶⁰

⁵⁹Quoted in J. Anderson and R.W. May, McCarthy, The Man, The Senator, The "Ism" (Boston, 1952), 384.

⁶⁰Richard H. Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy (New York, 1951), 12.

In short, Senator McCarthy's attacks wasted the time and energy of valuable men who could have put their talents to work in worthier causes, and caused concern among the United States' allies at a time when unity was essential.

What did Mr. Truman and his colleagues do to solve the problems caused by domestic political opposition and McCarthyism? In retrospect, one wonders what could have been done in view of the ruthless nature of Senator McCarthy, the anti-Communist emotion in the United States generated by the Korean War and other episodes in the East-West struggle, the Republicans' hunger for power, and the complex nature of Far Eastern affairs. Perhaps Senator McCarthy could have been stopped in his tracks if a few public officials of stature had come out firmly and publicly against the man and all he stood for; but the few who tried were usually defeated subsequently at the polls, thus strengthening the Senator's image of invincibility. Perhaps the criticism of the Republicans could have been allayed by a determined effort by the Administration to create a bipartisan policy; but Senator Taft's assessment of the political situation in the United States, and the complete disagreement on basic foreign policy principles between the Truman government and leading Republicans such as Mr. Taft, Mr. Hoover, and General MacArthur made a bipartisan approach to foreign policy, especially Far Eastern policy, impossible. In actual fact, the actions taken by Mr. Truman to solve his political problems at home were unimaginative and ineffective. Possibly no others were feasible. Criticism voiced by the Republican

leaders was rebutted by the President in speeches and at press conferences. Thus Mr. Truman answered Messrs. Taft and Hoover, and their suggestions about American foreign policy, in the State of the Union speech of Jan 8, 1951. The President described the vast quantities of raw materials, the accumulation of capital goods, the great numbers of people that the Soviet Union would gain if it took over Western Europe, Asia, and Africa. "In such a situation the Soviet Union could impose its demands on the world without resort to conflict, simply through the preponderance of its economic and military power".⁶¹

To counter the attacks on Dean Acheson, President Truman seized every occasion to demonstrate in public his firm support of his Secretary of State. From Jun, 1949 to Aug, 1952 Mr. Truman found the opportunity at least nineteen times to compliment Mr. Acheson publicly on the Secretary's fine work.⁶² The President's favourite places for delivering these accolades were the airport (when Mr. Acheson was going to or coming from a conference) and the press conference. This may not be the type of defence that stirs men's imaginations, but no doubt it was at least as effective as any other. Moreover, these continuing congratulations were backed by the strongest support of all: Mr. Acheson was kept in his job.

⁶¹Text in DOAFR, XIII, 2.

⁶²Arthur Krock counted them from Jun, 1949 to Sep, 1951, New York Times, Sep 16, 1951; I counted the rest in subsequent issues of the New York Times.

This personal loyalty in the face of extremely strong pressure is one of the bright spots in Harry Truman's chequered presidency.

Secretary Acheson tried to gain support for his policies not by presenting them to the general public but by attempting to persuade the Congress of the soundness of his views. This he was unable to do, despite concessions to the Republicans, especially in Far Eastern policy. His failure was due partly to political factors, partly to a basic difference on foreign policy methods and goals, and partly to the personality of the man. The personality factor was of some importance; Mr. Acheson seems to have been able to irritate Republicans on sight; he was perhaps too British looking, he was somewhat indifferent to the opinions and advice of those he considered inferior to him, and he was often unable to foresee the effect of his remarks on to-morrow's headlines (the classic example was his statement "I do not intend to turn my back on Alger Hiss").⁶³

Public statements of various kinds, then, formed the main defence of the Truman Administration against domestic opposition. A few other tactics might be cited; John Foster Dulles was included in the inner circle of foreign policy makers in order to deter Republican criticism;

⁶³Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Nov 26, 1950.

extremely thorough, well publicized purges of the State Department and other government agencies were carried out to placate the McCarthy supporters; promises were made that the Administration had never considered, and never would consider, recognizing Communist China.⁶⁴

The Truman Administration's response to attacks at home was uninspiring, but the President had to move slowly because of the considerable body of public opinion which supported his opponents. The 1950 elections showed the strength of the Taft Republicans; the Gallup Polls demonstrated how many people believed that Senator McCarthy was doing a good job. These supporters of Joe McCarthy included a large number of Democratic Party members, a fact which made the party leaders even more cautious. Few important Democrats were willing to condemn Senator McCarthy publicly.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, President Truman was largely unsuccessful in his attempts to reduce the effect of domestic opposition. As a result, his foreign policy lost valuable flexibility. The alternative of trying to reach some sort of amicable agreement with Communist China (including, perhaps, eventual diplomatic recognition and admission to the United Nations) was not open to the Administration. It is quite possible that

⁶⁴Rovere, op. cit., 14.

⁶⁵Ibid., 13.

President Truman would not have pursued such a policy anyway; but the domestic situation made even consideration of such a course impossible and forced the President to adopt a very hard line against Communist China and to endorse Chiang Kai-shek once more.⁶⁶

A third problem for the Truman Administration was posed by the allies of the United States. It was part of the basic foreign and military policy of the Truman Administration that the United States should support and be supported by a number of staunch allies. Allies can be bothersome, however, because their views are occasionally apt to be at odds with one's own and must be given some consideration if the alliance

⁶⁶Spanier, op. cit., 269. Walter Lippman has written:

"President Eisenhower signed an armistice which accepted the partition of Korea and a peace without victory because, being himself the victorious commander in World War II and a Republican, he could not be attacked as an appeaser. President Truman and Secretary Acheson, on the other hand, never seemed able to afford to make peace on the only terms which the Chinese would agree to, on the terms, that is to say, which Eisenhower did agree to. The Democrats were too vulnerable to attack from the political followers of General MacArthur and of the then powerful Senator McCarthy, and indeed to attack from the whole right wing of the Republican party".
Quoted in ibid., 270.

However, it seems to me that the Truman Administration was unable to conclude an armistice because of the Prisoner of War question, not because of the political opposition at home. President Eisenhower was able to achieve an armistice because the Chinese Communists gave way on the Prisoner of War issue.

is to be maintained. During the Korean War, the United States Government did find itself in disagreement with its allies, of whom Britain and France were most important. It is not clear that United States foreign policy was much affected by the opposition of Britain and France -- few important changes appear to have been made by the United States in response to allied pressure -- rather, the allies should be seen as yet another of the pressure groups trying to influence the course of American foreign policy, as one more barrier to be evaded, knocked down, or climbed over in the movement towards the foreign policy goals of the American Government.

The issue that caused the deepest division between the United States Government and its foreign colleagues was Far Eastern policy, specifically the attitude which the Western Powers should adopt towards Communist China. The respective views of the United States and her British and French⁶⁷ allies were clearly delineated in the conference between Mr. Truman and Mr. Attlee and their advisers in Dec, 1950. The Americans saw the Chinese intervention in Korea as part of a master plan; Russia was trying to entangle the West in an Asian conflict in order to

⁶⁷The position taken by the British at the U.S.-U.K. conference of Dec, 1950 can be regarded as the French position also, since before leaving for Washington Mr. Attlee conferred with the French Premier and Foreign Minister and, according to the meeting's communique, had established with the French "a general identity of objectives of the two Governments in the present international situation". Ibid., 166.

have a free hand in Europe. The West, then, had to counter this intervention forcefully, while avoiding excessive involvement. This meant fighting the Chinese in Korea, confining the war to the Korean Peninsula, and forcing a cease-fire. If this could not be done successfully, evacuation of the peninsula might prove inevitable. No concessions should be made to China, since these would be interpreted in Asia as a sign of weakness; and the acceptance of a cease-fire must not be made dependent upon the questions of Formosa or the Chinese seat in the United Nations, because this would be rewarding aggression. In the opinion of Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson, the burden of proof of good intentions now rested upon Communist China, not the West; Western policy now should be to build up sufficient military strength to deter further aggression in the future.⁶⁸

The Anglo-French analysis of Far Eastern affairs was different. According to this line of thought, the Chinese Communists might break with the Soviet Union, as Marshall Tito had. Communist China was not yet completely under Russian control; the West, therefore, should try to divide Russia and China who were, after all, traditional rivals in the Far East. "I think", said Mr. Attlee, "that all of us should try to keep the Chinese from thinking that Russia is their only friend. I want the Chinese to part company with Russia. I want them to become a counterpoise

⁶⁸HST, II, 397-404.

to Russia in the Far East. If we don't accept this theory, if we just treat the Chinese as Soviet satellites, we are playing the Russian game".⁶⁹

It can be seen that the American and Anglo-French assessments of the situation in the Far East were quite different. The latter view was much more conciliatory towards China. The Europeans felt that there was justice in the Chinese Communist Government's claim to Formosa and a seat in the United Nations; the Communist government was obviously in full control of China, and the continuation of a harsh policy towards the Peking regime would, they feared, only increase the risk of an all-out war.⁷⁰

According to Mr. Truman, at the Dec, 1950 conference he and Mr. Attlee agreed to disagree about those matters whereon they differed,⁷¹ but this apparent mutual tolerance, if it did exist then, soon gave way to a serious split between the European allies and the United States. This disagreement was played down in public by all the countries, in order to maintain a united front against the Communist bloc, but the charges that were privately thrown back and forth were serious. The British charged the Americans with recklessness in their handling of Far

⁶⁹ Ibid., II, 402.

⁷⁰ Spanier, op. cit., 176-177.

⁷¹ HST, II, 409, 412.

Eastern affairs, while the American in Washington began to talk of British "appeasement". The various charges and counter-charges which were made are not particularly important to us at this point, but a further refinement of the British Government's analysis of Far Eastern affairs is worthy of note. The British feared that unless every opportunity for possible peaceful settlement with the Peking government was explored before sanctions were applied against China, all the Asian friends of the West would drop out of the fight, leaving the United States and Britain in a "racial war", whites against coloured. The British also favoured conciliation in the belief that the opposite course -- an intensified war effort -- might be difficult to control and maintain as a "limited war".⁷²

This disagreement among the western allies, which was mainly Anglo-American, was exacerbated by the great distrust with which the British viewed General MacArthur. It was felt, with some justification as we have seen, that the General disagreed with the British view of the Korean War, that he was not too closely controlled by the Washington Government, and that he was quite willing to take advantage of his freedom from direction and sabotage Far Eastern policies favoured by the British. General MacArthur's dismissal was welcomed by most of the British, and this act

⁷²Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Jan 24, 1951.

did much to ease the tension between Britain and the United States.

The disagreement over what policy should be followed in the Far East was the most serious matter affecting the United States' relations with its allies. Other disputes arose - for example, in 1952 the British were unhappy about American failure to consult with them on the conduct of the Korean War - but the alliance survived. One gets the impression that the United States Government did its best to convince its allies that American policy was right, but if the allies remained unconvinced little effort was made to alter American policy to accommodate the opposing views. Superficial changes might be made, minor alterations in a United Nations resolution, for example. Occasionally, as in the matter of "hot pursuit",⁷³ the influence of allied opinion was considerable. Usually, however, the basic American policy remained pretty well unchanged. This simply reflected the realities of the situation; the United States was carrying the burden in the Far East and reserved the right to decide how it might best be borne.

One other problem faced by the Truman Administration deserves brief mention. From time to time an influential voice would advocate a full-scale American attack upon the Soviet Union and China. The most

⁷³ See above, 221.

remarkable example has already been mentioned, Secretary of the Navy Francis Matthew's call for "a war to compel cooperation for peace . . . We would become the first aggressors for peace".⁷⁴ Such talk, which appeared to have some popular support, embarrassed the American Government. Its allies became more apprehensive about the leadership of the United States, and there was a danger that the Communists would regard the speeches of the preventive war supporters as evidence that the United States would soon go to war. This might draw the Communists into preventive aggression of their own. We have already seen that this was probably a factor in the Chinese decision to intervene in Korea.⁷⁵ The Administration strongly opposed the idea of attacking the Soviet Union. Such a policy, it was believed, would immediately destroy the Western alliance, bring all of Western Europe under Russian occupation and atomic bombardment, and destroy free European society.⁷⁶

The Administration dealt with this problem in what was probably the only way open to it. Vigorous attacks upon the idea of preventive war were made by the highest government officials. In a television interview on Sep 10, 1950, Dean Acheson called the idea of preventive war "a thoroughly wicked thing . . . It's immoral and wrong from every point of view . . . It's idiocy of the worst sort to talk in those terms".⁷⁷

⁷⁴ See above, 174

⁷⁵ See above, 173 - 176.

⁷⁶ Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Feb. 25, 1951.

⁷⁷ Text of interview in Stabul, 23:585, 460.

In Mar, 1952 President Truman said that premeditated and deliberate war could not be undertaken by a democratic, God-fearing nation, that one would be insane to even consider it, that such a course would be much more expensive than present American policy, and that preventive war could only lead to immense destruction of life and property.⁷⁸ There was an argument there for every taste - moral, material, rational.

The idea of preventive war did not capture the popular imagination, perhaps because of the Administration's efforts. It is another problem the effect of which is hard to gauge. It seems likely that it played a part in China's entry into the war; no doubt it added fuel to the flames of allied criticisms of American foreign policy; further than that the evidence does not permit us to go.

The purpose of this chapter has been to delineate a number of problems which faced the Truman Administration as it formulated and carried out its Korean policy, to suggest in a general way the influence of these problems upon Administration policy, and to show how the President attempted to solve them. The problems examined were: the insubordination of General Douglas MacArthur; the opposition of the conservative Republicans, Senator Joe McCarthy's witch-hunt; the views of allies; and the public statements of American preventive war advocates. It is not possible to assess with any exactness the ways in which these problems influenced United States foreign policy. Their general effect, however, was to increase the hazards which President Truman had

⁷⁸ President Truman's Message to the Congress Mar. 6, 1952, text in the New York Times, Mar 7, 1953.

to consider in making decisions, and thus to reduce substantially the flexibility of the Administration's Korean policy.

CHAPTER X

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARDS KOREA AFTER JUNE 1950

Having examined the main features of the Truman Administration's conduct of the Korea war, we can now consider the development of American foreign policy towards Korea after the outbreak of hostilities. Prior to the North Korean invasion, the United States Government wanted to keep the Republic of Korea independent, but was unwilling to use American troops for this purpose because Korea was considered to be strategically unimportant. Obviously, this policy changed after June 25, 1950.

The immediate and most striking alteration in American policy was the military intervention of the United States in Korea. The decision to use force in Korea was made hastily, and in contradiction of previous United States policy. Mr. Truman and his advisers, by their action, revealed that paramount goals of the United States' Korean policy had become the maintenance of South Korean independence and the deterring of further aggression. The first of these two goals was a direct war aim, the second an indirect war aim.

Within two months, the Truman Administration's objectives in the Korean war changed radically. On June 29, 1950, Secretary of State Acheson said that the provision of air and sea support to the South Koreans was "solely for the purpose of restoring the Republic of Korea

to its status prior to the invasion from the north and of reestablishing the peace broken by that aggression".¹ But the startling success of the United Nations forces, so unforeseen when the decision to intervene was made, provided a temptation that the United States was unable to resist. A speech by Warren Austin in the Security Council on Aug 17, 1950, when the defensive line in Korea had been stabilized and plans were being laid for a counter-attack,² showed a shift in United States policy away from the limited objective of simply restoring the status quo ante bellum.

Said Mr. Austin:

. . . The United Nations must see that the people of Korea attain complete individual and political freedom.

Shall only a part of the country be assured this freedom? I think not . . . The Korean people . . . have a right to expect . . . that . . . they will all have the right to freedom and unity. Korea's prospects would be dark if any action of the United Nations were to condemn it to exist indefinitely as half slave and half free, or even one-third slave and two-thirds free. The United Nations has consistently worked for a unified country, and independent Korea. The United Nations will not want to turn from that objective now.³

While these remarks reaffirmed the original aim of the United States in Korea, a unified, independent Korea, they achieve additional significance

¹ Stabul, XXIII:575 (Jul 10, 1950), 46.

² Whitney, op. cit., 343-345.

³ Text in U.N. Security Council, Official Records, 1950 #30, 488th meeting, Aug 17, 1950, 6-7.

because they were delivered when the North Korean offensive had been stopped and a major counter-stroke was being planned. In these circumstances, Mr. Austin's words imply that his country would not be satisfied simply to return to the stalemate existing before the attack, for to do so would certainly "condemn Korea to exist indefinitely as . . . one-third slave and two-thirds free". What could the United Nations do to avoid such a dismal situation? Mr. Austin did not suggest any action, but presumably the minimum effective step would be to demand North Korean co-operation under threat of military force. If this co-operation were refused, the threat would have to be replaced by the reality. At this time, then, the United States Government seems to have held the view that the conflict must not end with the Korean situation unchanged. This in itself was a step away from Mr. Acheson's statement of Jun 29, 1950. Moreover, the American Government must have been willing at least to consider extending the war into North Korea, since what Mr. Austin was calling for could quite conceivably be attained only by force of arms.

By the end of Sep, 1950, with the Inchon landing accomplished and the United Nations troops approaching the Thirty-eighth Parallel, the United States was obviously ready to take advantage of the favourable military situation to achieve the political objectives in Korea which three months before had seemed unattainable. For evidence we can turn again to Mr. Warren Austin, specifically to an address he made Sep 30, 1950 before Committee I of the General Assembly. The speech was in support of the draft resolution passed by the General Assembly on Oct 7,

1950, a fact which in itself shows that the United States intended now to use force to gain its ends, for the resolution called for action to ensure stability "throughout Korea". Such a condition could be obtained only by destroying the North Korean army. Particularly interesting, however, were Mr. Austin's comments on the significance of the Thirty-eighth Parallel, when compared with the earlier American declaration that the purpose of the intervention was "to restore the border."⁴ This "border", originally acknowledged by the United States Government, was now at the end of September an "artificial barrier" which had "no basis for existence either in law or in reason". "Let us not", said Mr. Austin,

at this critical hour and on this grave event, erect such a boundary, rather, let us set up standards and means, principles and policies, according to the Charter, by which all Koreans can hereafter live in peace among themselves and with their neighbors.⁵

In other words, United Nations forces must cross the Thirty-eighth Parallel and achieve the political aims which had proved unattainable by political means.

It can be seen, therefore, that the military success of the United Nations Command induced the American Government to change the objectives

⁴HST, II, 341.

⁵Text in Stabul, XXIII:588 (Oct 9, 1950), 579-580.

of its intervention from restoration of the pre-war boundary and general situation to the establishment by military force of a unified, independent Korea.

This general shift in the United States' immediate policy towards Korea was accompanied by a clarification of the final result which the United States hoped to obtain by its efforts in Korea. Besides an independent and united country, the United States wanted the Korean people to have a government which the Koreans themselves had elected. This government would not necessarily be the government of Syngman Rhee, for while recognizing that the Rhee regime had certain rights, the United States did not intend to foist Dr. Rhee and his colleagues upon the North Koreans. On the other hand, the Communists would not be allowed to subvert any coalition government that might be set up. A vigorous programme of reconstruction and development was to be undertaken; United Nations forces would be withdrawn as soon as the United Nations objectives had been achieved. Eventually the United States hoped that Korea would become a member of the United Nations.⁶

This was the kind of Korea that should be established, the United States Government decided, as it reassessed its policy in the light of

⁶ Statement by Warren Austin before Committee I of the United Nations General Assembly Sep 30, 1950, text in DOAFR, XIII, 458: and article by James Reston in the New York Times, Sep 26, 1950.

the success of its military forces. However, the Truman Administration did not intend to commit itself without qualification to the establishment of a united, democratic Korea. In particular, it did not in Sep, 1950 want to become involved in a war with Communist China or the Soviet Union over Korea. American action in Korea was considered by the Government in relation to the risk of general war; the Truman Administration had no desire to fight a major war to achieve its political objectives in Korea.⁷

Neither the American Government's hope of finally unifying Korea nor its hope of avoiding conflict with the Powers bordering North Korea was to be realized. Both expectations were dashed by China's entry into the war. Narrowly escaping disaster, the United Nations forces retreated in the face of an enemy which had a great advantage in numbers. By the middle of January, however, the United States Eighth Army had succeeded in stabilising its position along a line roughly seventy miles south of the Thirty-eighth Parallel, and the Chinese Communists no longer had the initiative in the struggle.

During the first half of 1951 President Truman, Secretary Acheson,

⁷Testimony before SENCOM May 14, 1951, text in the New York Times, May 15, 1951; and article by James Reston in the New York Times, Sep 26, 1950.

and other leading government officials outlined publicly and privately the main aims and considerations affecting United States policies in the Korean war. Those policies were the product of basically the same factors that had brought about the almost instinctive intervention in Korea in June 1950. By 1951, however, the Truman Administration had had time to work out more fully the arguments justifying its decision to intervene, and the implications of that decision. China's participation in the war completely altered the situation, of course, but to a large extent the Chinese intervention had the effect of pushing United States policy back onto its old path, from which it had been deflected in the autumn of 1950 by the prospect of complete military success. By early 1951 a certain stability had been achieved in Korea. The Chinese had declared themselves in; the United States forces were still in Korea and likely to stay there; "total victory" for either side did not seem feasible. The United States Government was able, therefore, to settle down and work out a coherent, firm set of policy objectives which governed American action in Korea until the end of the Truman administration.

The goals of the American intervention, as presented in 1951, fall easily into two general classifications. One group consisted of positive, direct objectives, essentially military in nature, which were to be achieved as quickly as possible. The other was made up of rather broader strategic aims which could never be achieved finally and permanently, and

which were usually presented by American spokesmen in the form of explanations of and justifications for the presence of United States troops in the Korea conflict.

Turning first to the former set of objectives, one finds that a military aim which had to be kept constantly in mind was the preservation of the United States army in Korea. That force made up the bulk of the United States' effective standing army, and its destruction would have been disastrous to the general security of the United States. More specifically, its loss would have left Japan defenceless, for the American Eighth Army in Korea had a dual role: it was not only the American contribution to the United Nations force in Korea but also the garrison of Japan. Its latter function was its primary one.⁸ This meant that the Eighth Army would have to be withdrawn if its destruction seemed imminent. President Truman made it clear to General MacArthur that the government realized that the Eighth Army might be forced to leave Korea; the only condition imposed by the President was that such an evacuation must be demonstrably the result of military necessity. The United States must not appear to be accepting or condoning aggression.⁹

Apart from maintaining its own security, the Eighth Army's main

⁸ Willoughby and Chamberlain, op. cit., 357.

⁹ Truman to MacArthur Jan 13, 1951, quoted in HST, II, 436.

mission was to end the war and to protect the Republic of Korea from further aggression. The war would not be voluntarily ended by the United States, however, until virtually all South Korea had been re-claimed from the Communists.¹⁰

Throughout 1951 and 1952 the United States Government reiterated its belief that peace could come to Korea through a settlement which would end the hostilities and prevent future aggression.¹¹ It was in accordance with these principles that the United States co-operated with Trygve Lie in June 1951 to pave the way for armistice negotiations with the Communists.¹² The directive sent to General Ridgway, instructing him on the conduct of armistice negotiations, laid down as the principal military interest of the United States in the armistice: "a cessation of hostilities in Korea, an assurance against the resumption of fighting and the protection of the security of United Nations Forces".¹³ With the breakdown of the armistice talks the primary objectives of the United States in Korea were not achieved; the war, therefore, went on.

One other specific policy objective remains to be examined. This

¹⁰ Ibid., II, 456.

¹¹ Address by President Apr 11, 1951, text in AFPBD, 2613-2614; Statement by Dean Acheson Jun 2, 1951, text in the New York Times, Jun 3, 1951; President Truman's State of the Union Address Jan 9, 1952, text in ibid., Jan 10, 1952.

¹² See above, 194 - 195.

¹³ Quoted in HST, II, 458.

was the determination of the United States Government to confine hostilities to the Korean peninsula, a decision which became almost an article of faith for the Truman Administration, and which provoked bitter opposition from the Administration's critics.

Having resolved not to extend the war beyond Korea, the United States Government applied this policy by placing certain restrictions upon its Commander in Chief in Korea: United Nations airplanes were forbidden to pursue Chinese aircraft into Chinese territory; bombing attacks were not to be directed against targets within or even close to China; when the Chinese crossed the Yalu River General MacArthur's orders to have the bridges across the Yalu destroyed by bombing were countermanded. These decisions were incomprehensible to General MacArthur and his staff. The General's frustration and bitterness are revealed in his exclamation over the order to leave the Yalu bridges intact:

"I realized for the first time that I had actually been denied the use of my full military power to safeguard the lives of my soldiers and the safety of my army. To me it clearly foreshadowed a future tragic situation in Korea and left me with a sense of inexpressible shock!"¹⁴

What were the reasons for the Administration's policy which, in General

¹⁴Quoted in Willoughby and Chamberlain, op. cit., 384, 401-402.

MacArthur's opinion, imposed upon him handicaps "without precedent in military history"?

One reason was the opposition of the United States' allies. They had no wish to be drawn into a general war in the Far East, especially one which might develop into a world war. In their opinion the present effort in Korea held promise of a successful outcome, and they would not support an attempt to hasten matters by extending the conflict to China. The Truman Administration had made collective security one of the main foundations of its foreign policy; it did not propose to weaken its system of alliances by engaging in military operations outside Korea. Actions in the Far East which met strong disapproval from the United States' allies would have serious repercussions upon the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.¹⁵ In General George C. Marshall's words, "The possibilities of the loss of our Allies, the loss of continuation and development of collective action; and collective defense . . . appealed to us as being so serious that . . . General MacArthur's proposals were not considered advisable". General Marshall went on to say that the MacArthur plan to extend hostilities, if seriously implemented, would seriously jeopardize the efforts of the United States to build up a collective defence in western Europe.¹⁶

¹⁵ Statement by Dean Acheson Jun 1, 1951, text in AFPPD, 2621.

¹⁶ Testimony of George C. Marshall before SENCOM, May 7, 1951, text in the New York Times, May 8, 1951.

Furthermore, if the United States took the initiative in attacking China, not only allies would be unfavourably impressed. As Senator Paul H. Douglas pointed out, the United States would be regarded as the aggressor by all the dark-skinned people in Asia; great hostility would be aroused there which might result in the loss of Malaya and India to Communism.¹⁷

There were other possible consequences of expanding the war which further deterred the Truman Administration from adopting such a policy. There was, for instance, the fear that the United States' limited military forces might get entangled in a major war in Asia. Faced with the almost inexhaustable Chinese reserves, hampered by long supply lines, the American forces could become bogged down, and American defences elsewhere would likely have to be stripped bare. Having caught the enemy's sword in a Chinese net, the Soviet Union could then make a trident thrust into unprotected Europe.¹⁸

Probably the most important factor deterring the American Government from extending the war, however, was the chance that an attack upon China might bring about military action by the Soviet Union, and that such a confrontation of the two Super Powers might lead to a third World War. The Soviet Union had considerable influence in North Korea.

¹⁷Address by Senator Paul H. Douglas at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., Apr 20, 1951, reported in the New York Times, Apr 21, 1951.

¹⁸AFPBD, 2612; HST, II 446, 456.

and had provided assistance to both North Korea and China, The United States' Government assumed that understandings had accompanied that assistance, holding out the possibility of active Soviet intervention if China were threatened.¹⁹ It was known also that in Feb, 1950 a Sino-Soviet mutual defence pact had been signed, which was to become effective only when China or the Soviet Union was attacked by Japan or one of Japan's allies; the American Government was apprehensive that a United States attack on Manchuria would be interpreted by the Soviet Union as an attack on China by an ally of Japan.²⁰ Russia's entry into the war, in General Marshall's opinion, would have been "a very serious matter, because they [the Russians] have . . . a considerable force -- I have forgotten exactly how many thousands in the vicinity of Vladivostock, Dairen, Port Arthur, Harbin". General Marshall believed that Soviet intervention in Korea was "a very real possibility pertaining to the Soviet Government, the decision is of a few men and can be an instant decision whenever they choose to make it".²¹ There was also the possibility that attacks on Manchuria might bring about retaliatory air raids upon Japan, the American supply centre.²² And as Secretary of State Acheson pointed out, the Sino-Soviet treaty would give the Chinese Communists a powerful lever to demand Russian intervention if the war were

¹⁹Statement by Dean Acheson Jun 1, 1951, text in AFPBD, 2620.

²⁰Article by James Reston in the New York Times, Apr 20, 1951.

²¹Testimony of George C. Marshall before SENCOM, May 8, 1951, text in the New York Times, May 9, 1951.

²²Address by Senator Paul H. Douglas Apr 20, 1951, reported in the New York Times, Apr 21, 1951.

extended to China by the United Nations forces.²³

Even without the treaty, the Truman Administration reasoned, Russia had good cause to enter the war if hostilities spread to China. China was the Soviet Union's largest and most important ally. Russian interests in the Far East, and consideration of prestige, would likely force the Soviet Union to act.

Such action could take several forms. The Soviet Union could give large numbers of aircraft and "volunteer" crews to China, or might use the Russian air and submarine forces. "Volunteer" ground forces could be provided, or the Soviet Union could begin an all-out war. In any of these cases, the potential for expansion into world war seemed too strong for the United States Government to take the risk.²⁴

As Mr. Acheson made quite clear, it was just such a confrontation with the Soviet Union that the United States Government was working to avoid.

"The activities of the UN in Korea have been described as 'the reluctant crusade' -- reluctantly the East and West get into the showdown. Now if anything is important, if anything is true about the situation in Korea, it is the overwhelming importance of not forcing a showdown on our side in Korea and not permitting our opponents to force a showdown.

²³Text in the New York Times, Jun 5, 1951.

²⁴Statement by Dean Acheson Jun 1, 1951, text in AFRBD, 2620-2621.

"That has been the whole heart and essence of the policy which the Administration has been following . . . 25

Related to this policy was the belief that time, if put to good use, was on the side of the United States. If a major war with the Communists could be avoided, the United States would be able to build up a deterrent military force strong enough to hold off an enemy attack in some future war until the superior military potential of the West could be transformed into actual troops and materiel.²⁶

The main immediate goals, then, of American policy towards Korea had crystallized by 1951. They included keeping the Eighth Army intact, ending the war with the Republic of Korea free of Communist forces and protected from future aggression, and confining hostilities to the Korean peninsula.

We can now turn to the second classification of American policy goals in Korea. These were more general than the objectives just described, and formed a bridge between the United States' specifically Korean policy and its overall foreign policy.

²⁵Text in DOAFR, XIII, 7.

²⁶Dean Acheson Jun 1, 1951 text in AFPPD, 2621-2622.

From its first public statement on its intervention in the Korean war, the United States Government continually stressed that its paramount aim in taking military action was to stop the aggression of North Korea.²⁷ We have seen that when the decision to go all out against the North Korean invaders was made during the period June 25-27, the overriding factor was the conviction of President Truman and his advisers that if aggression were allowed in Korea, there would later be further aggression elsewhere.

Again and again American spokesmen in 1951 repeated that the main reason for the United Nations action in Korea was to stop aggression.²⁸ There seems to have been complete conviction in the minds of the members of the Administration -- certainly no doubt was ever publicly admitted -- that the decision to enter the Korean conflict was right because to have stood back would have been to encourage new invasions. Adlai Stevenson expressed the opinion of the President and his supporters when he said that if the United States had not accepted the Communist challenge in Korea, Munich would have followed Munich.²⁹

The idea of preventing further aggressions by stopping the first

²⁷See AFPBD, 2539-2541, 2550-2560.

²⁸See HST, II, 435; AFPBD, 2551-2552, 2567, 2603-2607, 2610-2612.

²⁹Adlai Stevenson, "Korea in Perspective", Foreign Affairs, XXX:3 (Apr, 1952), 353.

one fitted in with the Administration's policy of containment. President Truman believed that the Communist Power intended to try to conquer all of Asia. Any movement in that direction, therefore, had to be checked by the United States -- hence Korea.³⁰ It was accepted that a successful act of containment in Korea would not deter the Soviet Union forever. There might be many more Koreas, but whenever a new aggression occurred, it must be resolutely opposed.³¹ The unrelenting, expansionist pressure of the Communist dictatorship had to be matched by an equally implacable stand by the United States.

Another important aim of United States policy was presented frequently by American spokesman in 1951; it had not been mentioned in the early stages of the war. This aim was expressed in various ways, all of which had one common element -- viz., the effect upon other nations of United States action or inaction in the Korean crisis.

Members of the Administration sometimes explained this particular policy goal by asking the rhetorical question: what would have happened if the United States had not intervened in Korea? The answer provided was always grim. The people of Europe, watching to see how the United States would react in the moment of crisis, would have been disheartened.

³⁰Address by President Truman Apr 11, 1951, text in AFR, 2611.

³¹Remarks by Dean Acheson Jun 29, 1951, text in DOAFR, XIII, 7.

They would have felt that since United States support was undependable, there was no point in resisting Communism further. Eventually Western Europe might fall, and with the balance of population and industrial strength thus overturned, the United States would face disaster.³²

Similarly, American inaction would have convinced the people of Asia that those who stood up to Communist as allies of the Americans would be deserted by the United States if a crisis occurred. The Asians, therefore, of necessity would have adopted a policy of appeasement, which would eventually have led to their loss of freedom.³³

Stated more positively, this aim of American policy in Korea embodied the idea that the United States was fighting to prove that American friendship was very valuable in moments of adversity, to deflate Communist prestige and demonstrate that the Communists were not invincible, and to hearten nations threatened by Communist aggression.³⁴ These objectives would be difficult to achieve if the United States forces were evacuated from Korea; this explains why President Truman emphasized that such a withdrawal, if necessary, must clearly be attributable to military necessity, not appeasement. Of course, the loss of prestige from such a military defeat would also seriously jeopardize the attainment of these goals.

³²Remarks by Dean Rusk, text in Stabul, XXV:647 (Nov 19, 1951), 819.

³³Stevenson, op. cit., 353; also, address by Adrian Fisher, Legal Adviser, State Department, Feb 17, 1951, textual excerpts in Stabul, XXIV: 609 (Mar 5, 1951), 378.

³⁴Truman to MacArthur Jan 13, 1951, text in HST, II, 435.

Another aim of the United States' policy in Korea was the strengthening of the United Nations and the system of collective security. The United States had put a great deal of money and effort into building up the collective security structure; the attack on South Korea was considered a direct blow at the foundation of this programme. It was vital, therefore, to resist the Communist thrust, otherwise a basic part of American foreign policy would be lost.³⁵ As President Truman pointed out, Korea was the first great test of the United Nations Organization; it was imperative that the test be passed successfully.³⁶ Secretary Acheson described this goal in a slightly different way. "Korea's significance", he said, "is not the final crusade. It is not finally making valid the idea of collective security. It is important perhaps for the inverse reason that in Korea we prevented the invalidation of collective security".³⁷ This is a subtle distinction, perhaps, but the Secretary of State was probably attempting to oppose to the Marxist concept of inevitable victory a counter idea of the permanence of collective security. The system of collective security had existed before the Korean war, and would continue after the war had ended. The successful United Nations resistance in Korea was simply a demonstration of this enduring truth, and that was why the United States supported the resistance.

³⁵ Statement by Dean Acheson Jun 1, 1951, text in AFPBD, 2616-2617.

³⁶ Truman to MacArthur Jan 13, 1951, text in HST, II, 435.

³⁷ From remarks by Dean Acheson Jun 29, 1951, text in DOAFR, XIII, 7.

All the goals of American policy towards Korea which have been described above can be combined into one broad, overriding aim. The United States was fighting in Korea to protect its national security. This was protection in an indirect sense. The Korean peninsula itself was described by General George Marshal as being "of very material importance", but "not absolutely vital" strategically,³⁸ and General Omar Bradley said that Korea was not part of the United States' strategic long-range defence.³⁹ What the Truman Administration feared, what impelled it to intervene in Korea, was not the physical loss of South Korea, but the intangible effects of that loss. The United States Government acted to prevent further aggression by the Communists, to maintain the prestige of the United States, to preserve the system of collective security. Since all of these objectives had a bearing on the security of the United States, the overriding aim of the Truman Administration in Korea, then, can be seen as the preservation of American national security.

After their hopes of unifying Korea by force of arms had been destroyed by China's intervention, the American leaders found it convenient in their public statements to differentiate between the United

³⁸Testimony before SENCOM, May 8, 1951, text in the New York Times, May 9, 1951.

³⁹Testimony before SENCON, May 24, 1951, text in ibid., May 25, 1951.

States' military and political aims in Korea. The immediate military objective was to end the war, leaving the Republic of Korea secure. The political objective was the establishment of a unified, independent, democratic Korea.⁴⁰ This had been the main aim of the United States' Korean policy before the outbreak of war. It continued to be the long-range goal of American policy.

Thus the Truman Administration failed to achieve both its short-term military objectives and its long-term political objectives before the inauguration of President Eisenhower. However, President Truman and many of his supporters believed that the Administration's broader goals in Korea, which have been analysed in this chapter, had been at least partially achieved by the American action in Korea.

⁴⁰ Statement by Dean Acheson Jun, 1951, quoted in Goodrich, "Korea, Collective Security etc.", International Conciliation, #494, (Oct, 1953), 174; President Truman's State of the Union Address Jan 9, 1952, text in the New York Times, Jan 10, 1952.

CHAPTER XI

THE EFFECTS OF THE KOREAN WAR ON UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY

In attempting to assess the Korean War's effect upon American policy, one is faced with the difficulty of distinguishing between those policies which would not have changed without the war, and those which would have evolved as they did, war or no war. Some developments in United States policy were quite clearly the result of the situation in Korea; in other cases, the connection was less clear. With this reservation in mind, we can examine American foreign policies after June 1950, with particular reference to the alterations in policy made necessary by the Korean war.

Not surprisingly, the Korean war's main impact was upon the Far Eastern policy of the United States. The guidelines of the Truman Administration's policy towards Japan had been well established by June 1950, the time of the North Korean aggression. By then, as we have seen, the United States Government was planning the swift return of Japan to independence and normal international relations through the signing of a peace treaty. Japan was also to be a bastion of the United States' Far Eastern security system. The main effect of the Korean conflict upon American policy towards Japan was to accelerate the United States' progress towards its established goals. For example, while the United States Government wanted to establish Japan as a long term military

stronghold, Japan's immediate value as the firm base for the Korean operations spurred the Truman Administration to reach a settlement with the Japanese Government.¹ The Korean conflict also made achievement of American aims somewhat easier, because many Japanese who had formerly rejected the idea of American bases in Japan were moved to change their opinions by the Communist aggression in Korea.²

Part of a memorandum read by Mr. Truman to Clement Attlee during their meeting in December 1950 stated:

" . . . other steps which might be taken to strengthen non-Communist Asia . . . might include:

(a) Restoration of considerable self-government to Japan, the acceleration of efforts to obtain a Japanese peace settlement, the strengthening of Japanese capacity for self-defence, the greater utilization of productive capacity to strengthen the capabilities of the free world, and the prompt admission of Japan into international organizations. United Kingdom reluctance to move on these . . . points should be discarded in light of the new critical situation".³

This passage, particularly the last sentence, shows that events in Korea caused the Truman Administration to hasten the completion of its programme for Japan.

¹ TUSIWA 1951, 174; ibid., 1952, 211.

² Ibid., 1951, 176-177.

³ Text in HST, II, 400-401.

The Korean war had a more drastic effect upon the United States' policies towards China and Formosa. Before June 1950, the Truman Administration had practically washed its hands of the Chinese Nationalist Government, had stopped sending military aid to the Nationalists, and had taken the unusual step of issuing a white paper strongly critical of Chiang Kai-shek's regime. While not recognizing the Communist regime as the official government of China, the United States Government had decided to do nothing more to prevent the Communists from attaining de facto control of China.⁴ This policy was continued after the initial attack upon the Republic of Korea. Although the United States Seventh Fleet was moved into the Strait of Formosa, its mission was to prevent attacks both by and against Communist China. Throughout the summer of 1950 the Administration hoped that the Chinese Communists would stay out of the Korean war, and that a split might develop between China and the Soviet Union.⁵ China's intervention ended that hope, and ended also the moderate policy which the United States had pursued towards the Peking regime. The United States pushed a resolution through the United Nations General Assembly on Feb 1, 1951, naming Communist China as an aggressor in Korea, and in Jan, and Feb, 1951, the United States resumed military assistance to the Chinese Nationalist Government.⁶

⁴See Chapter II above.

⁵See above VIII 229

⁶Testimony of General Omar Bradley before SENGCOM, May 21, 1951, text in the New York Times, May 22, 1951.

On May 18, 1951 the Administration announced, albeit in an indirect way, an abrupt reversal of its China policy. On that date, Dean Rusk, the Assistant Secretary of State, made a speech in which he announced that the Peking government, because it was a puppet government, would not be granted diplomatic recognition by the United States. Recognition of the Nationalist government would continue because, he said, it was more truly representative of the Chinese people. Mr. Rusk stated that the Formosa regime would continue to receive American aid, and he made a thinly veiled promise that if the Chinese revolted they would receive help from the United States.⁷

Mr. Rusk's address was regarded by both the press and foreign governments as new American policy. The British Government in particular was alarmed, fearing that the Truman Administration was moving towards the views of General MacArthur and his supporters. Specifically, the British were afraid that the American Government was adopting the view that its chief opponent was not the Soviet Union, but Communism, and that there must be no cessation of effort until every Communist government had been overturned. The British had no wish to embark on such a crusade and feared its consequences. The Chinese policy of the British government was to recognize the Communists as the government of China,

⁷Ibid., May 19, 1951.

and to favour admission of Communist China into the United Nations.⁸

The Truman Administration attempted to still apprehensions raised by the Rusk speech and to assure the world that there had been no change in American policy, no move towards the views of the American right wing. Mr. Acheson announced:

"I regard the Rusk speech . . . as a restatement of policy which has been in existence for some time . . . I think there is nothing new in that speech."⁹

Mr. Acheson was perhaps being both truthful and untruthful in his statement, depending on the period of time covered by his phrase "for some time". It was true that since China's intervention in the Korean war the United States Government had hardened its policy towards the Communist government and had begun once more to give aid to Chiang Kai-shek. This was quite apparent, and Mr. Rusk's speech did not mark any great departure from this position. Furthermore, the main fear of a number of nations, that the Administration was now planning to prolong and extend the war, was not, in the event, borne out.

However, the Truman Administration had changed its China policy

⁸ Ibid., May 23, 1951.

⁹ Testimony before SENCOM, Jun 2, 1951, text in ibid., Jun 3, 1951.

from that followed as recently as mid-November 1950.¹⁰ Mr. Rusk's firm statement of support of the Nationalists, and his characterization of the Peking regime as being "not Chinese" was a complete reversal of American policy towards China which, in its main outlines, had been followed until late autumn 1950. This change was obviously the result of the Korean war.

With the Administration's new attitude towards the Nationalist Chinese came a change in United States policy on Formosa. Before the start of the Korean war, President Truman had accepted the inevitability of the fall of Formosa to the Chinese Communists. With the outbreak of war, and particularly after China's intervention, the Administration changed its views. Whereas before June 25, 1950 the status of Formosa was to have been decided by the outcome of the Chinese civil war, after the outbreak of war in Korea the future of Formosa was to be decided by some type of international agreement.

As soon as President Truman decided to use American forces in Korea, he ordered the Seventh Fleet to "neutralize" Formosa, and announced that "the determination of the future status of Formosa must await the restoration of security in the Pacific, a peace settlement with Japan,

¹⁰ See above, VI, 167, 168.

or consideration by the United Nations".¹¹ The use of "or" in this statement suggests that any one of the three factors might decide the future of Formosa. The first factor -- restoration of Pacific security -- implied that the end of the Korean war might see the withdrawal of the Seventh Fleet and the return of Formosa to its former vulnerable existence. In other words, one could at least infer from the President's words that when the Korean operation was over, the United States might once again acquiesce in the conquering of Formosa by the Communists.

By the end of Aug, 1950, the official United States stand on Formosa was that the future status of the island depended upon an international agreement or United Nations action. There was now no suggestion that Formosa be allowed to fall to the Communists by armed invasion.¹² By the spring of 1951 the Administration had changed its Formosa policy even further. Although international discussions, in which Communist China would be included, might settle the status of Formosa, such a settlement would not be accepted by the United States if it included Communist control of Formosa.¹³ Here again was an Administration policy that was totally changed by the outbreak of war in Korea. In less than

¹¹Text in HST, II, 339.

¹²Truman to Warren Austin, Aug 27, 1950, text in the New York Times, Aug 29, 1950.

¹³Testimony of George C. Marshall before SENCOM, May 11, 1951, text in ibid., May 12, 1951.

a year the United States Government had completely reversed its stand on Communist rule in Formosa.

We have seen that before the Korean war the United States Government had recognized that there was a Communist threat in the former colonies of Southeast Asia, but had made a rather limited response to this menace.¹⁴ In Jan, 1950 Mr. Acheson described the "defensive perimeter" of the United States, including in it the Aleutian Islands, Japan, the Ryuku Islands, and the Philippines. He went on to say:

"So far as the military security of other areas in the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no person can guarantee these areas against military attack . . .

Should such an attack occur . . . the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations . . .

But it is a mistake, I think, in considering Pacific and Far Eastern problems to become obsessed with military considerations. Important as they are, there are other problems that press, and these other problems are not capable of solution through military means."¹⁵

After the Korean aggression, and undoubtedly to a large extent because of it, the United States greatly increased its commitment to the

¹⁴See above, II, 58 - 61.

¹⁵Text in AFPRD, 2318.

defence of the Southeast Asian countries and placed greater emphasis upon "military considerations". In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Oct 24, 1950, President Truman noted that the United Nations had used force in Korea to stop aggression, and he spoke his approval of further steps that were being taken to ensure rapid action in any future aggression. "However much they may regret the necessity", said Mr. Truman,

" [the peace-loving nations] will continue to build up their strength until they have created forces strong enough to preserve the peace under the United Nations. They will do all that is required to provide a defence against aggression".¹⁶

Under the circumstances of the Korean war, the American President's words amounted to a promise that the United States would use military force, under United Nations authority, to counter aggression against any country. In effect, then, less than a year after Mr. Acheson's refusal to guarantee the security of all Asian states, Mr. Truman was doing just that.

The Administration went further in this direction. On Nov 6, 1951, Dean Rusk made an address at Seattle, Washington, in which he said that the United States was sympathetic towards a further organization of

¹⁶Text in DOAFR, XII, 170-171.

security in the Pacific area, beyond the United States - Australia - New Zealand pact.¹⁷ The United States, said Mr. Rusk, hoped that there would be a growing consciousness of the interdependence of the Far Eastern nations in the maintenance of peace in the area, and that this would result in further co-operation in the interests of mutual security. "Further developments along that line will find a sympathetic and interested response from the United States".¹⁸ This was another long step away from the United States position enunciated by Dean Acheson in Jan, 1950. Far from refusing to guarantee the security of all but a few Asian states, the American Government was now publicly inviting the Asian nations to sign mutual defence treaties with the United States.

This change in policy towards the former colonial territories in Southeast Asia was almost certainly the result of the Korean war. Although the threat of Communist subversion continued, and the Administration took steps to remove the conditions which made subversion possible, Korea had shown that the threat of direct military attack was very real. Moreover, once the United States had decided to resist the aggressor in Korea, and had continually declared how right and wise that decision had been, it logically had to announce that it would resist any other aggression. This corollary was all the more mandatory because the

¹⁷A security treaty (ANZUS treaty) was signed Sep 1, 1951 by the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

¹⁸Textual excerpts in Stabul, XXV:647 (Nov 19, 1951), 823.

United States had not justified its original intervention by reference to its former special position in Korea, but had proclaimed its action as carrying out the principle of collective security under the Charter.

Although the Korean war caused important changes in the Truman Administration's Far Eastern policy, the basic features of the general foreign policy of the United States were essentially unaffected by the war. These policies reflected the Administration's analysis of Soviet aims, an analysis which remained basically the same during the tenure of the Truman Administration, and which had first been publicly outlined in the famous "X" article by George G. Kennan.¹⁹ Thus, in his Message to the Congress on May 24, 1951, President Truman declared that the strategy of the Soviet Union was to "pick off the free countries one by one, so that their resources and people can be organized against the rest of the free world". The Soviet threat, the President continued, was total, affecting every form of human endeavour, and would be of indefinite duration.²⁰ The views expressed by Mr. Truman in this message in 1951 paralleled the ideas expressed by Mr. Kennan in 1947, in which the Soviet Union was pictured as constantly probing and pressing, looking for weak spots to be exploited in order to hasten the overthrow of capitalism, undeterred by the passage of time because of the ideologically assured

¹⁹ See above, I, 10.

²⁰ Address by President Truman Apr 11, 1951, text in AFPPBD, 2610-2611.

inevitability of Communist victory.

What the Korean war did do, perhaps, was to focus the attention of the Truman Administration on Soviet aims in Asia. The United States Government soon saw the Korean attack as the first step in a Soviet programme to take over Asia, combining the population of China, the productive capacity of Japan, and the resources of Asia to become a state of overwhelming power.²¹

Since it had not substantially altered its opinion of Soviet aims, the Truman Administration maintained until 1953 the general policies which it had followed before the Korean war. The Soviet Union's attempts to expand were to be contained by vigilant action, including military defence, economic and social rehabilitation of threatened areas, propaganda, and constant use of the United Nations, both as a forum and a military organization.²²

Support of the United Nations continued to be a basic feature of United States foreign policy, and spokesmen for the Administration repeatedly stressed in public the importance of the United Nations.²³

²¹Address by Dean Acheson Apr 30, 1951, text in Stabul, XXIV:619 (May 14, 1951), 768.

²²Address by Adrian Fisher, Legal Adviser, State Department, Jan 31, 1952, text in Stabul, XXVI:660 (Feb 18, 1952), 245-247.

²³See, for example, Letter from President Truman to the Congress, Jul 3, 1952, text in DOAFR, XIII, 202-205.

The necessity of having allies, and the value of collective security were also concepts which the United States Government still supported after the outbreak of war in Korea.²⁴ The United States attempted to obtain the support of its allies for its policies, and at times, as we have seen, allied opinion was a factor in the formation of American policy. Various mutual security pacts were also signed after June 1950, a further illustration of the Administration's continuing belief in collective security.²⁵

The Korean war did increase the importance of force in American foreign policy. The war showed that the Communists were apt to use force at any time, and revealed the serious weakness of the United States' military posture. It was quite possible that the United States might in future have to give way to Soviet pressure through sheer inability to counter the threat physically. This had been a danger in Korea until the Spring of 1951; the United States could place only a limited number of troops in the field, and if these were not sufficient no more could be spared. As a result, Korea itself would have had to be given up - a severe military and political defeat for the United States. The experience of the Korean war, therefore, led to an extremely rapid build-up

²⁴Report by President Truman to the Congress Feb 12, 1952, text in DOAFR, XIII, 145-146.

²⁵For example, the United States-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty Aug 30, 1951, ANZUS treaty Sep 1, 1951, Security Treaty with Japan Sep 8, 1951.

of the United States armed forces, in order to provide the necessary element of military power to back up American foreign policies.

In summation, the Korean war caused drastic reversals in the Far Eastern policies of the United States. The effect of the war on general United States policy was less severe: American policy-makers were confirmed in their analysis of Soviet aims, and were strengthened in their resolve to counter those aims with policies which had already been established before the Korean aggression.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

The Korean war was somewhat of an anomaly. It would not have occurred if Korea had not, in the closing days of World War II, been artificially divided. Even then, the United States government considered the division of Korea to be unfortunate but relatively unimportant. For the American government believed that Korea had virtually no direct significance for American security. The Truman Administration believed that South Korea should be kept independent because democratic capitalism was on display there, and because it was important to contain Soviet expansion everywhere. But the conviction that Korea was of no military importance overrode all other considerations, as can be seen from the Truman Administration's policies towards Korea after the Second World War.

In 1946 the chief aim of the United States in Korea was the achievement of a unified, independent Korea. At first, little attention was given by the Truman Administration to Korea, but as Soviet intransigence became clear, the United States government began to devote more effort to the Korean problem. However, much of this effort was spent on attempts to reduce the involvement of the United States in Korea, without sacrificing the objective of a unified, democratic Korea. By 1950 the

United States government seemed to have attained considerable success in its Korean policy. The Republic of Korea had been established and recognized by the United Nations General Assembly as "a lawful government...based on election which were a valid expression of the free will of the electorate" of the southern half of Korea, and "the only such government in Korea".¹ The United States occupation forces had been withdrawn, and there was established a United Nations Commission on Korea which the Truman Administration hoped would deter an invasion by North Korea. In Secretary of State Acheson's famous speech of Jan 12, 1950, Korea was excluded from the definition of the United States' vital "defensive perimeter". It appeared, therefore, that the United States had been able to disengage itself from Korea, while at the same time establishing an independent, democratic government in at least half the Korean peninsula.

We have seen that the Truman Administration's policy towards Korea prior to Jun 25, 1950 precluded American military intervention in the event of an attack from North Korea. In launching their invasion, the Communists probably felt assured that the United States either would not or could not help South Korea.

At this point, however, other factors quickly came into play. One

¹Resolution 195 (III) of the United Nations General Assembly Dec 12, 1948, text in Goodrich, Korea, A Study etc., op. cit., 217-218.

of the basic features of United States foreign policy under President Truman was the principle of containment. The attack upon Korea was a most obvious rupture of the containment net which had been carefully constructed around the Communist bloc. The Truman Administration was logically compelled by one of the first principles of its foreign policy to intervene to stop the Communist expansion. In other words, it was abruptly realized that the earlier policy of refusing to commit the United States to the defence of the Republic of Korea was contrary to general United States policy and could only have been logical if South Korea had been regarded as a sort of no-man's-land whose occupancy by the Communists could not be called Soviet expansion. It became obvious with sudden clarity that South Korea was not such an area, but was, on the contrary, a model of a new nation based upon western ideals.

The opinions and outlook of President Truman and his chief advisers also played a part in the unexpected decision to intervene in Korea. All felt that in Korea the Communists were attempting either to test the Western bloc's will to resist or to demonstrate to the uncommitted world that the Communists were strong and their opponents weak. In either case, President Truman believed, failure to stop the Communist invasion would invite further aggression elsewhere. Here we can see that in a very real way the Korean war as it was fought was the result of World War II, not only, obviously, as an instance of East West tension

originating in World War II, but also as the expression of the firm belief of Harry Truman and his advisers that history does to a certain extent repeat itself and that if aggression were accepted now, further aggression would follow. They had been conditioned by Munich.

Prior to the Korean attack the United States government had considered Korea important for reasons of prestige. It was believed that the Asian nations would accept or reject democratic capitalism partly on the basis of its performance in South Korea. However, before Jun 25, 1950 the prestige factor was subordinated to military considerations which required an American withdrawal from Korea. After the North Korean attack less stress was laid upon the military merits of intervention; the necessity of demonstrating American strength and determination became the pre-eminent factor.

Finally, in analysing the considerations that led the United States to intervene, one other possibility should be noted. The great shock caused by the North Korean action -- the surprise, the military nature of the threat, the initial complete success -- may have forced President Truman and his councillors to overreact. The psychological effect of the sudden, unheralded invasion may have been to create an emotional desire to strike back at this shattering new menace, forgetting past policies which had been worked out when the situation was less desperate and time less precious.

The Korean war, therefore, can be viewed as a war of miscalculation. Had the Communists foreseen the American reaction, it is unlikely that North Korea would have invaded South Korea,² although it is possible that the attack would have been made anyway on the assumption that the Republic of Korea would be totally conquered before American aid could become effective. The United States government, for its part, did not believe that South Korea was about to be invaded, and publicly omitted Korea from the list of countries that the United States would definitely defend. Later on, the Truman Government again erred in its belief that Communist China would not enter the war. The result of these miscalculations was that the Soviet Union and the United States found themselves in what was potentially an extremely dangerous situation which had not been anticipated and for which policies had to be improvised.

To decide how well the Truman Government handled itself in these perilous circumstances, we must first decide upon our criteria of judgment. Certainly the aims of the Truman Administration in its approach to Korea should be discussed. Were these aims the correct ones, given the interests of the United States and the conditions limiting the Administration's actions? The danger in such a discussion of aims, however, is that there may be no resolution of the discussion; disagreement

²Assuming, as the Truman Administration did, that the North Korean attack was the work of the Soviet Union, and not an independent act by North Korea.

may occur on basic premises and principles, and neither side can be proved to be right or wrong. In examining the policies by which the Administration sought to achieve its purposes in foreign affairs, valid judgments can be made if one accepts the Administration's aims as given. In that case, a simple standard of judgment can be used, viz., success. One can ask, to what extent did the United States government's policies achieve their aims?

The Truman Administration's original aim in Korea -- the establishment of an independent, democratic Korean state -- is not subject to serious criticism. It was handed down from the previous administration, and Mr. Truman had vowed to continue his predecessor's foreign policy. Given the relative unimportance of Korea, Mr. Truman had no cause to change the Korean policy which he had inherited; his government had more vital matters to attend to.

The division of Korea was a new situation, but that it required a new formulation of aims was not immediately apparent to the United States. It was not until the summer of 1947 that the Truman Administration decided that it was impossible to unify Korea by direct negotiations with the Soviet Union. The Korean problem was then laid before the United Nations, but it was quickly apparent that the Soviet Union had no intention of permitting unification of Korea under United Nations auspices. As a result, although creation of a unified, independent, democratic Korea remained a long-term American goal, the more immediate

aims became the maintenance of the Republic of Korea, and the eventual withdrawal of United States forces from Korea. As we have seen, these aims were conflicting, and the Truman Administration showed considerable ingenuity in trying to reconcile them.

Were these new aims soundly chosen? Since the most expert military advisers in the United States said both before and after the Korean attack that the Korean peninsula was strategically unimportant, the withdrawal of United States occupation troops -- especially in view of the shortage of combat-ready American soldiers -- was a logical aim.

On the other hand, could the Truman Administration have washed its hands of South Korea, allowing that area to be taken over by the Communists? Several considerations opposed such a course. The United States Government felt an obligation towards the Koreans, because of the Cairo and Potsdam declarations and because the United States was an Occupying Power in Korea. The containment policy of the Truman Administration also argued against a complete withdrawal from Korean affairs, and the damage to American prestige in Asia if Korea became wholly Communist was an additional factor. It seems, therefore, that both of the Administration's aims in Korea, although contradictory, were sound. However, one can criticize the equal priority given to the two aims. Less emphasis should have been put at first on the withdrawal of American forces from Korea. The end of military occupation was a proper goal,

but it should have been subordinated to the aim of establishing the Republic of Korea as a viable state, capable of defending itself from invasion. An attack from North Korea was considered a serious possibility; no particular prophetic gift was required to see that the only forces capable of defending the Republic of Korea should remain until South Korea could shoulder the load by itself. A slower phasing of withdrawal of American forces, reflecting a down-grading of the United States' military aim in Korea, might have been sufficient. One reason for the precipitate evacuation of American troops was the misapprehension that the Republic of Korea forces were strong enough to repulse a North Korean attack; such a serious blunder by military intelligence must be severely condemned. It has been suggested that the United States purposely kept the South Korean army weak in order to prevent the Republic of Korea from attacking its northern neighbour. This sounds rather too Machiavellian to be true, but if the Truman Administration did so reason it was in serious error. The Republic of Korea could not mount a sustained attack without a steady stream of American supplies. The United States could have built the southern army to full strength, supplying stockpiles for only a limited period of fighting. The Government of the Republic of Korea could have been told bluntly that in the event of hostilities further supplies would be provided only if it was obvious that North Korea was the unprovoked aggressor.

When the Korean war began, the immediate aim of the United States was to force the invader back behind the Thirty-eighth Parallel, restoring Korea to the status quo ante bellum. This was a well chosen goal; it was limited and clear; it could not fail to gain the support of most countries of the world; it fitted in with the concepts and aims of the United Nations Charter. It was unfortunate that the Truman Administration, in the summer and fall of 1950, let success change the United States' aim in the war.

Many have argued that morality is the best guide in conducting foreign affairs, that in the long run expediency does not pay. Such exponents of morality can adduce the Korean war as a case in point. By deciding to use force to unify Korea simply because the opportunity seemed to be there, the United States deserted the principles for which it was supposedly fighting, and ignored its own rule -- voiced by Dean Acheson on Jan 12, 1950 -- that American purposes in Asia must be "straight" and "pure".³ Sir Benegal Rau, the Indian delegate to the United Nations, put the case against forceful unification just before the United Nations General Assembly authorized its forces to establish stability "throughout Korea":⁴

³See Above, II, 44.

⁴General Assembly resolution of Oct 7, 1950.

We cannot help thinking that it would impair faith in the U.N. if we were even to appear to authorize the unification of Korea by the use of force against North Korea, after we had resisted the attempt of North Korea to unify the country by force against South Korea. The result may be to intensify the North Korean opposition and to increase the tension in that part of the world.⁵

Since one of the main purposes of the United States intervention was to impress upon other nations that force should and would not be used to settle international disputes, even advocates of expediency might boggle at such a flagrant departure from principle.

By early 1951, as we have seen, the United States had clarified its military aims in Korea: the Eighth Army was to be kept intact; the war was to be ended; the Republic of Korea must be restored and made secure from any future attack; the war was to be confined to Korea. There can be little argument with the first three of the objectives; there can and has been considerable discussion on the merits of the fourth one. The arguments for and against extending the war to China have already been presented. Even if one disagrees with Mr. Truman's decision to limit the geographical extent of the war, it is clear, surely, that the decision was based not on whim but on strong, carefully thought out reasons.

⁵Quoted in Whiting, op. cit., 114 n.

The more general goals of the United States in Korea have been discussed previously: to deter future aggression; to show the strength and loyalty of the United States; to uphold collective security; to maintain the security of the United States. In view of the past policies of the United States and the normal foreign policy aims of any country, the above objectives seem reasonable. One can question whether intervention in Korea would necessarily prevent aggression later on somewhere else, but such discussion would inevitably resolve itself into simple differences of opinion. In this case President Truman and his advisers felt that they were applying the lessons of the past, and if the past does have lessons to teach, the Korean intervention would seem to have been a sound application of the lesson of the 1930's.

The obvious alternative to pursuing these objectives, of course, was non-intervention. To have refrained from sending troops to Korea in Jun, 1950 would have been consistent with the Administration's views on the strategic importance of Korea. While such a policy would have been out of step with the containment theory, as I have suggested, it would not have been inconsistent with the principle of containment as it was being applied in the Far East before the North Korean attack. Secretary of State Acheson, in his speech on Jan 12, 1950 outlining the defensive perimeter of the United States, specified the Far Eastern states that would definitely be defended by the United States. Other countries in the region, if attacked, could not be sure of full American assistance.

This was, therefore, a containment theory which called for resistance to Soviet expansion only in certain vital areas. The unimportant regions in between these strategic points would not necessarily be protected from Russian penetration. Non-intervention in Korea would not have flouted this Far Eastern version of the containment policy.

The direct military consequences of non-intervention would not have been serious, assuming that President Truman's military advisers were correct in their appreciation. Formosa as well as South Korea would presumably have fallen to the Communists, and the territorial positions occupied by the Communist and Western blocs in the Far East would have been more logical geographically than they now are. The 140,000 United States casualties⁶ would not have occurred. These results of American non-participation were foreseeable; it would be pointless to go further and examine advantages of non-intervention (such as possibly less acrimonious Sino-American relations) which were not apparent in Jun, 1950. It is possible that in the long-run non-intervention might have been the wiser policy, but one cannot prove this, just as one cannot prove that intervention was the right move. It is a matter, ultimately, of opinion and judgment. Certainly President Truman had powerful reasons for intervening after the North Korean attack. One

⁶Total dead: 25,604; Wounded: 103,492; Missing in action 10,748. Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica Book of the Year 1954, "Korean War".

criticism can, however, be made. There is no evidence that Mr. Truman and his advisers, in their first meetings after the invasion, ever considered the alternative of non-intervention. The decision to use force seems to have been made instinctively and almost immediately without any logical study of the other alternatives. If foreign policy is to be rational it must be based upon a full examination of all possible courses of action. One has the impression that emotional overtones were too strong at the President's meetings in the week of Jun 25, 1950, and that as a result not all the avenues of possible American action were explored. This, though, is not a condemnation of the decision to intervene, but rather of the way in which the decision was arrived at.

Turning now to the United States' policies in Korea, we can judge those policies by their success, by the extent to which they achieved their stated purpose. By this standard, the Truman Administration's Korean policies appear, on the surface, to have been either badly chosen or improperly applied. The continuous aim of the United States from 1945 on -- both before and during the Korean war -- was the establishment of one independent, democratic Korean state on the Korean peninsula. The Truman Administration's policies did not achieve that goal. It is difficult, however, to think of any course that the United States could have taken and been successful, in view of the obvious Soviet determination to preserve the division of Korea. The use of force to achieve unification, when tried in the fall of 1950, proved disastrous.

Not only was Korea not unified, but also the war was prolonged.

In the period 1947-1950, the United States Government attempted to reduce its commitment in Korea, while keeping the Republic of Korea independent. In order to reconcile these contradictory objectives the Truman Administration made the Korean problem the responsibility of the United Nations, and secured the establishment of a United Nations Commission which, it was hoped, would deter a North Korean attack. These policies failed; South Korea was attacked and came very close to being conquered.

The primary military aims of the United States in the Korean conflict were the restoration of the Republic of Korea, the ending of the war, and the securing of South Korea against further attacks. When President Truman left office in early 1953, South Korea had been almost wholly cleared of Communist forces, but the war was still on and there was no guarantee that the United Nations might not again be driven back down the peninsula.

The Truman Government was able to keep the hostilities confined to the Korean peninsula, despite strong pressure from many sides. The policies used to achieve that aim worked, but one cannot help but note that the Administration might not have had to go to so much trouble to keep the war out of China if the Thirty-eighth Parallel had not been

crossed in Oct., 1950.

The Truman foreign policy record in Korea is not so dismal as the preceding paragraphs suggest. While it is true that Korea remains divided, what policy, in view of the Soviet opposition, could have overcome this problem without sacrificing to an inordinate degree American resources, lives, and non-Korean foreign policy goals? Although the war continued beyond President Truman's term of office, it was the progress made under Mr. Truman on the battlefield and in the truce tents which made the final armistice possible. Moreover, it is indisputable that the Republic of Korea was saved from Communist control; aggression was not rewarded. The swift American decision to intervene prevented the Communists from expanding by force of arms. That was one of the main reasons for the United States response, and, in that, success was achieved.

It is more difficult to measure the success of President Truman's Korean policies in realizing their more general aims, because both the aims and the effects of the policies are intangible. Was future aggression deterred? The Communist military action in Indo-China, Hungary, and Vietnam suggests that aggression continues, and yet who can say that some other planned invasions were not prevented by the United States' firm response in Korea?

The Truman Administration's Korean policy appears to have bolstered American prestige. In Europe the allies were impressed by the United States' determination to resist Communist expansion.⁷ In Asia, the United States' successful resistance to the Communists had a marked effect. A myth of Communist invincibility had grown up in Asia; many believed that the Soviet Union had been the real victor over both Germany and Japan. It was very important, therefore, that the United States had shown that it had the ability to defeat Communist forces in large-scale combat. Balanced against this rise in prestige was the danger that United States military action might be construed in Asia as white imperialism.⁸ Here one must give the Truman Administration full marks for its policy of working through the United Nations. By so doing, the American Government was able to dispel many of the Asians' suspicions and to enlist their co-operation in the Korean war.

The top members of the Mr. Truman's Government, such as Dean Acheson, claimed that the American action in Korea strengthened the United Nations and the principle of collective security.⁹ Certainly the United States' own system of collective security was enlarged by the

⁷ Stevenson, op. cit., 355.

⁸ G.F. Hudson, "Korea and Asia" International Affairs, XXVII:1 (Jan, 1951), 18-24.

⁹ For example, see Mr. Acheson's address to the Women's National Press Club Apr 18, 1951, text in the New York Times, Apr 19, 1951; also Philip C. Jessup's interview with Eric Sevareid Aug 27, 1950, text in Stabul, XXIII:583

war, for the Korean conflict encouraged the Philippines, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan to take part in the United States' Pacific security arrangements.¹⁰ Whether the world's countries generally were more ready as a result of American resistance in Korea to "fight side by side, if necessary, for the safety of any of them because their common right is involved",¹¹ is difficult to say.

The relatively successful United Nations action in Korea may have increased the prestige of that body, as various prominent Americans claimed, or the effect may have been negligible. Events since 1953 seem to indicate that any rise in prestige was fairly transitory. What the Korean war did do, however, was to give the Western bloc experience in the techniques of organising world opinion in the United Nations. Specifically, the use of the General Assembly as an alternative to the deadlocked Security Council was developed through the necessities created by the Korean war. So, too, was the method of using the general provisions of the United Nations Charter on combatting aggression to justify action by the Organisation. Although the original mechanics of operation envisaged by the United Nations' founders were thus upset, the ability to act quickly in crises -- certainly an aim of the founders -- was facili-

¹⁰Stevenson, op. cit., 356.

¹¹Address by Dean Acheson to the Women's National Press Club Apr 18, 1951, text in the New York Times, Apr 19, 1951.

tated by this method of evading the veto power in the Security Council.¹² These changes were mainly the work of the Truman Administration. Of course, the old problem of the viability of a United Nations policy which is opposed by a great Power remains unanswered.

When criticizing President Truman's policies towards Korea, one should keep in mind the staggering difficulties that beset the Administration as it attempted to formulate and apply its Korean policies.

President Truman did not create the Korean problem; it was an unfortunate result of the Second World War. With the peninsula split in two, one part under Soviet authority and one under American authority, the attainment of a unified, independent country was virtually impossible, given the attitude and policies of the Soviet Union at this time. Thus Mr. Truman's Government was faced from the first with an impasse.

Another difficulty was the military weakness of the United States when the Korean attack came. Here again, the Truman Administration cannot be blamed too much because the rapid demobilization of American forces after the defeat of Japan was demanded by the American public.

¹²Address by Warren R. Austin at New York Aug 27, 1951, textual excerpt in Stabul, XXV:637

General Douglas MacArthur, another problem, was unique; no other American officer combined to anywhere near the same degree the prestige, ego, eloquence, and willingness to flout authority which the Pacific hero possessed. It was unfortunate that this man, whose views on the Far East were so different from the Administration's, was the Supreme Commander in Tokyo when the Korean war began.

Not only did President Truman have to deal with an uncooperative general abroad, but he also had to fight off strenuous attacks by the Republican Party at home. Convinced that continuous, severe criticism of the Administration's foreign policy was both morally and politically right, Senator Taft and his followers maintained a steady barrage against the Administration which seriously limited the Government's freedom of action in foreign affairs.

Another check upon the Administration's Korean policy was imposed by the necessity of keeping the support of the United States' allies and the new Asian nations. Critics have said that the Administration listened too much to foreign opinion -- a rather isolationist view -- or too little. My own impression is that the United States Government, with a few exceptions -- such as the failure to include an ally, except for South Korea, on the truce team -- preserved a fairly good balance between satisfying world opinion and getting things done.

The very nature of the Korean war imposed special difficulties upon the Truman Administration. The main purpose in entering the conflict was not to win in the traditional sense of forcing the enemy to surrender and accept the victor's peace terms. The aim was, rather, to prevent the Communists from achieving such a victory; restoring the South Korean border at the Thirty-eighth Parallel was all that the United Nations forces had to do to be successful in their operations. This type of war the American people found hard to comprehend. They were used to entering a war, beating the enemy to his knees, imposing their will upon the loser, and then withdrawing. The Korean war did not fit the pattern, and the military stalemate which was achieved in the area of the Thirty-eighth Parallel seemed to be a defeat rather than a victory. General MacArthur's declaration that "there is no substitute for victory" was closer to the traditional American view than was the Administration's policy.¹³

The confused, dissatisfied mood of the Americans was intensified by President Truman's decision to keep the war in Korea, and the restrictions on American military action which resulted from that decision. Instead of bringing all possible resources to bear on the problem in the normal American manner, the Truman Government hedged in

¹³See remarks by Senator J. William Fullbright in hearings of SENCOM May 12, 1951, text in the New York Times, May 14, 1951; also Goldman, op. cit., 207, 210.

its forces and their commanders with directives which forbade certain actions and which likely did add to United States casualties. Under the circumstances this was probably the wisest course, but it was not the American way, and many Americans -- General MacArthur being only the most spectacular example -- found it unbearable.

President Truman confined the war to the Korean peninsula primarily because he feared that to extend the conflict might precipitate a general war; this leads us to the last of Mr. Truman's burdens that I wish to discuss. The United States Government had to conduct the Korean war in a particularly volatile atmosphere. It was extremely difficult to discern the intentions of the Soviet Union. The presence of the United Nations Commission on Korea, and the United States' superiority in atomic weapons had not prevented the Communists from attacking. Obviously the Soviet Union was willing to begin -- through its satellites -- a local war; was it prepared to go all the way and launch an all-out war? The Truman Administration did not know the answer, but it was aware that if a world conflict did begin, Korea was not the place where the United States' main defensive force should be. There were, therefore, great risks involved in the American intervention; President Truman pursued his policy under the Damocletian sword of a possible Soviet attack. This threat put a great strain upon Truman and his chief advisers; the stakes were high and a wrong decision on any important matter could be disastrous. The direct effect of this danger

was the limiting of the war to Korea; by doing this, President Truman hoped to avoid provoking the Soviet Union into intervening openly in the war.¹⁴

None of the handicaps under which President Truman laboured, which I have been describing, was unique. But few statesmen can have had a larger number and variety of impediments to contend with in conducting foreign policy, a task which at best is rarely easy.¹⁵

As is true of most governments' foreign policies, the Truman Administration's Korean policy had both strengths and weaknesses. Unwise policies helped to precipitate an unexpected and unwanted war. The resulting decision to intervene, despite the criticisms which can justly be made of it, was I think, correct. If the containment policy had any meaning, if United States support of the United Nations and the principle

¹⁴For an Administration appreciation of the risks involved in the decision to intervene, see Dean Acheson in AFPPBD, 2617.

¹⁵I wonder, however, if President Truman did not have an easier task, in one respect, than his successors have had. It seems to me that the Korean war took place at a time when the justness of the American cause was clearer than it is today. In 1950 the memory of Russian secretiveness and intransigence after the world war was still fresh. Black and white were more apparent in international affairs, and God was clearly on our side. Today, American nuclear tests, the U-2 affair, and the Bay of Pigs invasion are behind us, and for many people the distinction between the two blocs has blurred. The American president now must make a greater effort to justify his actions from the point of view of morality.

of collective security had any meaning, the North Korean aggression had to be repulsed. The Administration's successes and failures during the war need not be repeated here, although the appalling difficulties faced by President Truman might be stressed once more. Some attempt has been made in this work to assess the results and the wisdom of President Truman's policies towards Korea. Final judgment may never be made, and certainly cannot be made until the Communists' archives are opened and one can see what effect American policies in Korea had upon the thinking and policies of the Communist bloc.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Primary Sources

----- Budgets of the United States Government for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1946-1954, Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1946-1953.

Documents on American Foreign Relations July 1944 - June 1945 Ed. by Leland M. Goodrich and Marie J. Carroll, Published for The World Peace Foundation by Princeton University Press, 1947.

Documents on American Foreign Relations July 1945 - December 1950 Ed. by Raymond Dennett and Robert K. Turner, Published for The World Peace Foundation by Princeton University Press, 1948-1951.

Documents on American Foreign Relations 1951 Ed. by Raymond Dennett and Katherine D. Durant, Published for The World Peace Foundation by Princeton University Press, 1953.

Documents on American Foreign Relations 1952 Ed. by Clarence W. Baier and Richard P. Stebbins, Published for the Council on Foreign Relations by Harper Brothers, New York, 1953.

Documents on American Foreign Relations 1953 Ed. by Peter V. Curl, Published for the Council on Foreign Relations by Harper Brothers, New York, 1954.

Documents on International Affairs 1947-1950 Ed. by Margaret Carlyle, Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1952-1953.

Documents on International Affairs 1951-1953 Ed. by Denise Folliot, Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1954-1956.

New York Times January 1, 1950 - January 31, 1953.

United States Department of State Bulletin Vols. 12-29 (1945-1953), Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office 1945-1953.

United States Department of State Korea's Independence Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947. (Publication 2933, Far Eastern Series, 18).

United States Department of State Korea 1945 to 1948 Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948. (Publication 3305, Far Eastern Series, 28).

United Nations Report of the United Nations Commission on Korea, Vol. I U.N. Doc. A/936 1949.

United Nations General Assembly Official Records of the Fourth Session Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly, I, Annex Lake Success, N.Y.: 1949.

United States Department of State United States Relations with China, with special reference to the period 1944-1949 Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949. (Publication 3573, Far Eastern Series, 30).

United Nations Security Council Official Records Fifth Year No. 15 (Jun 25, 1950) to No. 35 (Aug 31, 1950) Lake Success, N.Y.: 1950.

United States Office of Public Affairs United States Policy in the Korean Crisis Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950. (Publication 3922, Far Eastern Series, 34).

United States Office of Public Affairs The Conflict in Korea Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951. (Publication 4266, Far Eastern Series, 45).

United Nations General Assembly Official Records Vol. II Seventh Session First Committee 1952-1953.

The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg Ed. by Arthur H. Vandenberg Jr. and Joe A. Morris, London: Victor Gollancz, 1953.

Fifty Major Documents of the Twentieth Century Ed. by Louis L. Snyder, Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1955.

Truman, Harry S. Year of Decisions Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1955.

Truman, Harry S. Years of Trial and Hope 1946-1952 Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1956.

United States Department of State Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers: The Conferences at Yalta and Malta 1945 Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955.

United States Department of State Historical Office American Foreign Policy; basic documents 1950-1955 Vol. II. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957.

Select Documents on Asian Affairs - East Asia: China, Korea, Japan, 1947-50 Ed. by Vidya Prakash Dutt, Oxford University Press, 1958.

2. Secondary Sources - Books

Council on Foreign Relations The United States in World Affairs 1945-1952 New York: Published for the Council on Foreign Relations by Harper, 1946-1953.

McCune, George M. and Grey Jr., Arthur L. Korea Today Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1950.

Oliver, Robert T. Why War Came in Korea New York: Fordham University Press, 1950.

United Nations Secretariat: Department of Public Information Korea and the United Nations Lake Success, N.Y.: U.N. Publications I.8, 1950.

Kennan, George F. American Diplomacy 1900-1950 New York: Mentor, 1951.

Anderson, Jack and May, Ronald W. McCarthy, The Man, The Senator, The "Ism" Boston: Beacon Press, 1952.

Caldwell, John C. and Frost, Lesley The Korea Story Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952.

Calvocoressi, Peter Survey of International Affairs 1947-1953 Published under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London: Oxford University Press, 1952-1956.

Oliver, Robert T. Korea's Fight for Freedom II Washington: Korean Pacific Press, 1952.

Stone, I.F. The Hidden History of the Korean War New York: 1952.

Oliver, Robert T. Syngman Rhee: The Man Behind the Myth New York: Dodd, Mead, 1954.

Willoughby, Charles A. and Chamberlain, John MacArthur, 1941-1951 New York: McGraw, Hill, 1954.

Goldman, Eric F. The Crucial Decade: America, 1945-1955 New York: A.A. Knopf, 1956.

Goodrich, Leland M. Korea, a Study of U.S. Policy in the United Nations New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1956.

Reitzel, W.A., Kaplan, M.A., and Coblenz, C.G. United States Foreign Policy 1945-1955 Washington: Brookings Institution, 1956.

Whitney, Courtney MacArthur: his rendezvous with history New York: A.A. Knopf, 1956.

Vatcher Jr., William H. Panmunjom, The Story of the Korean Military Armistice Negotiations New York: Frederick A. Praeger Inc., 1958.

Gordenker, Leon The United Nations and the Peaceful Unification of Korea - The Politics of Field Operations 1947-1950 The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959.

Rovere, Richard H. Senator Joe McCarthy New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959.

Spanier, J.W. The Truman - MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Kawai, Kazuo Japan's American Interlude Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960.

Michael, F.H. and Taylor, G.E. The Far East in the Modern World New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1960.

Whiting, Allen S. China Crosses the Yalu, the decision to enter the Korean war New York: MacMillan, 1960.

Fleming, Denna F. The Cold War and its Origins 1917-1960 Vol. II London: Allen and Unwin, 1961.

3. Secondary Sources - Periodical Articles

McCune, George M. "Occupation Politics in Korea" Far Eastern Survey XV:3 (Feb 13, 1946) 33-37.

Cohen, Benjamin U. "The Impact of the United Nations on United States Foreign Policy" International Organization V (1951).

Grey Jr., Arthur L. "The Thirty-eighth Parallel" Foreign Affairs XXIX:3 (Apr, 1951) 482-487.

Hudson, G.F. "Korea and Asia" International Affairs XXVII:1 (Jan, 1951) 18-24.

Warner, Albert L. "How the Korean Decision was Made" Harper's Magazine CCII:1213 (Jun, 1951) 99-106.

Stevenson, Adlai "Korea in Perspective" Foreign Affairs XXX:3 (Apr, 1952) 349-360.

Goodrich, Leland M. "Korea, Collective Measures Against Aggression" International Conciliation 494 (Oct, 1953) 131-192.

George, A.L. "American Policy - Making and the North Korean Aggression" World Politics VII:2 (Jan, 1955) 209-232.