

# The Cold War



The Korean War 1950-1953

Chapter 16 - Section 3

# China

- Became a **Communist nation** under **Mao Tse Tung** after he defeated the government forces in a civil war in **1949**
- U.S. feared communism may spread throughout **Asia**, but realized there wasn't anything we could do about **China** so instead focused on saving **Western Europe** from **Soviet domination**



# Korea after WWII

- After Japanese were defeated Korea was occupied by the **Soviets in the North** and the **US in the South**
- UN wanted to create **one unified democratic Korea**, but the Communist North didn't want this



# June 1950

- **Communist-backed North Korean forces** trained by the Soviets and Chinese **invade South Korea** and push them all the way back to the southern tip of Korea (Pusan)



# General Douglas MacArthur

- Led a United Nations (UN) force that **drove the North Koreans back past the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel**





# 38<sup>th</sup> parallel

- The latitude line that divided the Soviet controlled North from the U.S. controlled South



# Hesitant to invade N. Korea

- Truman **didn't want to provoke the Chinese & Soviets directly**
- No UN troops would enter any part of China or the Soviet Union



# MacArthur invades N. Korea

- **North Korean capital of Pyongyang fell**
- Just when it looked like the war was over communist soldiers from China poured across the Yalu River and helped drive UN troops back into South Korea
- **Communist China did not want a democratic Korea next door**





# U.S. response?

- MacArthur wanted to retaliate against the Chinese
- Truman and the UN said No b/c if we directly attacked China this **might trigger nuclear war with the Soviets**



# MacArthur stripped of command

- **MacArthur** spoke out against the President (a big No No!) and was **dismissed for subordination**
- Lost his job, but **seen as a hero** by many Americans for standing up to Communism



# American public

- **Many Americans, including Sen. Joseph McCarthy, sided with the General against the President**
- **Fueled by anti-communist fears back home**



# Stalemate

- Over the next 2 years **both sides dug in at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel** pounding one another, but getting nowhere





# Negotiations...Finally

- Both sides finally agreed to create a **demilitarized zone (DMZ) - a buffer zone where no one would have soldiers**
- Also agreed to release POW's
- Only signed an armistice, not an official peace treaty - **war never officially ended**



# North Korean POW's

- Communists didn't want to allow N. Korean POW's to choose whether or not to return home b/c many would rather stay in non-communist S. Korea (25,000 did)





# Final Death Toll

- About **2 million North Korean troops** plus another million civilians
- About the same in South Korea
- **55,000 U.S. soldiers killed**



# Results of Korean War

- Korea never reunited, but we did contain communism in North Korea
- Many frustrated at loss of American lives “all for nothing”
- War never officially ended – a cease fire still exists to this day



# Present Day North Korea

- Troops still aiming guns at one another across 38<sup>th</sup> parallel in a tense state of armed truce
- **28,000 US troops still in South Korea**
- New, young leader, **Kim Jong Un**, wants to acquire nuclear weapons to prove himself and flex his muscles

