

# 15.2

## The Korean War



## **As a Young Historian, I will be able to...**

- Explain how Mao Zedong and the communists gained power in China.
- Describe the causes and the reasons for U.S. involvement in the Korean War.
- Identify the long-term effects and outcomes of the Korean War.

# China Turns Communist

**The Soviet Union hoped to spread communism, in 1949 it had begun to spread in China**

**Jiang Jieshi** of the nationalist party had been fighting a civil war against **Mao Zedong** & the communist party

**The Soviet Union supported Mao & the U.S. sent BILLIONS to support the nationalist party**

**The fear was that if China fell to communism, it would spread across Asia**

# **China Falls**

**Nationalist generals were reluctant to fight & corrupt officials pocketed the funds**

**Mao promised to stop starvation in the country & won increased support**

**Jiang is forced to flee China with supports to Taiwan**

**Communist party takes over China & renames it The People's Republic of China."**



# **U.S. Involvement in Korea**

**Korea had been split into 2 independent countries along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel setting up North & South Korea**

**U.S. leaves the region in 1949 as North Korea builds up military**

**June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1950 North Korea invades South Korea with Soviet weapons**

**Seoul, capital of South Korea, is taken & the South Korean army retreats further south**

# **U.S. Enters the Fray!**

**Truman, fearing a repeat of WWII appeasement,  
announces the U.S. would support South Korea**

**The UN Security council votes to follow Trumans  
lead, except for The Soviet Union who was  
boycotting**

**Truman doesn't ask Congress to declare  
war, simply moved troops from  
Japan to South Korea**

**Soon other countries from the UN join the  
American & South Korean forces**



# Counterattacks

**General Douglas MacArthur launches a surprise attack behind enemy lines in the dangerous waters of Inchon**

**In less than a month the North Korean forces retreat & Truman debates continuing war**

**China threatens retaliation, but Truman listens to MacArthur focusing on a “unified, independent, & democratic Korea!”**

**A victorious allied forces push into North Korea advancing to the Chinese border at the Yalu River**

# China Retaliates

**November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1959 – Chinese soldiers attack South Korea & UN troops are forced back**

**MacArthur & Truman begin to argue over a land war in Asia, MacArthur wanting total war**

**Truman favored **limited war**- a war fought to achieve only specific goals**

**Truman fires MacArthur for insubordination after he writes a letter to Congress**



# **Outcomes of War**

**A stalemate along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel begins for over 2 years as diplomats devise peace talks**

**July 27<sup>th</sup> a ceasefire is signed after the threats of nuclear weapons & the death of Stalin**

**War saw no victory & both countries remained split along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel**

**Set a precedent that the US precedent could commit troops to battle without a declaration of war**

**Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)-  
defensive alliance to prevent spread of  
communism**