Korean War

On June 25, 1950, the Korean War began when about 75,000 North Korean People’s Army soldiers raced across the 38th parallel into South Korea. This was the first attack of the Cold War. By July of 1950, American troops had entered the Cold War, supporting the Republic of Korea, South Korea, dragging the United Nations into the war with it. The United Nations viewed the war as a fight against international communism. Hopefully, the war would be a success and the suspicions of World War III would be ended quickly.

The UN forces were able to put enough men in the Pusan Peninsula to defeat the USSR supported North Korean People’s Army. This victory gave the United Nations and South Koreans momentum in the war. They were aimed toward Yalu, determined to pass the 38th parallel, and still be “Home by Christmas”, which was the goal of all American and UN troops deployed to Korea. All of this was assumed to be completed easily, before China came back into the picture. China swept in, destroying the UN troops, powering across the 38th parallel, and capturing Seoul. China was desperate to be viewed as a world power and capturing Seoul was exactly the procedure to accomplish that goal. But, once again, all momentum had shifted. The United Nations found themselves a new commanding general and were prepared to lead a deathly counterattack. The UN troops quickly recaptured Seoul and crossed the 38th parallel for the second time.

 The May Massacre occurred next. The Chinese Communist Forces and the North Korean Peoples Army teamed up together with over 50,000 men to destroy a division of the UN Infantry. Although the CCF and NKPA were on offense in this battle, the UN forces ruined them. The United Nations troops were supported by French and Dutch battalions. The CCF was horrified by the massive number of casualties from this battle. The Chinese and North Koreans quickly chased back across the 38th parallel. The CCF now saw that this war against communism was not going to be an easy one. As the Chinese reevaluated their current situation, they decided to enter into peace negotiations. Both the CCF and UN forces were digging trench lines on their respective side of the 38th parallel the width of Korea, preparing for battle at any moment.

 The war eventually shifted into a war of attrition. In the U.S. Presidential Election of 1952, the Republican candidate, Dwight D. Eisenhower, strongly criticized President Truman’s war efforts. Following Eisenhower’s presidential victory, he followed through with his promise and visited Korea. Eisenhower's trip made him realize that more had to be done to push forward with a peace negotiation. Eisenhower began to publicly hint at the use of nuclear arsenal to threaten the Korean military. He allowed the Nationalist Chinese government to perform air raids on Mainland China and pressured the South Korean ally to drop some of its demands in order to speed up the peace process. Whether or not Eisenhower efficiently pushed the peace process forward was up in the air, but all sides involved were ready to end the war and settle the conflict to end the bloodshed. The growing brutality of the war was becoming too much to handle.

 Now that the Communistic countries had agreed to discuss a truce, the war became much smaller. There were fewer large, full-scale battles that hundreds of soldiers died in. It was mostly decreased down to small battles that occurred around Combat Outposts, on the outskirts of the main action, along the Main Line of Resistance. Battles around the Combat Outposts were much more frequent and constantly changing in ownership between Communist and Democratic countries. These Outposts, where the rightful possessor could see everything from above for 5,000 yards to the Main Line of Resistance, were constantly changing owners for well over a year. These were strategic positions to obtain and many men died in each battle for the Combat Outposts. The only other small-scale battles that took place after July 1952 happened along the Main Line of Resistance, near the 38th parallel. These battles were much more vicious than those that took place around the Combat Outposts. Trench Warfare was the main war strategy used, which provides terrible conditions for all soldiers located inside the trenches. The negotiations between opposing sides took place despite the constant fighting surrounding them. Surprisingly, general global conflict never took place. The United Nations, China, and the USSR handled all peace negotiations. The Americans involved were working incredibly hard to form an armistice with the North Korean Communists and end the war as quickly and smoothly as possible. Nothing was taken from or gained for any side. Most negotiation meetings took place around the Main Line of Resistance, very close to the 38th parallel.

 The negotiations between the new world powers, United States, USSR, and China, took a very long time to complete. They continued throughout the entire war. By the time the negotiations had finally begun, President Truman had already decided that the war needed to be ended very soon. He believed that with the end of the Korean War, the end of Communism would soon follow. The Communist powers did not help the deadlock either. They did not want to give up on their primary demands. Letting up on these requirements would make these Communist powers seem weak. The United States continued to bomb the Communist powers, but they did not feel threatened. If anything, the bombings only strengthened the Communist countries and made them feel as if they could not be destroyed. Once President Eisenhower was elected in 1952, he got straight down to business with the war in Korea. He secretly flew over to the Korea to see the war first hand and establish an action plan. As a war hero and a strong Republican President, Eisenhower was not phased by the treacherous conditions in Korea or his citizens view on Communism. In fact, once witnessing the war personally, Eisenhower was determined to end the Korean War fast than former President Truman had planned.  Eisenhower was the person who ended the wars negotiations.

 It took 2 years and 17 days to complete all the Korean War negotiations. There were many disagreements over multiple topics and the war surrounding the Main Line of Resistance did not speed up the process at all. Once some of the sick and wounded prisoners of war were exchanged, peace negotiations continued. Then, once discussion of the new countries borders had begun, the idea of an armistice could be formed between the opposing countries.  All was going well between the United States, China, North Korea, South Korea, the USSR, and the United Nations until South Korea disagreed. By releasing 24,000 anti-communist prisoners of war, they proved their defiance to the truce. Once even further discussions took place and South Korea continued to agree with the former plan, the armistice was, once again, back in the picture. The armistice formed on July 27, 1953, that all countries agreed, to end the Korean War.