BAPTISM BY FIRE

CIA Analysis of the KOREAN WAR

A Collection of Previously Released and Recently Declassified Intelligence Documents

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF INTELLIGENCE

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

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IMS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Sponsors 2

II. Overview 5

III. Timeline 18-19

IV. Essays 21

Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950

A Personal Perspective

The Chinese Intervention in Korea, 1950

American Cryptology During the Korean War

V. Selected Intelligence Documents 36

The USSR and the Korean Invasion

Factors Affecting the Desirability of a UN Military Conquest of All of Korea

VI. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Electronic Reading Room 42

The Historical Collections Division (HCD) of CIA's Information Management Services is responsible for executing the Agency's Historical Review Program. This program seeks to identify, collect, and review for possible release to the public documents of significant historical importance. The mission of HCD is to:

- Promote an accurate, objective understanding of the information and intelligence that has helped shape the foundation of major US policy decisions.
- Broaden access to lessons learned, presenting historical material to emphasize the scope and context of past actions.
- Improve current decision-making and analysis by facilitating reflection on the impacts and effects arising from past decisions.
- Uphold Agency leadership commitments to openness, while protecting the national security interests of the US.
- Provide the American public with valuable insight into the workings of the Government.

The History Staff in the CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence fosters understanding of the Agency's history and its relationship to today's intelligence challenges by communicating instructive historical insights to the CIA workforce, other US Government agencies, and the public. CIA historians research topics on all aspects of Agency activities and disseminate their knowledge through publications, courses, briefings, and Web-based products. They also work with other Intelligence Community historians on publication and education projects that highlight interagency approaches to intelligence issues. Lastly, the CIA History Staff conducts an ambitious program of oral history interviews that are invaluable for preserving institutional memories that are not captured in the documentary record.

HARRY S. TRUMAN
LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

The Harry S. Truman Library and Museum was established to preserve and make available the papers, books, artifacts and other historical materials of the 33rd President of the United States for purposes of research, education, and exhibition. The Truman Library, the nation's second Presidential Library, was dedicated on July 6, 1957. Its archives have 15,000,000 pages of manuscript materials, of which about half are President Truman's papers. The Library contains an extensive audiovisual collection of still pictures, audio recordings, motion pictures and video tape recordings. The Library has available for research hundreds of transcripts of oral history interviews with President Truman's family, friends, and associates. The museum's collection consists of approximately 30,000 objects, including hundreds of Truman family possessions, political memorabilia, and diplomatic gifts.

Through its public programs, the Library reaches a diverse audience of people and organizations by sponsoring conferences and research seminars, by conducting special tours of the Library's museum for school classes and educational groups, and through a wide range of other activities. The Library's education department sponsors teacher workshops, and prepares activities and lesson plans for elementary and secondary students. The White House Decision Center gives students a first-hand look at President Truman's decisions concerning civil rights, the Korean War, the Berlin Airlift, and the ending of the war against Japan.

The Truman Library is supported, in part, by the Harry S. Truman Library Institute, its not-for-profit partner. The Institute promotes, through educational and community programs, a greater appreciation and understanding of American politics and government, history and culture, and public service, as exemplified by Harry Truman.

The Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum is an international institution where visitors can learn about the only five-star general to become President of the United States. The 22-acre site features five buildings, which are open daily from 9:00 a.m.-4:45 p.m., except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Day. By exploring all there is to see on our campus, visitors will have the opportunity to understand the life of the man, the hero, and the leader of the Free World – Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Our mission is the preservation of the historical papers, audiovisual materials, and artifacts relating to Eisenhower and his times. We strive to make this history
eral public, students and teachers, scholars, and interested
rograms, exhibits, educational materials, and online resources.

OVERVIEW

The Korean War and the Central Intelligence Agency

Dr. Clayton Laurie, Center for the Study of Intelligence

CIA Reporting on Korea, 1948-1950

The Korean War erupted less than three years after President Harry S. Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947, establishing the Central Intelligence Agency. Before North Korean forces invaded the South on 25 June 1950, the CIA had only a few officers in Korea, and none reported to the Agency's analytic arm, the Office of Research and Estimates (ORE). Analytical production relating to Korea reflected the generally low priority given the region by the Truman Administration's State Department and the military services. Indeed, most ORE current intelligence products, such as the Daily Summary, Weekly Summary, and Review of the World Situation, contained information derived from State Department and military reporting, usually supplemented with open source media material from domestic and foreign sources. New information or unique CIA contributions only rarely entered the mix. The Daily Summary, for example, which was intended primarily for President Truman, consisted of a highly selective digest of all dispatches and reports received on any given day from government sources. From 1947 on, in response to customer demands, the Daily began to include CIA interpretive comments, although they were not extensive. All members of the National Security Council, plus principal officers in the State Department and Pentagon, received the Daily, as they did the later Weekly Summary. The Review of the World Situation, which first appeared one week before the founding of the CIA, differed from the summaries as it was somewhere between current intelligence — published uncoordinated each month and brought up to date as of publication — and estimative intelligence. Written primarily for the NSC, the Review did not initially circulate beyond that small group. Truman did not attend NSC meetings until after the North Korean invasion, and he favored the smaller Daily and Weekly Summary, so it is doubtful the Review routinely came to his attention. By May 1948, however, copies of the Review did reach a minimum of 24 military and government offices, including the White House. Wider distribution, however, did not necessarily indicate the Review or the summaries had a wider readership or that government and military decision makers responded to the intelligence they contained by changing policies or formulating new courses of action.

Critics of ORE analysis before and after 1950 have noted the lack of any predictive estimates or other "actionable" indications and warning intelligence that would have allowed US policymakers to act on Korean events before they reached the crisis stage. Yet CIA analysts did report frequently on Korea in the prewar years, although from a perspective that highlighted the Soviet Union's involvement and saw Far Eastern events as the result of Soviet machinations and grand designs for world domination. Given the American adherence to the concept of a monolithic world communist movement controlled from the Kremlin, it is perhaps understandable that CIA viewed Korean events as just one of many fronts in the Cold War, closely interrelated with other Soviet-induced crises but not of any greater importance. While analysts accurately and consistently reported current intelligence, the reports did not emphasize that the Korean situation represented anything extraordinary beyond routine Soviet mischief-making and proxy-sponsored "tests" of American resolve. ORE reporting from 1947 through 1950 did provide many ominous predictions and indicated possibilities of future crises, yet in a world menaced by communists everywhere, its reporting on Korea did not stand out:

- As early as the 18 September 1947 edition of the Review of the World Situation, ORE reported the Soviet military threat in Korea as part of general Kremlin-orchestrated subversion worldwide.
- In December of that year, the Review noted Soviet efforts to establish a communist regime in North Korea, attempts to force a US withdrawal from the south, the emergence of a rightwing political party under Syngman Rhee, and UN efforts to bring about elections.
- On 12 February 1948, the Review covered the run-up to elections and cited Korean nationalist frustration with UN and US delays in arranging prompt polling, while also stating that given the general instability it "seems improbable that any South Korean Government can maintain its independence after a US withdrawal."
- The next month, CIA reported the likelihood that two mutually hostile regimes would appear in Korea, with the southern one unlikely to survive.

In addition, reporting from this period foretold that after the US and Soviet Union withdrew their military forces from the peninsula, the USSR would "permit the Korean People's Army to overrun the peninsula." After the 1948 elections, ORE reported bitter political rivalries in the south and continued Soviet interference. The CIA consistently reported the need for a continued US military presence until the southern regime created an adequate security force. Throughout 1948 and into 1949, ORE warned of potential negative consequences for Korea from the civil war in China, particularly as Communist military successes began to foreshadow a Nationalist defeat and possible ramifications of a cut in US military and financial aid.

Starting in 1949, CIA reporting on the potential for war in Korea became more explicit, especially as proposals for withdrawing American forces came closer to reality. The 28 February Review of the World Situation stated, ". . . it is doubtful if the Republic could survive a withdrawal of US troops in the immediate future." In the absence of a US military presence, "it is highly probable that northern Korean alone, or northern Koreans assisted by other Communists, would invade southern Korea and subsequently call upon the USSR for assistance. Soviet control or occupation of Southern Korea would be the result." The Review continued:

> Withdrawal of US forces from Korea in the spring of 1949 would probably in time be followed by an invasion, timed to coincide with Communist-led South Korean revolts, by the North Korean People's Army possibly assisted by small battle-trained units from Communist Manchuria.... In contrast, continued presence in Korea of a moderate US force would not only discourage the threatened invasion but would assist in sustaining the will and ability of the Koreans themselves to resist any future invasion once they had the military force to do so and, by sustaining the new Republic, maintain US prestige in the Far East.

While the Departments of State, Navy, and Air Force concurred with this assessment, the Intelligence Division of the Department of the Army, reflecting the long held goal of the service favoring the withdrawal of its forces from Korea, dissented from the majority view. The Army stated that it considered an invasion a possibility rather than a probability with any remaining US military presence being "only a relatively minor psychological contribution to the stability of the Republic of Korea." When the ORE assessment appeared, the US military force already had decreased from 40,000 to a mere 8,000 men, who returned to Japan in June 1949.

In the spring and summer of 1950, ORE reports reaching American military headquarters in Japan and top policymaking circles in Washington indicated the possibility of trouble ahead in Korea, although these assessments were based on vague military and State Department information. On 13 January 1950, CIA noted a "continuing southward movement of the expanding Korean People's Army toward the thirty-eighth parallel," and their acquisition of heavy equipment and armor, but like others, ORE did not see an invasion as imminent. Throughout June, the Review contained little information that could be termed indications and warning of a pending North Korean attack.

ORE also produced occasional estimates that were coordinated with the Intelligence Advisory Committee (IAC) in the three years before the Korean War. Yet between the appearance of ORE 5/1, entitled "The Situation in Korea," on 3 January 1947, and ORE 3-49, entitled "Consequences of US Troop Withdrawal from Korea in Spring 1949," on 28 February 1949, the CIA produced only four other estimates related to Korean events before the June 1950 invasion. While Korea did receive mention in other estimates, such as ORE 45-49 of 16

Developments in China," which said
ould likely result in increased military

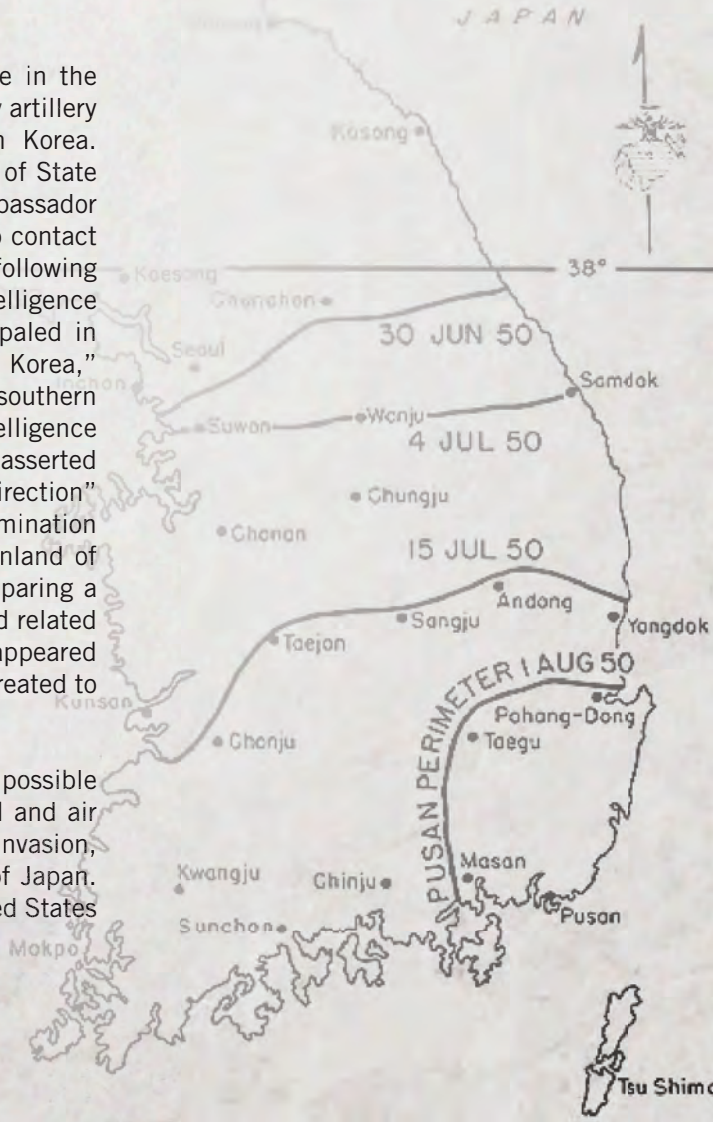
and economic aid to the North Korea regime, the focus of the estimate still remained on Chinese activities and Soviet influence in the region.

It was not until the spring of 1950 that ORE produced another estimate specifically on Korea, appearing one week prior to the invasion. ORE 18-50, entitled "Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime," and dated 19 June, contained information available to the Agency as of 15 May. The estimate declared North Korea a "firmly controlled Soviet satellite that exercises no independent initiative," possessing a military superiority over the south, and being fully capable of pursuing "its main external aim of extending control over southern Korea." While recognizing the "the present program of propaganda, infiltration, sabotage, subversion, and guerrilla operations against southern Korea," war did not appear imminent. "The ultimate local objective of the Soviet Union and of the northern Korean regime," the estimate noted, "is the [redacted] Korea and the unification of the Korean peninsula under Communist domination." Yet beyond noting a massing of North Korean forces, including tanks and heavy artillery, along the 38th parallel and the evacuation of civilians from these areas, the situation on the peninsula had not significantly changed from that described in earlier estimates or current intelligence reporting.

The War Begins

At 4:00 a.m. on Sunday, 25 June 1950 (Saturday, 24 June in the United States), North Korean troops, supported by tanks, heavy artillery and aircraft, crossed the 38th parallel and invaded South Korea. Notified at his home in Independence, Missouri, by Secretary of State Acheson, who had received a communication from the US Ambassador in Seoul, President Truman instructed the secretary of state to contact the United Nations and returned to Washington. In the days following the outbreak of war, ORE's Far Eastern/Pacific Division Intelligence Highlights noted, "all other Far Eastern developments . . . paled in comparison to the unexpected Communist invasion of southern Korea," and predicted on 27 June that "it is doubtful whether cohesive southern Korean resistance will continue beyond the next 24 hours." Intelligence Memorandum No. 300 issued on 28 June for DCI Hillenkoetter asserted that the invasion "was undoubtedly undertaken at Soviet direction" and with Soviet material support with the objective of the "elimination of the last remaining anti-Communist bridgehead on the mainland of northern Asia. At President Truman's request, ORE began preparing a Daily Korean Summary that reported military developments and related international diplomatic and political events. The first issue appeared on 26 June 1950. Soon after, a special staff within ORE was created to monitor and report on Korean events.

Seeing the invasion as a Soviet orchestrated move heralding possible aggressions elsewhere, President Truman authorized US naval and air operations against North Korea within forty-eight hours of the invasion, as US personnel evacuated Seoul and Inchon for the safety of Japan. Truman then activated military reserve components in the United States



and called on the UN to proclaim the North Korean attack a breach of world peace and assist the beleaguered Republic of Korea (ROK). Two days later the president committed US ground forces to the Korean peninsula under General MacArthur, who assumed command of all UN forces on 7 July. Within 24 hours of the presidential order, the first US troops arrived in Korea, joined during the next month by the first multinational contingents from an eventual 21 countries.

The force of the North Korea onslaught and the relative lack of preparedness of the 95,000 members of the ROK armed forces prompted a quick retreat south. Seoul fell on 30 June, followed by Inchon on 3 July, Suwon on 4 July, and Taejon on 20 July. On 30 July, Communist forces had pushed the remnants of the ROK army and the remaining US forces to the toe of the peninsula around the port city of Pusan, where they prepared for a last stand. Reinforcements were heading for Korea from around the globe, but the prevailing attitude among many in the American public, in the Truman White House, and in the CIA was that a catastrophic and humiliating defeat may be just days away.

Change of Command at CIA—DCI Walter B. Smith

When the NSC met in the days following the Korean invasion to decide on a response, neither DCI Hillenkoetter nor any other high CIA official was in attendance. The Korean invasion was widely regarded as an intelligence failure, and because of its role as the nation's intelligence service, the CIA bore the blame. Although Hillenkoetter claimed that the Agency had warned the president, the NSC, the secretaries of state and defense and others, as late as 20 June "that preparations for invasion were in high tempo," the lack of a definitive prediction and clear warning prompted President Truman to change the Agency's leadership as a necessary first step toward reform. Even though Hillenkoetter had indicated his desire to retire in May, it took until 21 August 1950 for Truman to announce the appointment of Lt. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith as the next DCI. Smith was a career staff officer who had served as Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's chief of staff at the Supreme Allied Headquarters (SHAEF) during World War II. He was a proven manager, known for getting results, who immediately saw the need to implement a far-reaching reorganization of CIA offices as well as reforms of its processes and procedures.

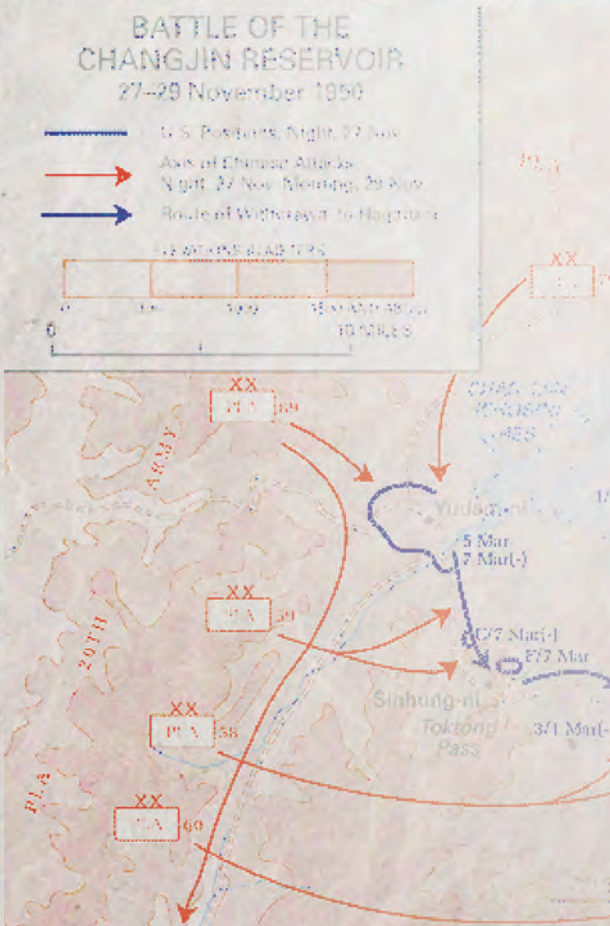
Although he received overwhelming Senate confirmation on 28 August, Smith was recovering from surgery to treat chronic ulcers and did not take office as DCI until 7 October. During the transition period, the analytical offices of the CIA continued to operate as before, providing a daily summary of events in Korea, to include both a military situation report as well as a brief summary of world events. Even before his arrival, Smith took the opportunity to read the various internal reports on CIA's alleged weaknesses as well as to reflect on the Agency's larger role as the nation's primary intelligence organization. Smith saw the CIA's allegedly poor performance as related to both growing pains, a lack of budget and personnel, and equally poor organization and coordination.

At his first meeting with the NSC on 12 October, he announced intentions to implement reforms including realigning intelligence production, reforming the IAC, integrating collection responsibilities, regrouping support staffs, and strengthening coordination mechanisms. Smith immediately restored the IAC to its intended place as the principal forum for discussing interagency problems, and jurisdictional conflicts, and as the final review committee for national intelligence estimates. The new DCI became an early and vocal proponent of the CIA on Capitol Hill and at the White House. Smith pushed for massive budget increases to finance the rebuilding of the organization, for hiring thousands more intelligence officers, and for funding more operations, not just in support of war in Korea but worldwide. Yet the recommended reforms Smith sought, which promised to transform CIA from a small organization into a large and effective intelligence agency, required time, and events in Korea would give all concerned an increased sense of urgency.

Anticipating Victory

The CIA's change in leadership and announcement of organizational restructuring came amid growing optimism within the Truman Administration and among military commanders in Korea that the United Nations was on the cusp of victory. During August and September 1950, growing numbers of UN forces defended the Pusan perimeter against North Korean attempts to push them from the peninsula. Yet during this time as well, the Pusan perimeter transformed from what had been a position of a probable desperate last stand into a mightily reinforced bridgehead where UN forces stood poised by mid-September to take the offensive against what were now exhausted North Korean troops. Then, on 15 September, in a brilliant tactical maneuver, UN forces launched an amphibious assault far behind North Korean lines at the port city of Inchon, north of Seoul. Meanwhile, on 16 September, the long-awaited United Nations offensive out of Pusan began. In days, resistance collapsed, and Communist forces began a hasty retreat north. UN forces liberated Seoul on 28 September, and by 1 October, North Koreans were retreating across the 38th parallel. On 27 September, MacArthur received authorization to cross the parallel to destroy all Communist forces and to continue his advance so long as no signs existed of actual or impending Chinese or Soviet intervention, and with the understanding that only ROK troops should fight in the provinces bordering Manchuria and Siberia (an instruction he ignored). On 2 October, the CIA reported that ROK forces crossed the 38th parallel; US forces followed one week later. In a meeting with President Truman on Wake Island on 15 October, MacArthur assured the president the North Korean regime faced imminent defeat and the war would be over by Christmas.

The Chinese Intervention and CIA Reporting



The belief within the Truman Administration that the USSR orchestrated both the Korean War and communist movements worldwide prompted early concern at the CIA that the North Korean invasion would soon lead Moscow to order Beijing to intervene. While China received direct ORE attention during the years of the civil war in all political, military, and economic respects, the initial reports concerning possible Chinese intervention in the first month of the Korean war remained ambiguous. Yet between July and November 1950, CIA produced several hundred reports from various sources bearing on a possible Chinese intervention. ORE alone produced ten Intelligence Memorandums for DCIs Hillenkoetter and Smith between 10 July and 9 November speaking of Chinese intentions. In addition, human intelligence reporting, as well as radio broadcasts from the USSR, China, and other Far East locations, monitored by the CIA's Foreign Broadcast Information Service from early October onward, indicated an increased likelihood that China may become involved militarily. Press reports appearing in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo, Bangkok, and Hanoi told of Chinese troop movements, material and medical acquisitions, and public and private pronouncements of PRC leaders indicating possible moves towards direct participation. The Far East Command and Washington policymakers received these reports within days of their arrival through IAC channels. Indeed, one later CIA History Staff assessment reported that:

> Among OSO's [Office of Special Operations] intelligence reports were some 554 reports disseminated during the critical period July – November 1950. According to the OSO's summary in April 1951 'a considerable number of reports derived from Chinese sources . . . trace the movement of Chinese Communist military forces northwards into Manchuria and towards the Korean border, indicating units, equipment, and other order of battle details'. Also included in OSO's listing of reports are seven 'indications based on Chinese Communist commercial activities in Hong Kong . . . and thirteen indications of CHICOM or CHICOM-USSR conferences and policy statement relating to war preparations.'

The first ORE Intelligence Memorandum raising the possibility of Chinese intervention app It stated that the USSR may order Chinese overt or co ORE's Review of the World Situation gave special notice to Chinese capabilities to intervene t the USSR ordered it. Or China had the military ca summary of 1 September form of Chinese Commur War" and that "some form or armed assistance to the North Koreans appears imminent." The of 8 September entitle Intervention in Korea" reported that while no direct evidence existed to indicate that China would enter the conflict, "limited covert Chinese

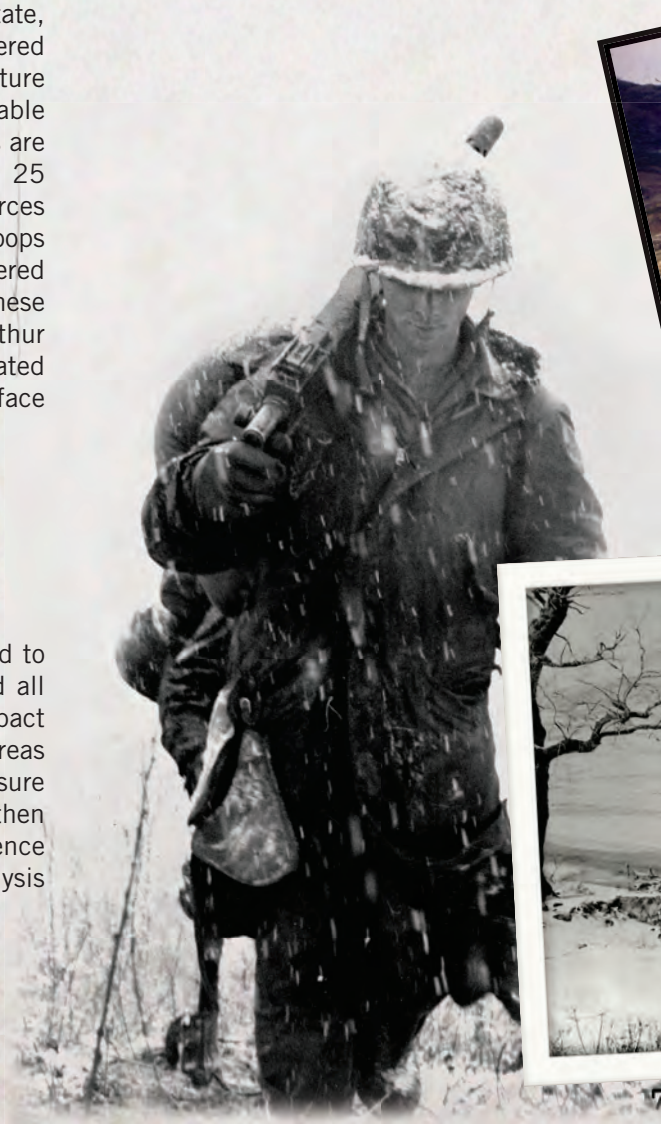
Communist assistance to the North Korean invaders, including the provision of individual soldiers, is assumed to be in progress at present." This memorandum reported an "increasing Chinese Communist build-up of military strength in Manchuria, coupled with the known potential in that area, make it clear that intervention in Korea is well within immediate Chinese Communist capabilities. Moreover, recent Chinese Communist accusations regarding US 'aggression' and 'violation of the Manchurian border' may be stage-setting for an imminent overt move." The report detailed that potentially 400,000 Communist soldiers had already massed in Manchuria or would soon arrive there.

In the week after the Inchon landing, and as North Korean armies crumbled, the Chinese leadership gave no indication that events on the peninsula would prompt a military reaction. Indeed, the lack of Chinese activity lulled many into a false sense of security. If China hoped to intervene decisively to prevent a North Korean collapse, the reasoning went, they had missed the opportunity to do so. Nonetheless, the CIA continued to address Chinese capabilities and the possibility of some outside communist intervention in the war. The ORE Review on 20 September expressed the idea that while both the USSR and Chinese had the capability to intervene, their likely covert response would involve the provision of Chinese Communist "volunteers" for integration into North Korean combat units. The Communist forces currently massed on the Manchurian border, ORE warned, "could enter the battle and materially change its course at any time." As late as 12 October 1950, however, ORE 58-50 "Threat of full Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea" stated the contrary. "Despite statements by Chou-En-Lai, troop movements to Manchuria, and propaganda charges of atrocities and border violations . . . there are no convincing indications of an actual Chinese Communist intention to resort to full-scale intervention in Korea," and "such action is not probable in 1950." "From a military standpoint, the most favorable time for intervention in Korea had passed." ORE 58-50, with a cover memorandum from DCI Smith, went directly to President Truman, then preparing for his first meeting face-to-face with General MacArthur at Wake Island. An 18 October Review of the World Situation repeated the assertion passed a week earlier to the president.

A week before Pyongyang fell on 19 October, more than 30,000 Chinese Communist troops crossed the Yalu River into Korea, followed by another 150,000 by the end of the month. These troops first engaged ROK and US forces on 25 October during the start of their "First Phase Offensive" that lasted for one week until ending abruptly on 2 November. During this opening phase, and over the course of several days through late October, both ROK and US forces captured and interrogated some 25 soldiers identified as being Chinese. In a memorandum for the president on 1 November, DCI Smith reported to Truman that in addition to fresh North Korean troops, "it has been clearly established that Chinese Communist troops are also opposing UN forces. Present field estimates are that between 15,000 and 20,000 Chinese Communist troops organized into task force units are operating in North Korea while their parent units remain in Manchuria." While Smith remained unclear as to whether Chinese forces were intervening directly in combat or were simply protecting hydroelectric plants along the Yalu River as he

had indicated to the president a week earlier, the fact remained that Chinese forces had entered Korea. NIE 2, published only one week later on 8 November, upped the estimated number of Chinese troops in Korea to some 40,000, who were now engaging UN troops at various points from 30 to 100 miles south of the Yalu River. The "present Chinese Communist troop strength in Manchuria," the report stated, "is estimated at 700,000" of which "as many as 350,000 troops" could be made available "within 30 to 60 days for sustained ground operations in Korea." The immediate cause of the Chinese intervention, the report maintained, "appears to have been the crossing of the 38th parallel by US forces and the consequent swift collapse of North Korean resistance." By mid-month, as reflected in the 15 November Review of the World Situation, the fact that Chinese Communist forces were engaged in Korea seemed to have gained acceptance within the CIA, if not in the entire US government.

During the first weeks of November 1950, the Chinese infiltrated an additional 300,000 troops into North Korea to support the remaining 65,000 soldiers of the North Korea army. Although CIA and US Army intelligence officers in Korea and at Far East Command headquarters in Tokyo uncovered increased evidence that Chinese troops had already entered and engaged in Korea, and that Chinese rhetoric concerning intervention may not be just propaganda, MacArthur renewed his offensive towards the Yalu on 24 November, predicting it as the war's last offensive. On that same day, NIE 2/1 entitled "Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea" appeared, a coordinated estimate with CIA, State, Army, Navy, and Air Force concurrence based on intelligence gathered as of 15 November. Reflecting the lack of consensus about the nature of the Chinese Communist involvement, the NIE concluded, "available evidence is not conclusive whether or not the Chinese Communists are as yet committed to a full-scale offensive effort." The next day, 25 November, however, upwards of 300,000 Communist Chinese forces counterattacked in their "Second Phase Offensive," sending UN troops reeling under the massive assault. Communist China had fully entered the war. On 28 November, President Truman remarked, "The Chinese have come in with both feet." In a cable to the President, MacArthur described the dire tactical situation as US and ROK troops retreated toward the eastern North Korean coast and south, stating, "We now face an entirely different war."



CIA's Reorganization under Smith

In the wake of the now-much wider Korean War, the CIA continued to reorganize. Although Smith's reforms and reorganizations affected all parts of the Agency, perhaps nowhere did they have as much impact as in the Agency's analytical offices. Smith identified three major areas for improvement in the execution of CIA's mission: the need to insure consistent, systematic production of estimates; the need to strengthen the position of the DCI relative to the departmental intelligence components; and the need to define CIA's research and analysis

function. At his first meeting with the IAC on 20 October, Smith noted that the CIA had the primary responsibility for insuring that surprise or intelligence failure did not jeopardize national security—as happened at Pearl Harbor or with the outbreak of the Korean War. In addition, the CIA had to consolidate and coordinate the best intelligence opinion in the country based on all available information. Smith stated that the national intelligence estimates produced by the CIA should command respect throughout the government, and to make sure this came to past, he announced the formation of the Office of National Estimates (ONE). He appointed as its chief former OSS Research and Analysis Branch veteran Walter Langer, who took office on 13 November 1950, five days after the appearance of NIE 2, and two weeks before NIE 2/1 addressed prospects for Chinese intervention. While Smith envisioned an operation of 1,000 people, Langer prevailed in his proposal for a smaller office to consist of a group of senior officers, never more than 50 in number, who came from a variety of academic and scholarly backgrounds. ONE would have two parts, one composed of analysts who would draft the estimate, and a board of seniors who would review and coordinate the finished estimate with other departments. The process change insured that the ONE final product benefited from coordination with all interested parties. After November 1950, ONE could approach other intelligence agencies and government departments directly, reaching out to counterparts for an interchange of ideas and information. Smith also insured that the IAC would perform a final review process with each NIE before it advanced to the policymaker. ONE would also create a list of intelligence issues for collection and frequent analytical reporting to guarantee that standing requirements always received the Agency's attention and policymakers never lacked up-to-date assessments. Between 1950 and 1952, ONE's major effort was dominated by production of estimates related to the Korean War, particularly those involving analyses of Soviet intentions.

The formation of ONE signaled the final demise of ORE. A new office created on 13 November 1950, named the Office of Research and Reports (ORR), picked up older ORE functions while redefining the CIA's intelligence production mission. As originally configured, ORR consisted of the Basic, Geographic, and Strategic Divisions brought over from ORE, and new Economic Services, Materials, Industrial, and Economic Analysis Divisions. Basic Intelligence had no research function and served as a coordinating and editing staff in charge of the National Intelligence Surveys or country surveys. The Maps Division consisted of geographers and cartographers, unique to the federal government since the days of OSS, who provided a service of common concern, while the Economic Research Area became the focus of the CIA's analytical effort primarily examining the USSR. ORR products, unlike those of ONE, served the needs of senior and mid-level officials. The fact that ORR came into existence at the height of the Korean War when all federal departments needed intelligence services insured that the office would grow in size and influence, a trend that did not end with the Korean Armistice in 1953.

Under Smith, ONE took on a current intelligence reporting function on 15 November 1950 by forming a Current Intelligence Staff responsible for all-source coverage in a Daily Summary, with a 24-hour watch service, provisions for handling "hot information," and the creation and maintenance of a situation room. On 12 January 1951, the Current Intelligence Staff combined with the much smaller Office of Special Services to form the Office of Current Intelligence. The new OCI continued to produce the Daily Summary and Daily Digest, as well as the Current Intelligence Bulletin and the Current Intelligence Review. During the war, OCI turned out two daily publications on events in Korea. Divided into four regional offices, OCI included a Far Eastern office that promised better current reporting on Korean War events. Although controversy over the intelligence "failures" in Korea continued through the spring of 1951, involving General MacArthur among many other top US government military, diplomatic, and intelligence officials who were called to testify before Congress, the CIA continued refining its collection and analytical processes as the war itself stalemated.

The wholesale reorganization of CIA analytical activities, both within the Agency itself and within the wider intelligence and defense community, prompted DCI Smith to create the Deputy Directorate of Intelligence (DI). The DI would serve as the overall organization for analytical activities within the CIA. Veteran analyst Loftus Becker became the first Deputy Director for Intelligence on 2 January 1952. The new directorate contained six offices — all overt — the Office of Collection and Dissemination, the Office of Scientific Intelligence, the Office of National Estimates, the Office of Research and Reports, the Office of Current Intelligence, and the Office of Intelligence Coordination. The addition of another group, the Office of Operations, completed the CIA's analytical overhaul in late February 1952. The analytical capabilities of CIA continued to grow in quality, respect, budget and personnel through the remainder of the Korean War and by December 1953, the Directorate of Intelligence contained some ten times the number of trained analysts as had existed in June 1950.

To read this article in its entirety, please refer to the "Estimates and Misc." folder, "CSI Articles" subfolder, on the DVD.

North Korea and South Korea

KOREAN WAR TIMELINE OF MAJOR EVENTS

14 November
UN passes resolution declaring elections should be held and foreign troops withdrawn. USSR boycotts UN vote and declares resolution non-binding.

9 September
Kim Il Song appointed Prime Minister of North Korea, claims jurisdiction over entire peninsula.

July-August
At Potsdam Conference, Allies agree to partition of Korean Peninsula.

15 August
Government of South Korea under President Rhee formally assumes power from US military.

1-3 August
UN and South Korean forces establish Pusan Perimeter.

JULY

***19 July**
President Truman addresses nation regarding Korean situation.

29 July
"Stand or Die" order issued by US Eighth Army Commander.

SEPTEMBER

***15 September**
UN forces stage amphibious landing at Inchon, eventually forcing North Korean troops back across the 38th Parallel.

***29 September**
General MacArthur and South Korean President Rhee enter Seoul.

1945 1946 1947 1948 1949 1950

October
US-USSR Joint Commission established at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers to administer divided Korea.

***8 April**
President Truman orders withdrawal of US troops from south.

10 May
Syngman Rhee wins election in southern zone.

29 June
last US troops depart South Korea. US forms 500-strong Korean Military Advisory Group.

***12 January**
US Secretary of State Acheson in speech to the National Press Club excludes Korea, Taiwan from US defensive perimeter in Far East.

June

25 June
North Korea launches invasion of South; UN Security Council demands North Korea return to border.

***26 June**
President Truman address to nation on North Korean violation of border.

***27 June**
President Truman statement on situation in Korea.

***30 June**
President Truman commits US troops to enforce UN Security Council demand.

OCTOBER

9 October
UN forces launch assault across 38th Parallel in attempt to re-unify Korea.

14 October
Communist Chinese forces cross Yalu River to support North Korean troops.

15 October
President Truman and General MacArthur meet on Wake Island.

NOVEMBER

***1-6 November**
Chinese forces launch "First-Phase" offensive.
26-30 November
UN forces begin general retreat.
30 Nov-11 December
US 1st Marine Division breaks out of encirclement at Chosin Reservoir, rejoins main UN forces.

13 June
UN forces halt counterattacks, form Main Line of Resistance as armistice talks begin. Lines remain largely static for rest of war.

***10 July**
Peace talks begin at Kaesong.

3 January
Chinese and North Korean forces renew attacks, overrun Seoul.

***23 August**
Communists break off talks.

3 January
Communists reject POW exchange proposal.

***4 December**
President-elect Eisenhower begins visit to war zone.

30 March
Peace talks resume at Panmunjom.

***4 September**
Repatriation of POWs begins at Panmunjom.

1951 **1952** **1953**

6-31 March
UN forces launch Operation Ripper.
18 March
UN forces re-take Seoul.

MARCH **APRIL**

***11 April**
President Truman relieves General MacArthur.

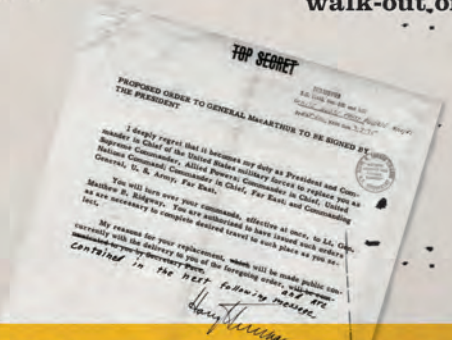
25 October
Peace talks resume.

27 November
Peace talks continue at Panmunjom.

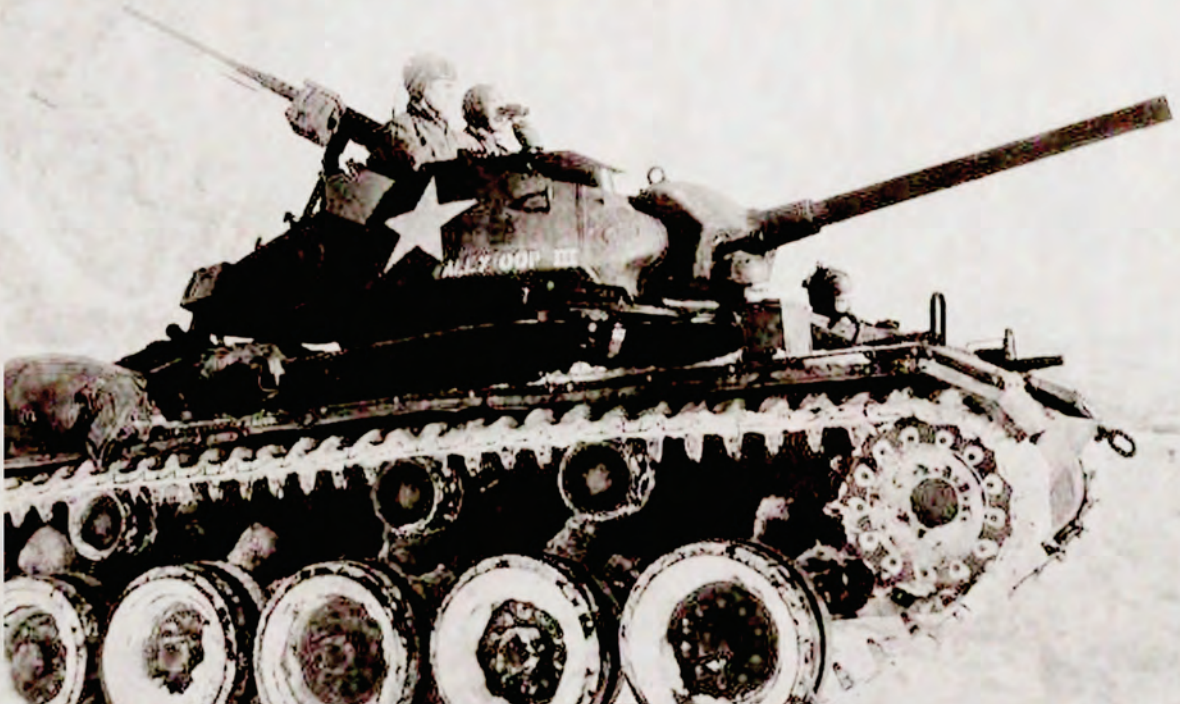
***18 June**
South Korea releases thousands of North Korean POWs who refuse repatriation, sparking Communist walk-out of peace talks.

JULY

***10 July**
Peace talks resume.
***27 July**
Cease-fire signed.



(Dates marked with an * indicate an accompanying link to a document and/or audio-video clip on the dvd)



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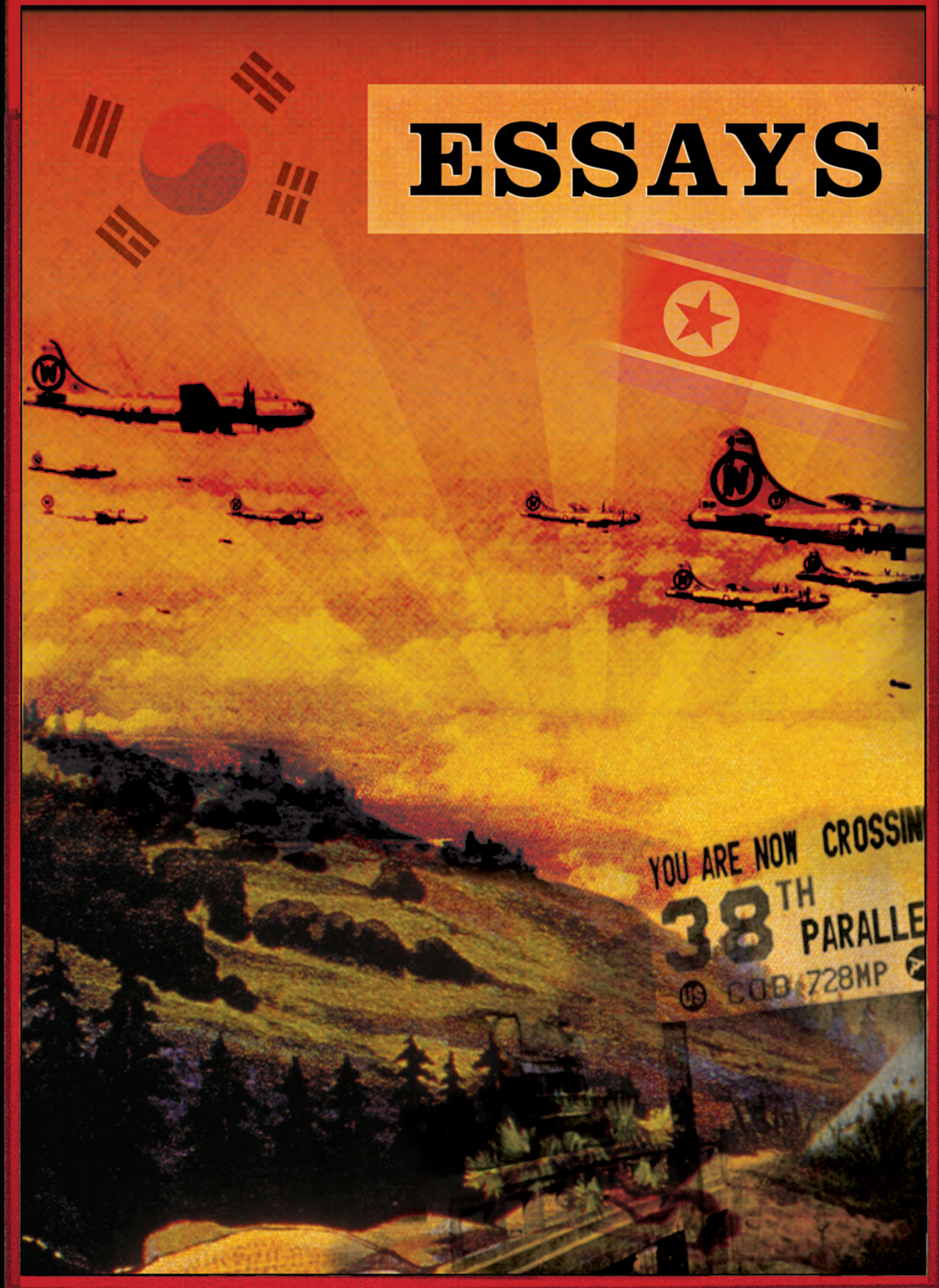

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Perceptions and Reality

Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950

P. K. Rose

On 25 June 1950, the North Korean People's Army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) swept across the 38th parallel and came close to uniting the Korean peninsula under the Communist regime of Kim Il-sung. American military and civilian leaders were caught by surprise, and only the intercession of poorly trained and equipped US garrison troops from Japan managed to halt the North Korean advance at a high price in American dead and wounded. Four months later, the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) intervened in massive numbers as American and UN forces pushed the North Koreans back across the 38th parallel. US military and civilian leaders were again caught by surprise, and another costly price was paid in American casualties.

Two strategic intelligence blunders within six months: yet the civilian and military leaders involved were all products of World War II, when the attack on Pearl Harbor had clearly demonstrated the requirement for intelligence collection and analysis. The answers to why it happened are simple, and they hold lessons that are relevant today.

The role of intelligence in America's national security is often misunderstood. Intelligence information has to exist within the greater context of domestic US political perception. With the defeat of Japan, our historically isolationist nation moved quickly to look inward again. The armed forces were immediately reduced in number, defense spending was cut dramatically, and intelligence resources met a similar fate. The looming conflict with Communism was focused on Europe, our traditional geographic area of interest.

The war had produced a crop of larger-than-life military heroes, and perhaps the biggest was Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Far East Commander and virtual ruler of a defeated Japan.

While many considered MacArthur brilliant, his military career also contained numerous examples of poor military judgment. He had few doubts about his own judgment, however, and for over a decade had surrounded himself with staff officers holding a similar opinion. MacArthur was confident of his capabilities to reshape Japan, but he had little knowledge of Chinese Communist forces or military doctrine. He had a well-known disregard for the Chinese as soldiers, and this became the tenet of the Far Eastern Command (FEC).

In January 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson had publicly declared a defensive containment line against the Communist menace in Asia, based upon an island defense line. The Korean peninsula was outside that line.

Still, America viewed Korea as one of several developing democratic nations that could serve as

counterbalances to Communist expansion. In March 1949, President Truman approved National Security Council Memorandum 8/2, which warned that the Soviets intended to dominate all of Korea, and that this would be a threat to US interests in the Far East.[1] That summer, the President sent a special message to Congress citing Korea as an area where the principles of democracy were being matched against those of Communism. He stated the United States "will not fail to provide the aid which is so essential to Korea at this critical time."[2]

US Intelligence Collection and Analysis

About the same time, US and Soviet troops withdrew from their respective parts of Korea. The Soviets left behind a well-equipped and trained North Korean Army, while the United States had provided its Korean military forces with only light weapons and little training. As US forces withdrew, MacArthur instructed Gen. Charles A. Willoughby, a longtime loyal staff member and his G-2, to establish a secret intelligence office in Seoul. Known as the Korean Liaison Office (KLO), its responsibility was to monitor troop movements in the North and the activities of Communist guerrillas operating in the South.

By late 1949, the KLO was reporting that the Communist guerrillas represented a serious threat to the Republic of Korea (ROK). The office also noted that many of the guerrillas were originally from the South, and thus were able to slip back into their villages when hiding from local security forces. Willoughby also claimed that the KLO had 16 agents operating in the North. KLO officers in Seoul, however, expressed suspicion regarding the loyalty and reporting of these agents.[3]

These questionable FEC agents were not America's only agents in the North. At the end of World War II, then-Capt. John Singlaub had established an Army intelligence outpost in Manchuria, just across the border from Korea. Over the course of several years, he trained and dispatched dozens of former Korean POWs, who had been in Japanese Army units, into the North. Their instructions were to join the Communist Korean military and government, and to obtain information on the Communists' plans and intentions.[4]

These and other collection capabilities contributed to CIA analytic reports, starting in 1948, regarding the Communist threat on the peninsula. The first report, in a *Weekly Summary* dated 20 February, identifies the Soviet Union as the controlling hand behind all North Korean political and military planning.[5] In the 16 July *Weekly Summary*, the Agency describes North Korea as a Soviet "puppet" regime. On 29 October, a *Weekly Summary* states that a North Korean attack on the South is "possible" as early as 1949, and cites reports of road improvements towards the border and troop movements there. It also notes, however, that Moscow is in control.

These reports establish the dominant theme in intelligence analysis from Washington that accounts for the failure to predict the North Korean attack--that the Soviets controlled North Korean decisionmaking. The Washington focus on the Soviet Union as "the" Communist state had become the accepted perception within US Government's political and military leadership circles. Any scholarly counterbalances to this view, either questioning the absolute authority of Moscow over other Communist states or noting that cultural, historic, or nationalistic factors might come into play, fell victim to the political atmosphere.

Fears of another war in Europe against the mighty Red Army and the exposure of Soviet spying against America created an atmosphere where the anti-Communist fervor and accusations of McCarthyism silenced any debate regarding the worldwide Communist conspiracy. In addition, the Chinese Communists' rise to internal power created a domestic political dispute over who had "lost" China. The result was a silencing of American scholars on China who might have persuaded the country's leadership that China would never accept Soviet control of its national interests.

To read this article in its entirety, please refer to the "Estimates and Misc." folder, "CSI Articles" subfolder, on the DVD.

Commentary on "Two Strategic Intelligence Mistakes in Korea, 1950"[1]

A Personal Perspective

Thomas J. Patton

The article by Mr. Rose appears to be the fruit of considerable research—far more than I have devoted to the subject since I last worked on it in 1952. However, I found it to be somewhat unbalanced and incomplete, and an injustice to analytic personnel of the early 1950s—even those who came to wrong conclusions at the time. Were I Bill Gertz or Rowan Scarborough, I would indeed have jumped at the opportunity it presented to excoriate the Agency.[2] And I am sure that there are others who were disturbed by the presence of this article in a CIA public journal. For my part, I would like to help set the record straight.

While I must rely completely on my memory, to me the article is marked by certain illusory shortcomings in analysis and the intelligence process that cannot but create misconceptions in the minds of present-day readers. I assume that the author had little understanding of the informational, organizational, and Intelligence Community situation and constraints during the early 1950s. His article missed an opportunity to identify those limitations on the conduct of intelligence as the all-but-devastating challenges that they were and to set them in perspective. Ultimately, as the 1950s progressed, many of the constraints were overcome; thus, they may have no relevance or meaning for today's analysts in the present intelligence environment. But I feel, rightly or wrongly, that CSI has done the Agency a disservice by publishing the article without putting the events and the intelligence information involved into an appropriate context.

In 1950, there was no real interagency (or even internal CIA) structure that permitted or encouraged regular discussion of critical current intelligence information below the "director" level, other than the Watch Committee—invented by my boss, J. J. Hitchcock—which met, as I recall, once a month. Information, particularly any information protected by a codeword or other "sensitivity," was not freely exchanged either between or within agencies. Thus, it could not easily contribute to broad analytic thinking in the Intelligence Community.

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[1] See article by P. K. Rose, *Studies in Intelligence*, Fall-Winter 2001, pp. 57-65.

[2] Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough referenced Rose's article in their column in *The Washington Times* on 18 January 2002. Their commentary begins: "The CIA released an embarrassing report this week in its in-house journal, showing, once again, how CIA analyses of China are not only flawed today but were wrong in several aspects during the Korean War."

Thomas J. Patton served in the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence. He previously commented on analysis of Korea in *Studies in Intelligence*, vol 40, no. 1, 1966.

- In CIA analytic elements, for example, SIGINT was received only within our unit, the General Division of the Office of Reports and Estimates (ORE), which was set up in 1948 by Knight McMahan to provide one centralized locus for the substantive examination of SIGINT. We could discuss it with, or show it to, "cleared" analysts or other elements of ORE, but it did not cross the desks of those analysts on a regular basis. Most importantly, they could not use it or refer to it in their published work. Fortunately, our ten-analyst team (then known as the Indications Branch)—which had been hastily created by General Division to produce the weekly *Situation Summary* (*SitSum*) requested by President Truman in July 1950—did have regular access to most SIGINT, but not necessarily to all other data.

- We never had a clear concept of what proportion or what level of clandestine information we were given access to. I recall that rarely did we succeed in getting responses from the Directorate of Operations to our questions about sourcing or our requests for elaboration on clandestine reporting. (Of course, as any analyst can testify, this was far from unique to the Korean war period, although I cannot speak for the present.)

- We may have had access to some State Department traffic, but we could never be sure of receiving it, and we could not have used it directly in any event And our access to information from military sources was always uncertain. In General Division, we could never be sure of what non-SIGINT information was reaching other analytic elements in ORE, such as those who issued estimates.

Physical handling of information was of necessity fairly primitive in those days. There were no copying machines. Most items that we received came in single copies, which we had to pass on and could not retain for our files. For the most part, files consisted of 5x8 inch cards on which we scribbled source and time data and as much extracted or summarized information as we thought we would need. We organized these according to an assessment structure developed by Hitchcock that proved essential in focusing our attention on "families" of indicators, particularly in those areas where we had little or no hard information. As primitive as this was, reviewing these cards was invaluable, at least during the month that I was responsible for the final writing and editing of the *SitSum*.

At the time, we could not be sure of the comprehensiveness of General Division's access to the "finished" intelligence issued by other analytic elements in ORE or by other government intelligence organs. While my memory could be fragile—not surprising after more than 50 years—there are references in Mr. Rose's article to relevant items from CIA estimates and daily summaries that I simply do not recall seeing.

I go into this at such length because I feel that a current reader of the Rose study might assume that all the information he describes and lists so thoroughly was available fairly promptly and on a fairly universal basis within the Agency. Such was not the case.

Rose's article contains no reference to any contributions that we made through the *Situation Summary*, even though this product was mentioned in the book *CIA Briefings of Presidential Candidates*, by John Helgerson, which the Center for the Study of Intelligence published in 1996.[3] It may well be that copies of the *SitSum* are nowhere in the files; this would not be surprising, since so much time has passed and since only three copies of each issue were produced (the original for the President, a carbon copy for the DCI, and one for our files). I have not myself seen any of these since early 1952. I know that they were not polished and that we presented few, if any, significant "conclusions," but we worked very hard to summarize and present what we saw as indications, or possible indications, of expansions in the Korean conflict—actually, we saw our responsibility as extending to Communist Bloc offensive actions on a worldwide basis. Reference to our product by Mr. Rose could at least have shown that the Agency was making an effort to keep the President apprised of what seemed to be signs of adverse developments in the Korean war, even though the formal estimates and other daily and weekly publications—which we rarely saw—served to discount the likelihood of such developments. Truman apparently felt well served; in early 1951, he directed that additional senior officials receive our weekly report.

With the exception of references to the *SitSum*, Mr. Rose appears to have researched his topic intensively. Nonetheless, I note that he relied mainly on secondary sources. This strengthens my observation that he does not appear to have viewed the information on Korea from the inside, as it was available to us at the time and under the limitations imposed on us at the time.

From early in the summer of 1950, we felt the pressures of our responsibility for turning out the *SitSum* for the President so deeply (at least I did) that, even after more than half a century, they still have an impact. Many workweeks were at least 80 hours, an intensity that seems to strengthen the memory a bit, notwithstanding the passage of so many years. This may explain my reaction to the publication of Rose's study, especially at a time when the world seems to be in worse shape than ever and the Agency seems to be facing more challenges than ever in predicting developments.

[3] Helgerson described it as "a closely held, all-source weekly intelligence publication, the first of its kind, called the 'Situation Summary' . . . a global review, built around the Korean situation . . ."

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Only half the battle

THE CHINESE INTERVENTION IN KOREA, 1950

Eliot A. Cohen

Introduction

> The situation here might well be that of the Allied powers in the Ardennes offensive during the winter of 1944-45, where overpowering the enemy was only half of the battle.[1]

So G-2 (Intelligence) Far East Command (FEC), Tokyo, told anxious listeners in Washington, chiefly from the US Army General Staff, on 16 November 1950. At that moment, United Nations forces, led by the forces of the United States Eighth Army and X Corps, were gathering strength for a final push north to the Yalu River. UN troops would, officials in Washington and Tokyo hoped, thereby bring to an end the six-month-old Korean War. Those participating in the teleconference could not know just how ironically apt the analogy with the Ardennes offensive would prove. In 1950 as in 1944, bitter weather merely accompanied an enemy surprise attack that battered American forces. Less than two weeks after the 16 November teleconference, American forces would be reeling from their worst defeat since the Battle of the Bulge and probably their most serious setback in postwar history. In the aftermath of both assaults, Americans would wonder how an enemy managed to achieve surprise, despite many pieces of evidence available beforehand to those concerned with the assessment of enemy intentions and capabilities.

How did it happen? Why, given that Chinese forces had operated in the Korean peninsula since early October—showing their hand in a short but vicious offensive at the end of that month—were UN forces caught seemingly off guard? For some historians, the matter boils down to a question of individual culpability. In the dock are either Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief of Far East Command (CINCFE) for his cavalier "disregard for China," [2] or MacArthur's intelligence chief, Major Genral Charles Willoughby, whom one of MacArthur's biographers called "an arrogant, opinionated sycophant." [3] What follows will suggest that attempts to pin the blame for the intelligence failure (which was only part of a larger operational failure) on one individual vastly oversimplify, and in some respects distort, the nature of the intelligence failure in Korea. So, too, do those accounts that render the events of November 1950 in terms of various popular theories of surprise. Instead, a close examination of available [4] intelligence assessments suggests a more complicated kind of failure, and one that has implications extending beyond this particular case study.

The paper begins by sketching the development of the Korean War from the North Korean invasion of the Republic of Korea (ROK) in June 1950 through the massive Chinese intervention in November of that year, and

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discusses intelligence sources and organization in the Far East and Washington. The bulk of the paper will look at American assessments during the less than two months that separated the crossing of the 38th Parallel from the debacle on the Yalu. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications of the case study for the study of intelligence and in particular intelligence failure.

From Inchon to the Yalu

The Korean War began on 25 June 1950 with the invasion of South Korea by some ten divisions of the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). Well trained (almost all of its high-ranking officers had learned their trade in the Soviet Red Army or under the tutelage of the People's Liberation Army), well equipped, and ruthless in battle, the NKPA routed most of the ROK forces in its path. A frantically improvised American counterintervention drawing on the four understrength and peacetime-soft divisions in Japan, backed by the airplanes of the Far East Air Force (FEAF), finally stopped the NKPA on the circumference of a box barely 3,000-square miles large around the southern port of Pusan. The war became an effort by the UN, but Americans controlled its conduct, and American and South Korean forces bore the brunt of the effort.

By September 1950, heavy losses and overstretched supply lines had weakened the NKPA. On 15 September, General MacArthur launched an independent corps spearheaded by 1st Marine Division in an amphibious assault against the port of Inchon, near Seoul on Korea's western coast. A week later, after bitter battles, the main UN force, Eighth Army, under the command of Lieutenant General Walton Walker, broke out of the Pusan perimeter and scattered the NKPA forces in its path. Five days later, Eighth Army and X Corps linked up. Two days after that, on 29 September, President Syngman Rhee was restored to power in Seoul.

There had been for some time a debate over further objectives.[5] Should UN forces press on and reunify Korea or should they halt at the 38th Parallel? On the day that MacArthur brought Rhee to Seoul, the Secretary of Defense on his own behalf and that of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) told MacArthur, "We want you to feel unhampered tactically and strategically to proceed north of 38th Parallel."[6] The advance was not a swift one. The remnants of the NKPA offered a stubborn resistance, and UN forces, supplied across a battered line of communications running through Inchon, suffered chronic shortages of material. On 19 October, however, the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, fell and preparations began for a drive farther north.

This final attack northward took weeks to prepare. X Corps had been withdrawn from Inchon (a move that tied up the port for some time and thus aggravated Eighth Army's already serious supply problem). After delays in clearing mines from the North Korean east coast port of Wonsan, X Corps began landing there on 26 October and slowly moved into position for the final offensive. At precisely this time (from 25 October through 6 November), the Chinese launched their "First Phase Offensive," shaking the hitherto confident UN Command. Several ROK regiments and one American regiment suffered heavily from the attack, which ended as mysteriously as it had begun. After a pause to regroup, MacArthur gave the word to begin the advance shortly after

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Intervention

Thanksgiving Day, 1950. A day later, on the night of 26/27 November, large Chinese attacks slammed into Eighth Army and X Corps as American and South Korean troops advanced to (and, in places, reached) the Yalu River, Korea's northern border. Thirty divisions of Chinese troops, rather than the 12 carried on order of battle charts, attacked the UN forces with appalling effect. Within weeks, ROK units, including whole divisions, had been destroyed. US 2nd Infantry Division was rendered combat ineffective, losing a third of its men and nearly all of its equipment. Parts of 7th Infantry Division in X Corps on the east were similarly hammered, and it looked for a time as if the Chinese would succeed in encircling and even destroying 1st Marine Division and the units attached to it, including some remnants of 7th ID and accompanying British units. Over the next two months, UN forces would retreat some 200 miles, losing not only Pyongyang but Seoul to the enemy for the second time in the war.

Intelligence: Structure and Sources

We have available today many, but not all, of the surviving documents necessary to understand the debacle before the Yalu. Of particular importance here are missing documentation on communications intelligence (COMINT) which the National Security Agency will not release until the year 2000, if not later, and detailed material on espionage networks in Korea, China, and elsewhere. One may make inferences about the role COMINT, in particular, might have played in the period leading up to November 1950, but these remain no more than educated guesses.

On the other hand, almost all of the TOP SECRET and SECRET finished intelligence of the period has been published, including the relevant National Intelligence Estimates and the products of FEC and its subordinate commands. The latter are particularly important, because the SECRET Daily Intelligence Summary (DIS) of Far East Command contained the raw data for MacArthur's intelligence assessments.[7] The DISs, which could be 30 pages long and frequently longer, contained detailed accounts of the day's fighting in Korea, a good deal of political material on all countries in the FEC region (including Japan and China), and special appreciations and order of battle annexes. Feeding into the DISs were the Periodic Intelligence Reports (PIRs) of lower-level commands, most notably Eighth Army and X Corps. These usually concentrated on daily battlefield events, although they occasionally contained special appreciations on special subjects, usually of a tactical nature. In addition, MacArthur's G-2 in Tokyo drew on intelligence gathered by espionage, photo reconnaissance, communications intelligence, translation of captured enemy documents, interrogation of enemy prisoners, and on open sources such as Chinese broadcasts and newspapers.[8]

For the most part, Washington depended for its basic assessments on FEC, although other sources (most notably attache and consular reports from Taiwan and Hong Kong) came into play. Information was communicated between Tokyo and Washington through the DIS and the daily teleconference, which included a daily situation report from Tokyo, as well as responses to questions raised by either side. Washington—meaning here the Central Intelligence Agency, Army Intelligence, and the corporate effort known as the National

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Intelligence Estimate or NIE— did not simply accept FEC-2's judgments. As we shall see, for example, the Defense Department's daily Joint Intelligence Summary, prepared by the Joint Intelligence Indications Committee, provided assessments that sometimes differed considerably in tone and substance from those of FEC.

Some FEC sources—agent reports and COMINT—remain classified, or at least heavily sanitized. It has been reported that American-controlled intelligence in North Korea was skimpy throughout this period, which is not entirely surprising given the relative unimportance of Korea to American planners before June 1950. Other sources, which both FEC and Washington treated with reserve, included contacts with Chinese Nationalist forces in Taiwan. In retrospect, the best warnings of Chinese Communist intentions came from reports passed to American military and State Department personnel by KMT figures.[9] On the other hand, both FEC and Washington analysts tended to discount Chinese Nationalist warnings for two understandable reasons: the KMT had interested motives in fostering American worries about the Chinese Communists, and some of the intelligence they provided appeared to be nothing more than FEC information passed to them earlier.[10]

It is, in any case, clear that FEC and Washington had some means for tracking the Chinese Communist mobilization for war during the fall of 1950. Such crude indicators of preparation for war as air raid drills and evacuation of key personnel could be monitored by Westerners still living in China, and the movement of troops could be traced fairly accurately. Although FEC consistenly underestimated the number of troops actually in Korea—tripling its estimate of 70,000 men on 25 November to nearly 210,000 five days later, an estimate still about 90,000 men too low—it tracked the buildup in Manchuria far more accurately.[11] FEC estimated that a regular force (i.e. excluding district troops and militia) totaling 116,000 men in July had grown to 217,000 men in early August and grown to at least 415,000 and possibly 463,000 by early November.[12] Ironically FEC intelligence had a better grasp of the size and disposition of Chinese forces not in contact with UN troops in Korea than those who actually were.

The chief sources of intelligence in Korea itself were prisoners of war, photo-reconnaissance, and the local population.[13] Although the first proved remarkably forthcoming—and Eighth Army alone picked up nearly 100 Chinese prisoners before the November 1950 attack—American intelligence was hampered by a shortage of interpreters. Moreover, a postwar study suggested POWs spoke freely only to Army-level interrogators. At the corps and divisional levels, which had few competent linguists in any case, the POWs were still too terrified to be candid.[14] Furthermore, the Chinese Communists, by creating special units for their "volunteers," succeeded in misleading FEC intelligence about the true order of battle of Chinese forces in Korea. In addition, the Chinese carefully used turned Nationalist soldiers in the first-phase offensive of late October-early November, saving the tougher and better motivated Communist forces for the later November attacks. Nonetheless, events were to prove that POWs were the best source of information.[15]

Photo-reconnaissance, so highly developed by American forces during World War II, had nearly vanished during the postwar period. As a result, it

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took a long time for both the Army and the Air Force to reconstitute the skilled photo-interpretation teams required for this means of intelligence gathering. Furthermore, in October and November Air Force reconnaissance focused its scarce assets on the bombing targets mandated by MacArthur's desire to cut the Yalu bridges and destroy the industrial and transportation infrastructure of the North. As a result, Eighth Army received an average of only three or four—and frequently fewer—photo-interpretation reports a day.[16] Compounding this problem, of course, was the superlative camouflage and road discipline of the Chinese Communist Forces (CCF).

In some areas, particularly in the X Corps sector on the east coast of Korea, the local population proved extremely forthcoming and helpful in letting American forces know about the movements of the CCF. When S. L. A. Marshall, a combat historian working as a consultant for Eighth Army, interviewed officers in the 1st Marine Division he found that they believed that such information was "worth far more than what we got with our own patrols."[17] This is not entirely surprising, because the CCF used Korean villages for shelter during their two-month buildup in northern Korea. This source of information appears to have been cultivated far more by the Marines than by Eighth Army, whose daily intelligence reports relied heavily on POW interrogations.

Regrettably, aggressive patrolling did not produce nearly as much information about the size and dispositions of the CCF as American commanders hoped it would. When Matthew Ridgway assumed command of Eighth Army at the end of December 1950, he found to his bitter diappointment that "They (American infantry) no longer even think of operating on foot away from their transportation and heavy equipment."[18] Even when the enemy came to the UN forces, little was done to sift the impressions of frontline troops until the arrival of S. L. A. Marshall. His 1952 report on the subject bears quoting:

> "Infantry, being the body which under the normal situation in war maintains the most persistent contact with the fighting parts of the enemy, is the antenna of the mechanism of combat intelligence . . . during field operations, infantry should be the most productive source of information pertaining to the enemy's tactics, use of weapons, combat supply system, habits, and general nature. Our G-2 processes are designed to drain dry any enemy soldier who falls into infantry hands. They take little cognizance that perhaps more is to be learned of the enemy from what has been seen, heard, and felt by our own soldier in the line. There is no steady winnowing of this field of information. There is no machinery for adding it up, analyzing it across the board, and then deducing its lessons."[19]

Marshall, in fact, did just this, producing reports which were subsequently disseminated throughout the theater as part of the DIS and Eighth Army intelligence reports.[20]

One may say, then, that the United States had a fairly broad range of intelligence assets available to it as it faced the problem of Chinese intervention in Korea in the summer and fall of 1950. To be sure, many of these could not be fully exploited because of organizational or material bottlenecks, and some

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sources (e.g. the KMT in Taiwan) were considered less than fully reliable. In some cases, open sources—Chinese radiobroadcasts—would prove as informative an any secret agent concerning Chinese aims in Korea. In any event, data was neither so voluminous and confusing as to confuse the analyst nor so skimpy as to preclude accurate assessment, which suggests that we should examine closely the quality of the analyses themselves.

American intelligence had to deal with two questions in the fall of 1950. First, would China intervene on a large scale in the Korean War, and with what motives? Second, if China did intervene, what sort of strategy might it use, and what operational capabilities would its forces manifest? The historiography of the Korean War has focused much more on the first of these questions than the second. As we shall see, however, the two are equally important.

To read this article in its entirety, please refer to the "Estimates and Misc." folder, "CSI Articles" subfolder, on the DVD

Opening the Door a Crack

American Cryptology During the Korean War

Thomas R. Johnson

Dr. Thomas R. Johnson is a 35-year veteran of cryptology operations. Currently associated with CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence, he is the author of a classified four-volume history of American cryptology during the Cold War.

This article is unclassified in its entirety.

> **"With Korean war cryptology, we are still in the early stage of declassification fifty years after the outbreak of the war."**

Editor's Note: The Korean peninsula was divided at the 38th parallel as part of war settlements decided at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. Less than five years later, on 25 June 1950, North Korean forces invaded South Korea. In response to a United Nations (UN) call for troops to restore peace, the United States committed ground, air, and naval forces to the conflict before the end of June. Pushing northward, UN forces reached the China border on 20 November, triggering a Chinese assault across the Yalu river into Korea. Fighting eventually stalemated near the original border between the two Koreas. An armistice, signed on 27 July 1953, provided for the continued presence of US troops on Korean soil. The United States suffered more than 140,000 casualties during the engagement. A peace treaty has never been signed.

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Allied silence about the role of cryptology in World War II was broken in 1974 by the publication of Frederick Winterbotham's *The Ultra Secret*.[1] The world had waited almost 30 years for the beginning of a declassification program for World War II communications intelligence (COMINT). A few spare historical accounts written during and immediately after the war represented most of what the National Security Agency (NSA) and the UK Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) had been willing to divulge, until, at last, enough pressure was mounted for a more general declassification effort. Larger and larger volumes of World War II documents emerged into public view, until by the end of the century virtually no bars remained to a complete release.

With Korean war cryptology, we are still in the early stage of declassification fifty years after the outbreak of the war. NSA has recently declassified a few historical summaries, but has not yet begun to release any reports from the war itself.[2] So what do we know about cryptology in Korea? Some of our knowledge preceded the official declassification effort. When Clay Blair wrote his history of the Korean war in the 1980s, he incorporated some tantalizing bits and pieces about the role of exploited North Korean messages, especially as it related to the Pusan perimeter.[3] More recently, researcher Matthew Aid has

[1] Frederick W. Winterbotham, *The Ultra Secret* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974)

[2] As of July 2001, NSA's website (www.nsa.gov) listed five papers related to Korea. Jill Frahm, "So Power Can be Brought into Play: SIGINT and the Pusan Perimeter," David A. Hatch and Robert L. Benson, "The Korean War: The SIGINT Background;" Thomas R. Johnson, "General Essay on the Korean War," originally published in *American Cryptology During the Cold War, 1945-1989, Book I: The Struggle for Centralization, 1945-1960* (Fort Meade: NSA, 1995), pp. 36-56, Patrick D. Weadon, "SIGINT and COMSEC Help Save the Day at Pusan," and "Cryptologic Background to the Chinese Intervention," by an anonymous retired NSA officer.

[3] Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea, 1950-1953* (New York: New York Times Books, 1987)

ferreted out a larger part of the story.[4] When we put what they have published together with the accounts recently released by NSA, we can assess what we know and, by implication, what we do not yet know.

Postwar Letdown

Korea can best be understood in terms of World War II, which has been described as a "SIGINT [signals intelligence] War."[5] By the end of the war, the Americans and British, with help from the Canadians and Australians, were able to read most of the important cryptographic systems that the Axis nations employed. Harry Hinsely, the British intelligence historian and direct participant in matters cryptologic, has written that the war was probably shortened by six months as a result of SIGINT successes. I would put the number at four to six months. Even if it were only four months, try running the numbers on likely additional Allied casualties over that period. Or, looking at the issue in another way, if the Russian troops were on the Elbe in May 1945, how far west might they have moved by September?

Among the generals and admirals who benefited from COMINT, expectations rose. Not knowing or understanding the black arts by which these things were done, they believed that the codebreakers could do anything they set their minds to and that their successes would continue into the trackless future.

“Within years of the end of World War II, American cryptology was a hollow shell of its former self.”

Within years of the end of World War II, however, American cryptology was a hollow shell of its former self. When the soldiers and sailors went home in 1945, so did the cryptologists. Permanently lost to cryptology were William P. Bundy, Lewis F. Powell, Edwin O. Reischauer, Alfred Friendly, and Telford Taylor, as well as mathematicians Joe Eachus, Andrew Gleason, and a host of others. And this was just on the American side. The British lost, among others, Alan Turing, credited by some as the inventor of the modern digital computer. The loss of talent was accompanied by a catastrophic budgetary collapse.

The lack of resources was compounded by bureaucratic infighting. A wartime feud between Army and Navy cryptologists continued into the post-war period. Then a new group—the Air Force Security Service (USAFSS), established on 20 October 1948—joined the fray. Although the USAFSS began as a weak sister, it benefited from the Air Force's ability to get money from Congress and soon became the largest of the three service cryptologic agencies. It also became the most parochial, separating itself from the cryptologic community by physical as well as psychic distance by setting up its headquarters in San Antonio, Texas.

Amid all the bickering came signs of professional failure. Until 1948, the Army and Navy had been reading many of the codes of the new prime target, the Soviet Union. Then, in the space of less than a year, the lights went out. The USSR changed everything—its codes and ciphers, its communications procedures, and the very equipment that it used. The cryptologic community referred to what had happened as Black Friday. In fact, it didn't happen on a Friday, but evolved over several months. The bottom line was the same: the cornucopia of exploitable messages disappeared and Washington was caught short.

Woe piled upon woe. In 1949, Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan, and Mao and the Communists came to power on mainland China. Their communications were no more exploitable than those of the Soviet Union.

In 1949, the feuding cryptologic agencies attempted a union of sorts, called the Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA). AFSA, however, lacked the authority to control its nominal subordinates. Instead of one umbrella agency overseeing three military service departments, four more-or-less coequal organizations competed for resources in a shrinking pool. Moreover, as a creation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), AFSA gave priority to military requirements, resulting in bitter complaints from civilian customers, especially the CIA and the State Department. At

[4]Matthew M. Aid, "U.S. Humint and Comint in the Korean War: From the Approach of War to the Chinese Intervention," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol 14, No 4, Winter 1999

[5]Walter Laqueur, *A World of Secrets: The Uses and Limits of Intelligence* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

AFSA's founding, the United States was already unable to exploit the communications of its two principal antagonists and it was just months short of its next major war.

Wake Up Call in Korea

When it came to COMINT on Korea, AFSA had no arrows in its quiver. Like the rest of the Intelligence Community, it had only the most tenuous and insubstantial requirements to work with—keeping a general eye on the Soviet posture on the peninsula and little else. No one in the US Government seemed worried about Korea, and AFSA, preoccupied with jurisdictional disputes, gave it little attention. It had plenty of other work to keep it busy. Even worse, AFSA had no technical expertise on Korea. It had only one self-taught Korean linguist, no Korean dictionaries, no Korean typewriters, and no books on Korea. Until April 1950, it had no Korean communications collection of any kind. As it happened, late in 1949 one of its units in the Far East had collected some traffic that looked like Soviet communications, but, when finally analyzed months later, turned out to be Korean. On 21 April 1950, AFSA tasked an Army Security Agency (ASA) unit near Kyoto, Japan, to collect more Korean traffic. By mid-June, however, Kyoto had collected virtually nothing.

Following World War II, Korea had been left outside the American defensive perimeter in the Far East. When the North Koreans invaded the South in June 1950, they met little opposition. Republic of Korea

> **"When it came to COMINT on Korea, the Armed Forces Security Agency had no arrows in its quiver."**

(ROK) armed forces numbered barely 100,000 poorly armed and inadequately trained infantry troops against a North Korean army of about 135,000 fully trained soldiers with tanks and artillery. The United States had only a 500-man Korean Military Aid Group on the peninsula—it was designed to show the flag, not defend the country. The US contingency plan for Korea was to evacuate posthaste to Japan.

After initial hesitation, the United States responded to the UN call for troops and entered the fray. President Truman ordered Gen. Douglas MacArthur in Japan to scrape together a defensive force and send it to Korea. American forces began arriving at the South Korean port of Pusan in late June, and Gen. Walton Walker, commander of the US 8th Army, hastily assembled American forces and remnants of the ROK Army to try to hold a line.

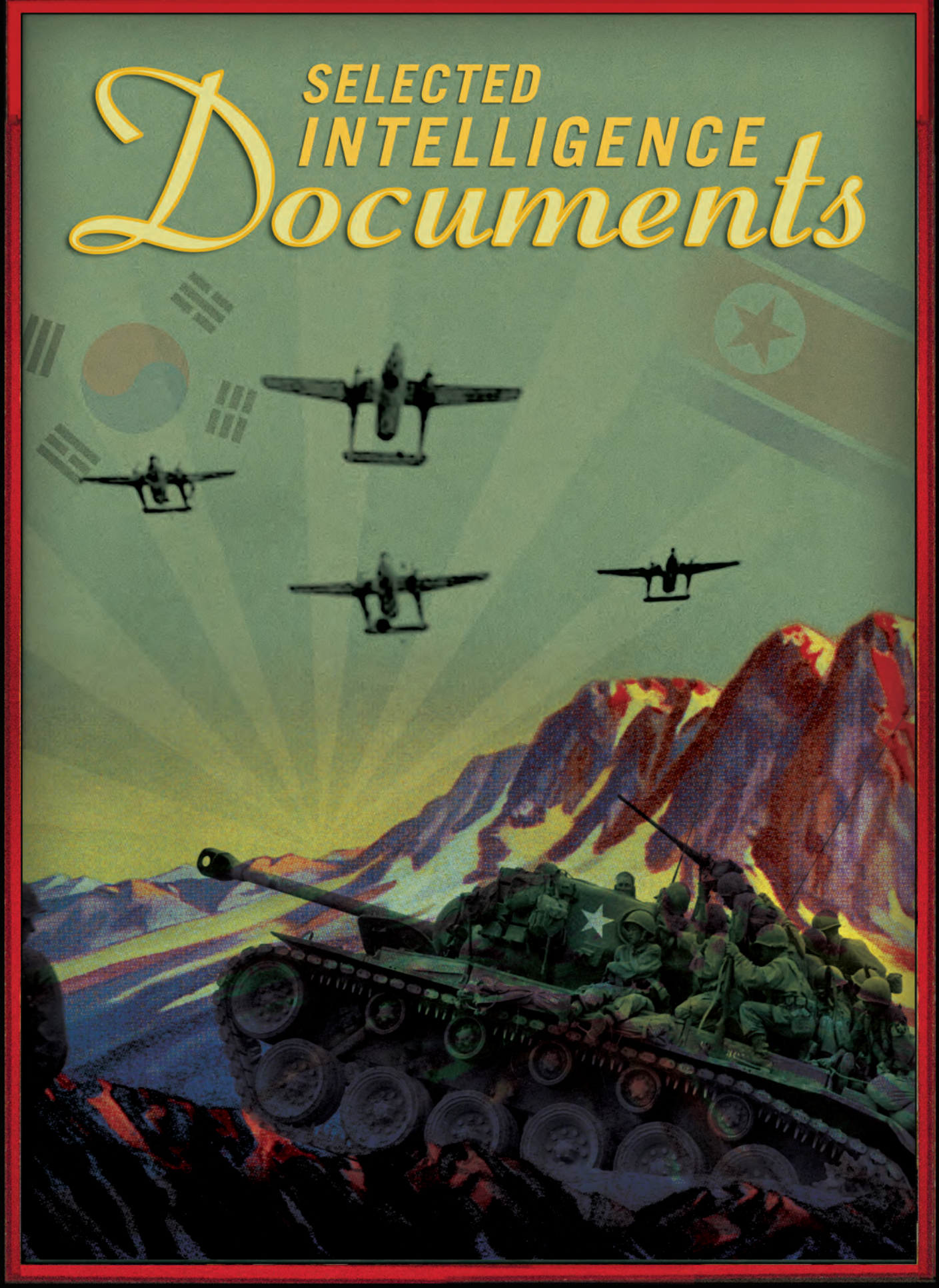
ASA, the Army's cryptologic organization, was caught just as flat-footed as everyone else. Initially, Walker had little or no SIGINT support. The first ASA contingent did not arrive until 9 September, six days before the US landing behind enemy lines at Inchon. This contingent was an advance unit from Hawaii, with minimal capability. ASA's plan was to support 8th Army with one communications reconnaissance battalion at Army level, and a battalion assigned to each of the three subordinate corps; however, it took the first designated Army SIGINT unit—the 60th Signal Service Company at Fort Lewis, Washington—three and a half months to arrive on the scene.

Filling the Breach

The Air Force actually beat ASA to Korea. Its first representative, 1st Lt. Edward Murray, arrived in Taegu on 19 July 1950, almost two months ahead of his Army counterparts. Using equipment borrowed from the USAFSS unit in Tokyo, he attempted to set up a tactical SIGINT organization to support the 5th Air Force. Murray, however, found that the 5th Air Force already had SIGINT support, courtesy of one Donald Nichols. A murky figure, Nichols lived in Seoul, had a reserve commission as an Air Force major, and headed the local Office of Special Investigations. Quite on his own, he had set up a hip-pocket SIGINT intercept and reporting service using native Koreans. The most prominent of these were Cho Yong Il, a former North Korean Army radio operator and cryptanalyst, and Kim Se Won, a captain in the ROK navy. Kim had served with the Japanese SIGINT service in World War II and, having been interned in Hawaii for a period of time, had a good grasp of English. Together, they had a going concern. Nichols, in turn, reported the material as thinly disguised HUMINT. The 5th Air Force didn't want Murray. After taking possession of his badly needed equipment, they sent him back to Japan.

To read this article in its entirety, please refer to the "Estimates and Misc." folder, "CSI Articles" subfolder, on the DVD.

SELECTED INTELLIGENCE Documents



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 300

28 June 1950

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SUBJECT: The USSR and the Korean Invasion

The invasion of the Republic of Korea by the North Korean Army was undoubtedly undertaken at Soviet direction and Soviet material support is unquestionably being provided. The Soviet objective was the elimination of the last remaining anti-Communist bridgehead on the mainland of northern Asia, thereby undermining the position of the US and the Western Powers throughout the Far East. By choosing Korea as the area of attack, the USSR was able to challenge the US specifically and test the firmness of US resistance to Communist expansion.

North Korea has possessed the capabilities for attacking South Korea for some time, and the USSR has probably been making plans for such an attack ever since the withdrawal of US forces from Korea in 1949. This withdrawal and subsequent US policy probably led the Kremlin to believe that the US had abandoned any intention of giving effective military support to South Korea and that North Korean aggression could be undertaken with only a slight risk of US intervention. The USSR probably further estimated that, even in the event of such intervention, it could readily disclaim or otherwise localize the conflict.

The timing of the invasion was probably determined primarily by such recent indications of increased US interest in the Far East as the development of a policy for economic and military aid for Southeast Asia.

The prompt US reaction in ordering air and naval support of South Korea has probably exceeded Soviet expectations, and the USSR is now faced with a strong possibility of global war if it supports the North Korean invasion sufficiently to overcome combined US and South Korean resistance. It is still estimated that the USSR is not yet prepared to risk full-scale war with the Western Powers, and it is expected, therefore, that the USSR will seek to localize the Korean conflict. The USSR can achieve this result by publicly disclaiming any responsibility for the invasion and: (1) secretly ordering a North Korean withdrawal to the 38th Parallel and cessation of hostilities; (2) permitting the North Korean forces to be driven back to the 38th Parallel, but probably continuing sufficient aid to maintain that position; or (3) providing support to North Korea short of open participation by Soviet forces in an attempt to perpetuate the civil war and maintain North Korean positions south of the 38th Parallel. Because of the advantages of continuing civil

Note: This memorandum has not been coordinated with the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force.

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and military disorder in Korea, the USSR will probably adopt the third alternative. In the probable event that this attempt proves impossible, the situation might well develop into indecisive and intermittent hostilities stabilized at approximately the 38th Parallel. Meanwhile, the USSR will continue to provide substantial material aid to the North Koreans, including irregulars recruited from Chinese Communists and Soviet forces.

Although the USSR has for some time been considering the advisability of aggressive moves in other areas of the world, there is no conclusive evidence to indicate the exact nature or timing of the moves being contemplated. Southeast Asia (particularly Indochina), Iran, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Berlin offer the USSR the greatest opportunities for aggressive moves or increased pressure. For example, there is continuing evidence of military preparations in the Balkans aimed at either Yugoslavia or Greece and several reports have indicated that the Korean invasion was designed, in part, as a diversionary action to cover an attack on Formosa.

In view of the vigorous US reaction to the Korean situation, however, it is not likely that the USSR will instigate surprise moves in any of these areas until the Kremlin has had an opportunity to study the implications of this reaction, particularly as to its effects on the possibility of global warfare in the event of Soviet-inspired outbreaks elsewhere. Nevertheless, Communist activity in the Far East and elsewhere will continue and will probably be intensified, but greater care will be taken to maintain the fiction that it is "indigenous."

Meanwhile, the USSR has reacted to the strong UN resolutions on the North Korean invasion by branding all action taken thus far by the Security Council as illegal and hence not binding. The attack itself indicated continued Soviet indifference to ending the boycott of the UN and the temper of non-Soviet members of the UN will in turn make it far more difficult for the USSR to return.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

22 August 1950

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Factors Affecting the Desirability of a UN Military Conquest of all of Korea.

Conclusions

Although an invasion of North Korea by UN forces could, if successful, bring several important advantages to the US, it appears at present that grave risks would be involved in such a course of action. The military success of the operation is by no means assured because the US cannot count on the cooperation of all the non-Communist UN members and might also become involved in hostilities with Chinese Communist and Soviet troops. Under such circumstances there would, moreover, be grave risk of general war.

Discussion

A successful invasion of North Korea by UN armed forces could bring several important advantages:

1. The conquest of North Korea by UN forces would represent a major diplomatic defeat for the USSR. It would have a profound effect on the entire non-Communist world and would give renewed hope to anti-Communists in both the European and the Asian satellite states. The recovery of a Satellite from Soviet domination, regardless of its geographical position or political importance, would be a decisive victory for the Western world.

2. The military victory achieved by the UN forces would greatly increase the prestige of the UN and particularly would bring prestige to the US as the chief participant in the UN forces. The countries of Western Europe and the Near East would place greater reliance in the UN as a practical force for world peace and in the determination and ability of the US to stem Communist aggression.

3. UN military conquest of Korea would not only deny the USSR a strategic outpost from which to threaten Japan, but it would provide the Western Powers with a buffer area and a wedge into Communist-held territory.

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[redacted]

4. The elimination of the arbitrary division of Korea at the 38th parallel and the expulsion of the North Korean regime would appear to provide an opportunity to bring about the economic and political unification of the country. Korean unity would be in accord with the wishes of the Korean people, the announced policy of the US, and the recommendations of the UN.

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No Change in Class.
Declassified
Class. Changed to: TS S C
Auth: HR 70-2
Date: 15 Sept 78
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In addition to these advantages, however, an invasion of North Korea would involve certain grave risks for the US:

1. It is doubtful whether the US could secure the support of its allies and of other non-Soviet nations in the UN for such a course of action. Many non-Communist members of the UN would almost certainly be opposed to any action which would involve the risk of strong counteraction by the USSR. The nations participating with the US in Korea do not wish to become deeply involved in Korea or to take action which might bring them nearer to a general war. They would probably take the position that the UN forces are not committed to the liberation of North Korea and that the SC's resolutions do not provide an adequate legal basis for the conquest. Consequently, US action would provide the USSR with a strong wedge for attempting to separate the US from its Western European allies. It would also have serious repercussions among Asian nations, particularly India, which is habitually distrustful of Western motives, and might convince many Asians that the US is, after all, an aggressive nation pursuing a policy of self-interest in Asia.

2. The invading forces might become involved in hostilities with the Chinese Communists. As it became apparent that the North Koreans were being defeated in South Korea, the Chinese might well take up defensive positions north of the 38th parallel. The USSR, which might welcome the outbreak of hostilities between the US and China, would thus have an additional opportunity of driving the wedge more deeply between the US and its allies. The USSR might use Chinese Communist troops at any stage in the fighting, but their participation would be especially useful at the 38th parallel where UN members could legally discontinue their support of the US policy.

3. Inasmuch as the USSR would regard the invasion of North Korea as a strategic threat to the security of the Soviet Far East, the invading forces might become involved, either directly or indirectly, in hostilities with Soviet forces. The USSR is now in a high state of readiness for general hostilities, and the Kremlin might well calculate that, with US mobilization set in motion, the USSR is better prepared now than it would be later for a full-fledged test of strength with the US. It could therefore place Soviet forces on the 38th parallel and oblige the US to initiate hostilities against Soviet forces under conditions which would alienate most of Asia from the US-UN cause in Korea, permit full exploitation of the propaganda theme that the South Koreans under US guidance opened the aggression against the North Koreans and other peace-loving peoples, and enable the USSR to neutralize and conquer most of Europe and the Near East before the impact of US industrial mobilization could be felt upon the defensive capabilities of those areas.

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Even if the USSR should not choose to utilize a UN attempt to conquer North Korea as a pretext for the inauguration of general hostilities against the West, it is probable that the Kremlin would be prepared by one method or another to prevent UN occupation of North Korea. Along with exploiting fully its veto power in the UN and the opportunity for charging the US with aggressive action, the USSR might well provide sufficient ground, air, or naval assistance to interdict UN communications, halt the ground advance, and neutralize UN air and naval superiority. Concurrent with such action, the USSR might well inaugurate new limited aggressions elsewhere in order to offset the advantages which might be gained by an advance into North Korea and to strain further UN military capabilities. There is no assurance that the USSR is unprepared to assume such risks.

4. The conquest of North Korea would not provide assurance of peace throughout the country or of true unification. The Soviet high command would almost certainly attempt to withdraw into Manchuria or into the USSR a large portion of the North Korean forces. From these areas the USSR might continue to threaten aggression and infiltration and thus produce such instability as to require the continuing presence of large numbers of US or UN forces. Moreover, Syngman Rhee and his regime are unpopular among many--if not a majority--of non-Communist Koreans. To re-establish his regime and extend its authority and its base of popular support to all of Korea would be difficult, if not impossible. Even if this could be done, the regime would be so unstable as to require continuing US or U. military and economic support. If, as one alternative, a new government should be formed consequent to a UN-supervised free election, there is no assurance that the Communists would not win either control of or a powerful voice in such a government. If, as another alternative, a prolonged trusteeship under UN control and with US participation were established, instability would nevertheless continue, with probably even the non-Communist Koreans reacting against the substitution of outside control for independence. Furthermore, Korea once more would become the catspaw of international politics, and its ultimate status would be dependent upon the comparative strength and ambitions of the countries whose representatives supervised the trust administration.

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Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Electronic Reading Room

The CIA has established this site, available through the "Library" menu on www.cia.gov, to provide the public with an overview of access to CIA information, including electronic access to previously released documents. Because of CIA's need to comply with the national security laws of the United States, some documents or parts of documents cannot be released to the public. In particular, the CIA, like other U.S. intelligence agencies, has the responsibility to protect intelligence sources and methods from disclosure. However, a substantial amount of CIA information has been and/or can be released following review. See "Your Rights" for further details on the various methods of obtaining this information.

Special Collections

Additional document collections released by the Historical Collections Division can be found on the FOIA Electronic Reading Room and include:

Strategic Warning and the Role of Intelligence: Lessons Learned From the 1968 Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia

This collection consists of DI intelligence memorandums, various estimates and memos written by the Office of National Estimates (ONE), articles from the Central Intelligence Bulletin (a current intelligence daily publication), Weekly Summaries, Intelligence Information Cables, and Situation Reports, which were published up to three times a day during the crisis when tensions flared.

The Warsaw Pact: Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance

A collection of sensitive Soviet and Warsaw Pact military journals from 1961 to 1984 that provide a view into Warsaw Pact military strategy. New information was added to this site in January 2010.

Air America: Upholding the Airmen's Bond

A fascinating assembly of documents revealing the role that Air America, the Agency's proprietary airline, played in the search and rescue of pilots and personnel during the Vietnam War. The collection has personal accounts by the rescued pilots and thank you letters as well as commendations from various officials.

Preparing for Martial Law: Through the Eyes of Col. Ryszard Kuklinski

A captivating collection of over 75 documents concerning the planning and implementation of martial law in Poland from mid-1980 to late 1981. Colonel Ryszard Kuklinski, a member of the Polish Army General Staff and the source of the documents, provided information and personal commentary that gave intelligence analysts and US policy makers invaluable insight into the crisis.

Creating Global Intelligence

Discover the back story of the US intelligence community by exploring this collection of more than 800 documents from the late 1940s to the early 1950s that pertain to the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency. The collection provides perspective on the complex issues that senior US government officials grappled with as they considered how to establish an enduring national intelligence capability.

The Original Wizards of Langley: Overview of the Office of Scientific Intelligence

This overview and collection of documents and other material related to the Office of Scientific Intelligence (OSI) offer a glimpse of CIA's contribution to the analysis of Soviet capabilities in science and technology during the Cold War.

A Life in Intelligence - The Richard Helms Collection

This collection of material by and about Richard Helms as Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) and Ambassador to Iran comprises the largest single release of Helms-related information to date. The documents, historical works and essays offer an unprecedented, wide-ranging look at the man and his career as the United States' top intelligence official and one of its most important diplomats during a crucial decade of the Cold War. From mid-1966, when he became DCI, to late 1976, when he left Iran, Helms dealt directly with numerous events whose impact remains evident today and which are covered in the release.

A-12 OXCART Reconnaissance Aircraft Documentation (With the Center for the Study of Intelligence)

This release, containing approximately 1,500 pages of material, consisting of about 350 documents, maps, diagrams, and photographs will provide researchers on aviation and intelligence with significant additional detail about the design and development of the A-12.

CIA information review and release officers reviewed, redacted, and released hundreds of documents related to the Korean war for this event. The accompanying DVD contains over 1,300 documents and more than 5,000 pages of material.

The material is organized into the following categories.

The Korean War document collection—featuring CIA memorandums and daily intelligence reports, National Intelligence Estimates and dpecial memos, summaries of foreign media, and other reporting related to the Korean conflict.

The multimedia collection—photos, audio, and video material from the Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Libraries, as well as from other sources, providing background context to the document collection.
This DVD will work on most computers and the documents are in .PDF format.

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In conjunction with a conference hosted by the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the start of the Korean War