

KOREAN WAR - RESULTS

RESULTS: Our focus today were the results of the Korean War which I tried to answer in some arguments with evidence:

1. No peace settlement! In July 1953 both sides agreed on an armistice but we have never reached a settlement between North and South Korea

2. Huge loss of life and destruction! Recent scholarship has put the full battle death toll on all sides at just over 1.2 million:

3. Korea remained divided!

4. Communist expansion was prevented:

a. South Korea did not become communist. Syngman Rhee remained in power with US support

b. Chiang Kai Shek (Jiang Jieshi) survived in Taiwan. The Korean War led to US support for the Kuomintang (Guomindang) leader which had been portrayed both as corrupt and brutal. The US 7th Fleet was instructed to prevent a communist invasion of Taiwan

c. The US changed their policy in Indo-China. USA started to support the French in their war against Ho Chi Minh and the communists (in Vietnam which remained divided up to 1976)

d. The USSR made no advance in Europe or the Middle East. We don't know what Stalin's intention for these areas were and in March 1953 he died

5. The Korean War strengthened the "West" and its commitment against communism:

a. The "West" increased its defense spending. The US defense budget increased from \$13 billion to \$50 billion with the army being increased 50% to 3.5 million men. Western European defense expenses increased by an average 50%. West Germany was allowed to rearm.

b. NATO was strengthened. In December 1950 NATO agreed on setting up an integrated standing NATO force, under a US Commander. US troops were thus stationed in Europe. In 1951 and 1952 Greece and Turkey joined NATO and they were followed by West Germany in 1955.

c. New defense pacts were formed. In order to contain communism all over the world two more defense pacts were established: *ANZUS* (Australia, New Zealand and the US) Defense Pact in September 1951, *SEATO* (South East Asian Treaty Organization) in 1954 and *CENTO* (Central Treaty Organization) in 1955.

d. The US accelerated the signature of the San Francisco Treaty with Japan. According to this treaty in 1951 Japan got to have a 735 000 strong defense force and it was declared that the US would not limit the Japanese rearmament.

but at the same time it had some points that weakened the "West"

a. The US public support was poor. The people of the United States were tired of warfare and some critical voices were heard. The US society was not at all involved in the war the same way as they had been during WWII. Sometimes the Korean War is therefore referred to as the "Quiet War"...

b. Strained US-British relations. The British thought that the US had overreacted.

c. The USSR also increased their defense spending by 50% – with the Red Army doubling in size to 4.9 million men

d. The set up of Western Defense Pacts led to the formation of the Warsaw Pact 1955

6. Japan, West Germany and Spain were restored to the Western "community":

a. The Treaty of San Francisco 1951. The Korean war also helped to kill the growing anti-US movement in Japan. It helped the Japanese economy as well since the main US base was established there and Japan provided lots of the UN material

b. West Germany gained full sovereignty in 1955. They also gained the right to rearm and they joined NATO

c. General Franco's Spain seized to be an isolated dictatorship. The US dropped its formal opposition against General Franco and signed the **1953 Madrid Pact** by which US bases were set up in Spain

7. Some Communist gains:

a. China under Mao gained prestige and morale. Mao and Red China had apparently checked the US. The war therefore helped unite Communist China behind Mao Tse Tung (Mao Zedong). It strengthened his leadership and it showed that Communist China was a great power

b. The USSR gained some international prestige in the role of peace-makers. Already in 1951 the USSR had suggested ceasefire talks. The peace talks started in Kaesong, later Panmunjon in July 1951 but both the US and China delayed the armistice with demands as well as deliberate delays... It was the Soviet Diplomat Malik that suggested an armistice line along the 38th Parallel (in June 1951)

8. Some effects on the US:

a. As mentioned before the US now implemented NSC-68 – a more aggressive containment policy

b. The US revised its view on future wars. A future war may not be total like WWI and WWII and therefore The US had to plan for limited warfare. This made it necessary to build-up conventional forces

c. The conflict helped the Republican candidate Dwight Eisenhower to win the 1952 presidential election. President Truman and the Democratic Party failed to bring the hostilities to a rapid and successful conclusion. Their policy to try to avert war caused wild accusations from the Republican Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy that communist sympathizers were responsible for the US failure. General MacArthur was very critical of Truman who as a result of the war decided not to stand for re-election. Dwight Eisenhower was a General and war hero of WWII and he promised to “*go to Korea and see for myself*“. The majority of the voters liked this message which gave them the idea that the old war hero would do what was necessary

9. Some economic effects:

a. The war helped the Japanese economy to recover. The US troops and the manufacturing as well as selling of material to the UN troops gave a boost to the strained Japanese post-war economy

b. South Korea and Taiwan received economic help from the US. As a result both these countries would develop into industrial powers

10. The war raised hopes about the effectiveness of the United Nations. One decision that was taken in connection with the Korean War was the “*Uniting for Peace Resolution*“. This meant that the Assembly could decide on action if the Security Council were deadlocked. In the event of a deadlock seven members of the Security Council, or a majority of the Assembly, could get the matter passed to the Assembly for a decision. This was not first used against the USSR as had been anticipated but it was used against Great Britain and France during the Suez Crisis 1956

11. Strained relations between the US and Communist China. Before the Korean War the US had been on the point of recognizing the People's Republic of China. With the outbreak of the war the US began to support Chiang Kai Chek (Jiang Jieshi), doubtless thereby preventing a Communist invasion of Taiwan. Great Britain had recognized the People's Republic of China in 1949 but the war brought **some strained Anglo-Chinese relations** (and trade between the two countries were reduced)