

The Korean War

The Korean War was a military conflict between the Republic of Korea, supported by the United Nations, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, supported by the People's Republic of China, with military material aid from the Soviet Union. The war began on June 25, 1950 and an armistice was signed on July 27, 1953.



Historical Map of Korean War 1950- 53



Chow line for Thanksgiving dinner of 1st SigBn at Hamhung Korea. 11-23-1950 NARA File#: 127-GK-234G-A5289

Following the surrender of Japan in 1945, American administrators divided the Korean peninsula along the 38th Parallel, with United States troops occupying the southern part and Soviet troops occupying the northern part. The war was a result of the physical division of Korea by an agreement of the victorious Allies at the conclusion of the Pacific War at the end of World War II.



Film poster of "Mash" a popular 1970 movie then TV series on US military life in Korea



South Korean Flag

The failure to hold free elections throughout the Korean Peninsula in 1948 deepened the division between the two sides, and the North established a Communist government. The 38th Parallel increasingly became a political border between the two Koreas. Cross-border skirmishes and raids at the 38th Parallel persisted. The situation escalated into open warfare when North Korean forces invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. It was the first



Washington DC Korean War Veterans Memorial



United States soldier at beginning of the Korean War



Korean Civilians during the War in 1951

The United Nations, particularly the United States, came to the aid of South Korea in repelling the invasion. A rapid UN counter-offensive drove the North Koreans past the 38th Parallel and almost to the Yalu River near the Chinese border. The People's Republic of China (PRC) then entered the war on the side of the North. The Chinese launched a counter-offensive that pushed the United Nations forces back across the 38th Parallel. In 1953, the war ceased with an armistice that restored the border between the Koreas near the 38th Parallel and created the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a 2.5-mile (4.0 km) wide buffer zone between the two Koreas. Outbreaks of fighting continue to the present day.