

**CHAPTER 18** Section 2 (pages 609–615)

# The Cold War Heats Up

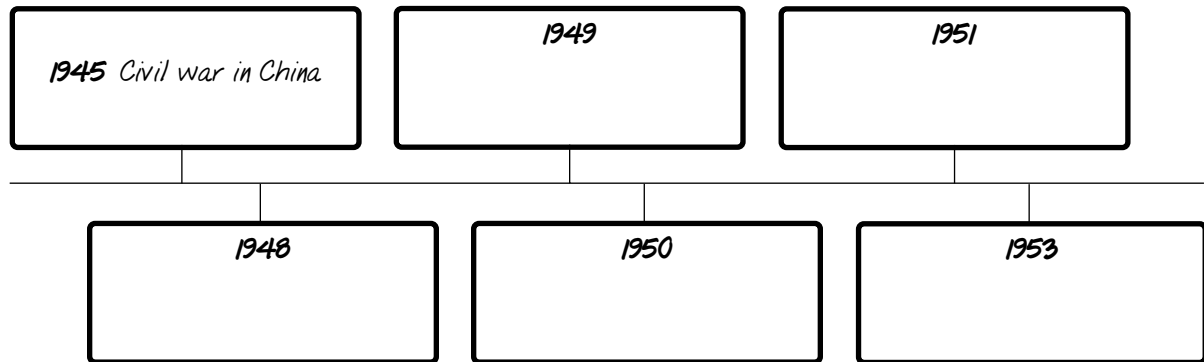
## BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about postwar Europe.

In this section, you will read about the postwar situation in Asia and about the Korean War.

## AS YOU READ

Fill in the time line below with the major events of the Communist takeover in China and the Korean War.



### TERMS AND NAMES

**Chiang Kai-shek** Leader of the Nationalist forces in China

**Mao Zedong** Leader of the Communist forces in China

**Taiwan** Island off the coast of China

**38th parallel** Imaginary line that divides Korea at 38 degrees north latitude

**Korean War** War begun when North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950

## China becomes a Communist Country (pages 609–611)

### *How did the Communists gain control of China?*

For two decades the Chinese Communists struggled against the Nationalist government led by **Chiang Kai-shek**. The United States supported Chiang because he opposed communism and sent him aid. But U.S. officials knew that Chiang's government was inefficient and corrupt. He overtaxed the Chinese people even during times of *famine*. He did not have the support of the people.

**Mao Zedong** led the Communist forces in the North. He won the support of many Chinese *peasants*. Mao distributed land to them and reduced rents. He had an experienced army with high morale.

President Truman refused to send American troops to help the Nationalists fight communism. But he did send aid. Even so, in 1949, Chiang and his forces had to flee to **Taiwan**, an island off the coast of China. China was now Communist. Containment in China had failed!

American conservatives said that the United States had “lost” China because not enough had been done to help the Nationalists. Truman's followers said that the Communist success was because Chiang could not win the support of the Chinese people. Conservatives claimed that the U.S. government was filled with Communist agents. American fear of communism began to burn out of control.

1. How did Communists gain control of China?

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# The Korean War; The United States Fights in Korea (pages 611–615)

## What caused the Korean War?

Japan had ruled Korea since 1910. At the end of World War II, Japanese forces in the north surrendered to the Soviets. In the south, the Japanese surrendered to the Americans. Two nations then developed. They were separated by the **38th parallel**, an imaginary line that divides Korea at 38 degrees north *latitude*.

In 1948, South Korea became an independent nation. North Korea became a Communist nation. Each claimed the right to rule all of Korea.

In June 1950, North Korea started the **Korean War** by invading South Korea. Truman was afraid another Asian nation was about to fall to communism. He ordered air and naval support for South Korea. Then the United Nations agreed to help South Korea. Troops from 16 nations—most of them American—were sent to South Korea. They were led by General Douglas MacArthur.

North Korean troops moved steadily south. They conquered the South Korean capital of Seoul. Then MacArthur launched a counterattack. His forces trapped about half the North Korean Army, which surrendered. MacArthur's success in Korea made him a national hero.

UN and South Korean forces advanced toward the 38th parallel. If they crossed it, the war would become an *offensive* rather than a *defensive* one. In October 1950, the UN told MacArthur to cross the 38th parallel and reunite Korea.

The Chinese opposed UN forces moving into North Korea. China said it would not let the

Americans near its border. The UN ignored the threat and advanced. Then Chinese troops entered North Korea. They drove UN forces back. In January 1951, the Communists recaptured Seoul.

For two years, fighting continued. But neither side advanced. MacArthur wanted to extend the war into China. He even suggested dropping atomic bombs on China. Truman was against this strategy. The Soviets were allies of the Chinese. Truman felt bombing China would start World War III.

MacArthur continued to argue for his plan. He spoke to the press and to Republican leaders. Truman felt that he could no longer allow MacArthur's *insubordination*. He fired MacArthur as commander. At first, the American public sided with MacArthur. Later, they came to agree with Truman's idea of a *limited war*.

Meanwhile, a cease-fire went into effect in June 1951. Both sides agreed on a *demilitarized zone* at the 38th parallel. An *armistice* was signed in July 1953. The agreement was a *stalemate*. Korea was still divided between Communist North Korea and non-Communist South Korea.

Many people felt that American lives had been lost for little gain. As a result, the American people rejected the party in power, the Democrats, in the 1952 election. Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected president. Americans also became even more worried about Communist expansion abroad and Communist spies at home.

## 2. What was gained by the Korean War?

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"Mr. Prima Donna, Brass Hat, Five Star MacArthur" **Harry S. Truman**

Photo Credit: Carl Mydans, *Life Magazine*. Copyright © Time, Inc.

## Skillbuilder

Use this picture to answer these questions.

1. What kind of leader do you think MacArthur was from looking at this photo?

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2. What does the quote from President Truman tell you about his feelings toward MacArthur?

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